

2024

Narrative Report on the National Validation of the AgCSG Policy



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Moyo Media

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KEY PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS

1. Nigeria Agribusiness Group NABG
2. Nigeria National Accreditation System NiNAS
3. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation BMGF
4. NQC
5. SON
6. NAFDAC
7. Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security FMAFS
8. Gombe State, Ministry of Agriculture
9. Adamawa State, Ministry of Agriculture
10. Borno State, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
11. Harvest Plus
12. International Institute for Tropical Agriculture IITA
13. BOP Inc.
14. Mercy Corps
15. Top Certifier International Limited
16. NAQS
17. NRCRI
18. NIPC
19. FCCPC
20. Lead Consultant, Celestine Okanya
21. Rapporteur, Michaela Moye

PARTICIPATING STAKEHOLDERS

NGOS, Funders, Partners	
GIZ	GIZ AgSgS
ActionAid Nigeria	NILOWV
Golden Women Initiative	Farm Radio International
Helen Keller Int'l – Advancing Nutrition	Jesuit Refugee Service
AUDA-NEPAD	CHESIDS
MDAs	
NTDC	NASC
NITDA	NYSC
Nigerian Institute of Animal Science	UBEB
KGVCDP	Kaduna State Internal Revenue
Kano State ADP	
OPS, Foundations, Projects, CSOs	
FMAN	GGPMAN
FACAN	Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria
IWAKLF	DPPEPI
Michael Adedotun Oke Foundation	NWAP
Youth Initiative for Sustainable Agriculture	YFAI

Nigerian Women Farmers	NigWED Project
MSME Forum	PACF-Nigeria
ACVEP	Nigeria Young Farmers Network
Nigeria Cassava Growers Association	Edward Chiagozie Foundation
Africa Projects Development Centre	Young African Agripreneurs
Live Changing Multipurpose	JONAPWD
Tammy's International Women in Agriculture Empowerment Association	WOFAN
Newdown Farmers Association	AFAN
NASSI	Sasakawa Africa Association
Cassava Cottage Processing	Y Farm Cooperative
Advocates for Moral Values & Civic/Duties	Youth Association of Sierra Leone
Nigerian Association of Women in Agriculture (NAWIA)	Advocate for Broadcasting Network
Soft Transformation Initiative	SOFTTI (Save Our Future)
Businesses and Farms	
Green Npaujer Farms	JohnWayne Farms
Honking Global Limited	Louminous Bunch Limited
Sovereign Wealth Agro Allied	Safitech General Enterprises
Bluseal Enterprises	Leventis Foundation
Origin Group	AgroPro
AGRICON	Ambience Consultants Limited
Nicert Expert Consulting Limited	Yarchung Strawberries
Juanlee Integrated Services	Mammag Int. Ltd.
Maslaha Seeds	Fruits and Plugs Limited
Flour Mills of Nigeria	Tropical General Investments
TransSaharan	Welcome2Africa International
Extension Africa	Sbalaus Global Services
Danyari Technologies	Ikore International Development Limited
GMPC Investment Limited	HortiPeak Farms
Zoba Advisory	HTS Farms
D&D Multipurpose and Agricultural Services	OLAM Food Ingredients
Metafora International Services	Policy Innovation Centre
Os FreshNDry	Green Plant Agro Solution
GreenPlant Fertilizer Ltd	Quebec Food Processing Parks
Primeland Farms Limited	Pwabuleno Agroinitiative
Agrovesto Enterprises Limited	Evolve Beyond Industries
X-Hervests	Anthill Technologies
Farmie Agritech Ltd	Yakubee Enterprise
Agb Farms	Kibs
SALID Agriculture Nigeria	Muna Farms
Bluefox Farms & Agro Allied	Baobab Export Solutions
Joe Richmond Resources	Havenhill Synergy Ltd

Sué Farm	Husk Power
Gumpton	Rich Meal Agro Food
Cravin	Kollo T Agro Allied Farm
Marbles & Gardens Limited	RAAL Poultry Farms Nigeria
Food Forward Ltd	Bulk-market
Iphex Global Ventures	Kafi's Farm
Alban Stores NG LTD	Zafar Multi Dynamic Enterprise
World Trade Center Abuja	ATS Farms
Kitron Green Initiatives	Sahfunmi Nigeria Limited
Kasuwa Africa	Cozance
ThriveAgric	Baatoul Integrated Farms
JasHouse	Healthy Hub Cereals
Ecovirun	Samuda Communications
Top 10 AgroServices Limited	Farmers2u Multiservice Ent.
Mulkishea Commodity Products	Choochers Ventures
Ummita Foods and Beverages	Slay Farms
Viricap	Clean Technology Hub
Alziraa Agri Tech	Nustanza Nigeria Limited
Montrouge Projects Limited	Almaim Integrated Farm
CHC Agritech Africa	Wilmet Solutions Limited
iTropics	Fatasmu Agric Farms
Hamilton Technologies Limited	Sir J Farm
Global Sustainable Future Network	Hottadoz Agro-Processor
Ritk'nen Ventures	One Pot Spices
Sunstone Synergy Global	Hemam Synergy Limited
BarakPhils Agro-Allied	Nafarm Agroallied Integrated
Oyoyo's Foodsquare	Talion Group
Dece Agro & Farms	African Silesian Business Hub
Carat-Concept Int'l Ltd	TradeBuza
Vivaworld Creation Limited	Saro Agrosience Limited
LoftyInc Allied Partners Ltd	Able Feeds Limited
Agri Growth Africa	Takuti Agro Specialties Global
Cater and Merger Consult	Dodo Agro Production
Fiddyakz Farms Limited	Mekrex Pharmaceuticals
Arid, Inc.	Faku Agro Allied Ltd
Phase 3 Trading Company	Rock Solid Pixel
Banks and Financiers	
Fidelity Bank	Wema Bank PLC
Optiva Capital Partners	Fortis Mobile Money
Titan Trust Bank	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
AgCSGS	Agricultural Commodity Standard & Grading System
ACVEP	Agricultural Commodity Value Chain Expansion Project
ADP	Agro-Pastoral Development Project
AFAN	All Farmers Association Nigeria
AgroPro	The Agricultural Productivity Enhancement Company Ltd.
AUDA-NEPAD	African Union Development Agency – New Partnership for Africa’s Development
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
BOP Inc.	Base of Pyramid Incorporated
CHESIDS	Centre for Health Systems Support and Initiatives for Development
DG	Director General
DPPEPI	Divine Prince and Princess Empowerment Programme
FACAN	Federation of Agricultural Commodity Association of Nigeria
FCCPC	Federal Competition and Consumer Protection Commission
FEC	Federal Executive Council
FMAFS	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
FMAN	Flour Milling Association of Nigeria
FMITI	Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment
G&S	Grades and Standards
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GGPMAN	Ginger Growers, Processors and Marketers Association of Nigeria
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
IWAKLF	Iwa-Khamani Leadership Foundation
JONAPWD	Joint National Association of Persons With Disabilities
KANINVEST	Kano State Investment Promotion Agency and Diaspora
KGVCDP	Kogi Value Chain Development Programme
LC	Lead Consultant
LCBs	Local Commodity Brokers
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NABG	Nigeria Agribusiness Group
NAF	Nigeria Air Force
NAFDAC	National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control
NAMSS	Nigeria Agricultural Marketing Support Services
NAQS	Nigeria Agricultural Quarantine Service
NASC	National Agricultural Seed Council
NASSI	Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists
NEPC	Nigerian Export Promotion Council

NCX	Nigeria Commodity Exchange
NiNAS	Nigeria National Accreditation System
NigWED	Nigerian Women Economic Development Project
NG-AGMARK	Nigeria Agricultural Mark
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NILOWV	The League of Women's Voters of Nigeria
NIPC	Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission
NITDA	National Information Technology Development Agency
NRCRI	National Root Crops Research Institute
NTDC	Nigeria Tourism Development Corporation
NQC	Nigeria Quality Council
NWAP	Nigerian Women for Agricultural Progress
OPS	Organised Private Sector
PACF - Nigeria	Pan African Competitiveness Forum Nigeria
PZV	Policy Zonal Validation
Q&A	Question and Answer
SCW	Stakeholders Consultative Workshop
SON	Standards Organisation of Nigeria
SPO	Senior Programme Officer
SSP	Small Scale Producers
TS	Technical Session
UBEB	Universal Basic Education Board
YFAI	Youths for Apiculture Initiative

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Background & Justification

The parameters of Grades and Standards (G&S) in the agricultural sector have expanded significantly from the primary role of reducing transaction costs of commodity market participants to the evolved position as strategic tools for:

- Market penetration
- System coordination
- Quality and safety assurance
- Brand complementing; and,
- Product niche definition.

This expanded role of G&S presents relevant implications for Nigeria's agricultural value chains, especially as regards trade, exports, competitiveness and safety.

Developing and implementing a transparent system of communication amongst farmers (including smallholder farmers), middlemen, retailers, exporters and the end consumers is imperative in order to achieve consistency, traceability and to ensure value addition for processes and products.

“The low quality of the agricultural commodities produced by [small scale producing] farmers, limits their ability to effectively participate in some domestic and international markets.”¹ - *Mercy Mayaki, BOP Inc. Country Representative*

Improved access to domestic and international markets for strategic and lucrative agricultural value chains will increase Nigeria's share of global agricultural exports to over 6% by 2005 in line with the National Development Plan.²

The Nigeria Agribusiness Group (NABG), in partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) established the Promotion of Agribusiness Advocacy for Small-Scale Producers project. Expected outcomes of the project include the development of

AgCSGS Policy Timeline

20 September 2022

NABG hosts a one-day SCW in Abuja, with support from BOP Inc.

27 – 28 March 2023

1st Policy Zonal Validation Workshop takes place at IITA, Ibadan, with support from Harvest Plus.

16 – 17 August 2023

2nd PZC Workshop is held in Enugu, with support from Harvest Plus.

14 – 15 December 2023

3rd PZC Workshop takes place in Kano, in collaboration with KANINVEST.

28 March 2024

National Validation Workshop, in Abuja, with support from BMGF.

a national policy on agricultural commodity grading; and, ten (10) pilot agricultural commodities.



Jafar Umar, NABG DG

“It is critical to reflect on the commodities’ quality...By adhering to standards, producers can gain a competitive edge in the global markets and increase overall value of our agricultural produce.”³

- Jafar Umar, NABG, DG

In order to achieve these outcomes, the NABG-SSPS advocates for the institutionalization of standards grading and the adoption and enactment of the national policy. Working with the Lead Consultant, Celestine Okanya, NABG and relevant stakeholders developed a *National Agricultural Commodity Standards Grading System and National Policy to Support Commodity Grading Systems*. Core Teams comprising relevant stakeholders were inaugurated in Abuja on 20 September 2022 to provide expertise and stakeholder representation during the policy formulation process.

The Core Teams were as follows:

- Policy Development Committee
- Policy Advocacy Committee
- Standards Grading System Committee.

The AgCSGS policy underwent several review and validation exercises with regional workshops in Ibadan, Enugu and Kano (*See AgCSGS Timeline above*) before the final National Validation Workshop which took place at the NAF Centre in Abuja on 28 March 2024.

Workshop Objectives

The key objective of the workshop was the national validation of the AgCSGS policy. This involved:

- Overview of Commodity Grading Policy and its relevance to the Nigerian economy
- Review of sections of the policy draft
- Stakeholder feedback via Q&A and comment forms.



Panellists, SCW, Abuja, 2022



Stakeholder review, PZV, Ibadan, 2023



Group photo, PZV, Enugu, 2023



LC making his presentation, PZV, Kano, 2023

Workshop Highlights

The AgCSGS National Validation workshop signals the final stage of Phase III of the project: Document Validation and Approval. The day's proceedings commenced with a welcome address by NABG's Director General, Jafar Umar. Mr. Umar briefed participants on the reasons for the meeting and outlined the expected outcomes of the workshop.

NABG President, Arc. Ibrahim Kabir, made the opening remarks during which he urged participants to ask questions and validate the policy in order to incentivize the government to adopt it. "This is a gateway to economic success. With the population and land mass we have, [Nigeria] has no business looking for food security," Arc. Kabir said, adding that the policy will provide impetus to do better agribusiness.

Goodwill messages were heard from stakeholders.

Dr. Audu Grema, Agriculture SPO, BMGF, challenged the NABG to establish a baseline of the current S&G practices and follow up with an impact assessment of the implementation of the policy. “It is not enough to develop policies but there has to be implementation,” he said, adding, “[NABG] is a very compelling organisation to support with their policy advocacy effectiveness.”

NAFDAC and SON expressed willingness to collaborate on the implementation of the policy by supporting farmers and producers to attain and maintain appropriate standards. NQC expressed satisfaction with the array of participants present at the workshop, adding, “We are happy to be here as partners with the NABG.”



Dr. Audu Grema, BMGF



Anyawu Ogochukwu, NAFDAC

The two-part Technical Session, led by the LC, involved a deep dive into the policy document.

Technical Session Part I: “Overview of Commodity Grading Policy and Its Relevance to the Nigerian Economy.”

The first part of the TS tracked the progress of the policy development, including research, stakeholder contribution and the review process. The following were highlighted during the presentation:

- The different parameters of grading and standards determine price.
- Buyers determine the grades they wish to purchase. This is why different grades exist.
- SON is responsible for setting the standards in Nigeria. The policy draws upon the existing G&S guidelines which will be collated and codified into a comprehensive policy.
- The sources of these standards are: Private Standards Grading; Group/Association Standards Grading; Government Standards Grading; Industrial Standards Grading; Buyers’ Standards Grading; and, Sector Specific Grading.

PROJECT PHASES



- Reviewed precolonial Produce grading system
- Reviewed USDA, AGMARK INDIA, KENYA
- Reviewed SON Agricultural Commodity standards
- Understudied the commodities bulk buyers grading systems.
- Reviewed operations of available commodity exchange markets and their challenges.
- Worked with a team of experts to develop a draft policy
- Held a national consultative stakeholder's workshop
- Held Technical Committee reviews
- Held Zonal Validation Exercise (Kano, Ibadan & Enugu)
- National Validation Exercise



Image 1: Project Phases⁴

What we have achieved

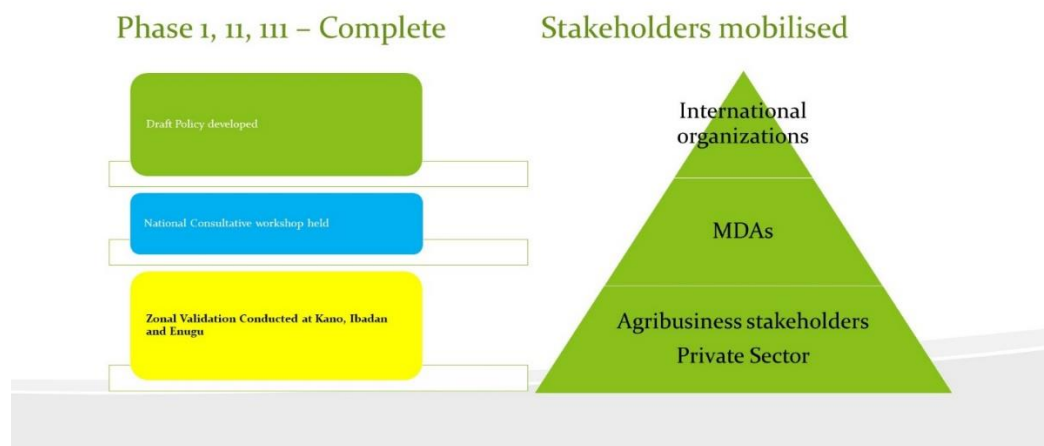


Image 2: Phases Completed⁵

Technical Session Part II: Overview of the Policy Document

This TS covered the structure and content of the policy. The policy is an estimated 70-page document, split into eight (8) key chapters, with each one focused on a specific issue. Each chapter comprises multiple parts. From Chapter 7, parts 7 and 9 – 13 cover aspects of implementation such as Legal Framework and Financing and will be developed separately.



LC, Celestine Okanya, presents the Policy Overview to participants

Chapter Summation

Chapter One – Background:

- This covers the journey to Commodity Grading, why it is important and how it can be achieved.
- Rationale/Reasons for this policy
- Status of commodity grading
- AfCFTA and commodity grading
- The aim, vision and objectives of the policy
- The implementation drivers, i.e. relevant stakeholders, and the scope of the policy.

Chapter Two – Governance Structure:

- Administration: The government or private sector organization may establish grading services to serve as a disinterested third party. The document could be validated as either a Government Policy or an NABG AgCSGS Policy. A national steering committee shall be drawn up from the government and private sector for implementation.

- Inspection, Grading, Sampling, Analysis and Certification.
- Metrology (Weights and Measures).
- Bags and Packaging.
- Regulatory requirements.

Chapter Three - The Policy Principles:

This chapter covers the key issues and guidelines, which include recommendations on the following:

- Requirements on traceability; sorting and segregation and, grading.
- Commodity Specification, size variations and sampling guidelines.
- Quality Assurance specifications and criteria.
- Warranties; restrictions on sale; and, distribution and exports.

Chapters Four & Five – Stakeholders:

- Chapter Four specifies the persons/entities that are considered stakeholders - Consumers, Consumers Associations and Commodity Based Associations.
- Chapter Four also enumerates the responsibilities of stakeholders and citizens towards the successful implementation of the policy.
- Chapter Five states the roles of specific stakeholders – Government, NABG, donor community, NGOs and OPS.

Chapter Six - Success Factors:

The following have been identified as parameters for measuring the success of the policy's implementation:

- Application of technology, specifically information technology used for data analyses, data curation and traceability.
- Government political will, investments and legal frameworks.
- Strong private sector leadership.
- Consumer awareness and protection.

Chapter Seven – Offences and Penalties:

- Market forces naturally provide the initial consequences of not complying with this policy, however, the policy will also provide strong incentives for compliance.
- Upon approval of this document as a national policy, the government shall advance this policy to develop the required legal framework. FMAFS and/or FMITI is expected to take leadership in sponsoring this policy to the FEC for approval and subsequently to Ministry of Justice for its legal text.
- The legal draft will contain all necessary penalties for the violations.

Chapter Eight - Policy Demands:

This chapter enumerates the demands placed on the government by the policy:

- Recognition of the need for an agricultural commodity standards grading system and a policy framework to support its implementation; as well as an appropriate legal framework.
- Funding - Government recognition that implementation of this system shall increase availability of financing opportunities for farming
- Full implementation - Government approval of Nigeria Agricultural Commodity Standards Grading System and its policy, and its passage into law; the development and implementation of NG-AGMARK to serve as Nigeria's commodity grade Mark for the local and international markets; and the creation of Nigeria Agricultural Marketing Support Service, NAMSS, to manage the NG-AGMARK, as well as the unified agricultural commodity bagging and packaging system control.

Pertinent Issues Raised During Q&A and Feedback Sessions

- I. Participant stated that the cotton value chain ought to champion the establishment of NG-AGMARK as traceability is a challenge in the industry. Participant noted that from 2025, all cotton exports must be bagged in biodegradable bags and that cotton farmers require training on G&S.
- II. Participant pointed out that some agencies duplicate functions regarding export certification.
- III. Participant suggested that Offences & Penalties be discussed during the National Validation Workshop.

Response: The definition of offences and penalties must be done by the Ministry of Justice. The policy can highlight practices but cannot define offences and penalties.

Participant (**FCCPC representative**) added that Consumer Protection Groups can advocate on certain malpractices but the FCCPC is the enforcer on consumer protection issues including Return, Refund & Repair Warranties.

- IV. Participant stated that black markets create inconsistencies and affect produce inspection, weakening the application of and adherence to policies.

Response: Governments drive policy. The Nigerian government has agencies set up to deal with issues – NAFDAC, SON, FCCPC – However, lack of resources hamper implementation. Ideally, an enabling environment will encourage private sector and donor party for implementation. Specifically, for the AgCSGS policy, which is a market policy centred around buying and selling, NABG has the right to drive it via OPS.

Conclusion

BEYOND VALIDATION



NABG Board Approval of Documents and report July 2024
Adoption / Approval of the policy for government implementation or
Full implementation by Private Sector with guidance from NABG
Commercialization of the value chain application of the policy
Inspection Services
Certification Services
Integrated Scheme of Agricultural Market
Market Research and information Network
NG-AGMARK
Bagging System
Traceability System
Trainings

Agrocommodities Standards Grading System

Image 3: Next Steps following National Validation of the Policy⁶

Addressing participants, DG NABG reiterated the potential for improved earnings from the agricultural value chain, stating that, “We need to close the gap with standards and grading.” The adoption of the AgCSGS Policy and its successful implementation will drive agribusiness via value addition and traceability, increased profits along the value chains, consumer satisfaction and improved access to domestic and global markets.

References:

¹ Mercy Mayaki BOP Inc. Country Representative, Goodwill Message, SCW

² Narrative Report on System and Policy Development, March 2023

³ Jafar Umar, NABG, DG, Welcome Address, AgCSGS National Validation Workshop, March 2024

⁴ Celestine Okanya, Presentation, AgCSGS National Validation Workshop, March 2024

⁵ Ditto

⁶ Ditto

ANNEXES

ANNEX I – PHOTOS FROM THE WORKSHOP





