



GOVERNMENT OF NIGER STATE

OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

STATE ACTION PLAN-II

SAP2

(2021 -2023)

Table of Content

Executive Summary

Foreword

SAP-II Formulation

I. Introduction

II. Open Government Context in Niger State

III. Leadership and Multi-stakeholder Process

Leadership

Action plan co-creation process

IV. Commitments

Commitment 1: Fiscal Transparency on Budgeting

Commitment 2: Fiscal Transparency on Procurement

Commitment 3: Fiscal Transparency on Revenue Generation

Commitment 4: Access to Information

Commitment 5: Citizens' Engagement & Empowerment

Commitment 6: Service Delivery

Commitment 7: Ease of Doing Business with impact on Insecurity

Commitment 8: Ease of Doing Business with impact on Climate Change

Commitment 9: Inclusiveness on Person with Disability PWD

Commitment 10: Inclusiveness on Gender Base Violence GBV

V. SAP-II Implementation

VI. Methodology and Sources

Annex I. Overview of Niger State Performance throughout Action Plan Development



Executive Summary: Niger State

Niger State's second action plan represents a significant step toward a sustainable open government movement. The state's co-creation process can be further strengthened by SAPII processes. Stakeholders has sought to increase the thematic from 4 to 6 and the commitments' scope and specificity from 6 to 10 in order to raise the level of ambition in the SAP2 action plan.



The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. The State Action Plan-2 (SAPII) will monitors all action plans to ensure governments follow through on commitments. Niger State joined OGP in 2018. This plan will consolidate and progresses into Niger's second action plan. The second action plan will build on previous open government initiatives and aligns with similar commitments at the federal level. The plan offers opportunities for information sharing and mutual learning. The action plan is also consistent with the 2015–2019 and 2019-2021 post Covid19 State recovery plan, which includes governance as a central theme. The action plan was co-created by the State Steering Committee of equal government and civil society representation.

However, the co-creation process of OGP had help strengthen the process of rolling out the second action plan. The second action plan consists of six thematic areas with ten commitments as follows: fiscal transparency on budgeting, procurement, revenue generation, access to information, citizen's engagement, service delivery in water, education, health and agriculture, Inclusiveness on Person with Disability & Gender Base Violence and finally Ease of Doing Business with impact on insecurity & climate Change. Commitments 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5, are expected to result in a moderate change in government practices, in such areas as budgeting, procurement, revenue generation and access to information. Commitments 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10 are relevant to the inclusion of citizens in governance and overall impact to citizens. Overall, Niger State's second action plan is set as part of a strong foundation for increasingly ambitious open government reforms in the State's future commitments.

FOREWORD



I am pleased to present Niger State Open Government Action Plan. Niger State is one of the leading states in Nigeria; it has abundant arable land, and makes enormous contribution in the area of agriculture in Nigeria. The State has improved in the areas of security and is conducive for investments.

Having successfully embarked on public governance reforms with the support of the World Bank, Niger State has taken steps to become even more open, transparent and accountable.

We are focused on achieving the following:

- Stimulate economic growth and innovation;
- Improve service delivery
- Be more responsive to the expectations of the citizens;
- Enhance government and non-state actor's collaboration; and
- Continue efforts to maintain peace and harmony.

Niger State Government is on an assured path towards increased openness and public participation.

Our budget process has been infused with the active involvement of non-governmental organizations, organized private sector and various citizen's groups.

We have encouraged our people to be more involved in government activities, take ownership and lead in their execution and monitoring - this has led to increased trust between the government and the people.

As Governor, I have insisted that all Government functionaries must demonstrate an understanding of accountability and transparency in their various activities. Niger State is happy to foster increased collaboration between the government and all other external stakeholders with the main aim of improving the living conditions of our citizens.

To achieve this, the grand challenges which Niger State Open Government Initiative aims to address includes:-

Improving Public Services:

Poor public service delivery has been one of the biggest issues standing between Government and the citizen. People have expressed their frustrations and are very skeptical with any improvement effort.

Increasing Public Integrity:

Inefficiencies and low performance in both the State and Local Government level have made it difficult to restore faith from the public. Niger state aims to engender trust in the public by minimizing these negative tendencies.

More Effectively Managing Public Resources:

For too long the public has been kept in the dark when it comes to public resources, especially revenues and outlays. The Government of Niger state aims to improve transparency through open budgeting, and more transparent public procurement system.

The above being premised, our state action plan spans the following thematic areas:

- a) ***Fiscal Transparency,***
- b) ***Right and Access to Information,***
- c) ***Citizen Engagement and Empowerment, and***
- d) ***Service Delivery.***

This Plan is our road map to enhancing transparent, accountable and citizen focused governance in the next two years.



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SAP-II FORMULATION

Based on the co-creation independent reporting mechanism IRM of the government and civil society's recommendations, formulated the development of the next second action plan 2, which guide in the implementation of the current second action plan with five key recommendations.

Five KEY IRM recommendations

Formalize the OGP process to ensure sustainability. Establish a clear role and mandate for the State Steering Committee. Increase budgetary provisions for OGP activities.
Increase documentation of the co-creation process. Update and expand Niger State OGP's repository and website to publish evidence, updates, and other documentation of the OGP processes.
Add more specific activities in milestones, to ensure commitments are verifiable. This is aimed at designing milestones that are "SMART": specific, measurable, accountable, realistic and time bound.
Increase the scope of commitment activities, to raise the level of ambition. Design commitments with a focus on the problem to be addressed rather than the instrument or document to be created.
The State Steering Committee should prioritize discussion on continuing and expanding Commitments in the second action plan. Future interactions of this commitment could focus on government responsiveness, inclusive civic participation, and facilitation of participation throughout the entire budget cycle.

I. Introduction

The Open Government Partnership is a global partnership that brings together government reformers and civil society leaders to create action plans that make governments more inclusive, responsive, and accountable. Action plan commitments built on an existing effort, identifying new steps to complete ongoing reforms by initiating action in an entirely new area. Niger State OGP's second action plan 2 (SAP-II) will monitor all action plans to ensure governments complete its commitments. Non-State actors and government leaders will use these evaluations to reflect on the progress and determine the actions which impacted people's lives.

It should be recalled that Niger State joined the OGP in 2018. This plan covers Niger State's second action for 2021–2023. The SAP-II of Niger State OGP was conducted and evaluated by the State and non-State actors. The aim is to inform ongoing dialogue around development and implementation of future commitments in the State.

II. Open Government Context in Niger State

This is the second action plan developed by Niger State, as a subnational Government in Nigeria to join the global OGP program. Facing the issues of transparency and accountability, Niger State adopted the open government initiatives as it joined OGP. These includes online publication of the state budget and audited annual financial statements. To build on this progress, this plan contains a wide range of commitments to improve participatory budgeting, open contracting, increase revenue generation and utilization, access to information, and a citizens' engagement and empowerment, service delivery and a newly included commitments of inclusive person with disability, gender base violence and ease of doing business with impact on climate change and insecurity.

Nigeria joined OGP in 2016, by 2018, Niger State joined, becoming the six in the 36 states of Nigeria to join the global OGP program, Niger State is among the 18 subnational entities globally and seven states in Africa to join OGP. Niger State had adopted open government initiatives as it joined OGP, such as online publication of the state budget and publication of audited annual financing statements within six months of financial year-end account, these initiatives had paved way for Niger State. A letter of intent to join, was submitted by **Governor Abubakar Sani Bello**, in 2018 and OGP was inaugurated the same year in the State.

Background

Nigeria has three levels of Government: Federal, State, and Local. The three levels are interdependent and distinct. Niger State is one of the 36 state Governments in Nigeria. The State covers approximately 76,363.2 square kilometer of landmass and has an estimated population of 5.5 million people, Niger State has 25 Local Government Areas. The state government is divided into an executive branch, led by the Governor; the legislative branch, led by the Speaker, State House of Assembly; and the judicial branch led by the State Chief Judge.

The Speaker heads the State House of Assembly. The Assembly has 27 members, who are elected by citizens from their state constituencies. The state legislature has three major responsibilities: (i) enacting laws at the state level, (ii) overseeing the other arms of government, and (iii) appropriating all monies for projects and programs for the three arms of government. It also has investigative powers and can call the highest executive and judicial officers to appear before it to answer or testify on any issues of public concern and interest.

The judiciary is the third branches of Niger State Government. The judiciary is made up of judges, non-judge staff members of the state judicial service, courts, and tribunals. The State High Court is the final appellate judicial authority and is headed by the State chief judge. The judiciary interprets, applies, and directs the enforcement of the laws, customs, and conventions that make up the state's legal system. Its sphere also extends to the protection or preservation of contracts, rights, and freedoms that define the sociopolitical and economic space of Niger state. The executive and the legislature branches are elected after every four years, under a multiparty democracy.

Transparency and Access to Information

Niger State, like the Federal Government of Nigeria, has recently sought to dismantle the culture of government secrecy that was instilled by years of military rule. In 2011, the Federal Republic of Nigeria passed the Freedom of Information Act, which obliges a wide range of public authorities to provide information they hold, the bill has a broad scope, however, Nigeria has struggled to fully implement the law. However, as of 2018, the Freedom of Information Act did not apply to state agencies. Therefore, Niger State Government is considering domesticating the Freedom of Information Bill, to be forwarded to the State House of Assembly

Non State Actors

The right to civic participation in Niger state has been remarkable and this is a great stride towards increasing channels for civic participation in government. Notably, the state government engaged citizens on reporting state project spending and implementation, additionally, non-State organizations (CSOs) provide a level of social accountability in Niger State OGP. Non-State actor's coalitions in the State scrutinize government activities and request explanations from public officials as part of co-creation process.

Accountability

Niger State have also made a giant stride to address accountability in recent years, however, addressing these challenges, in the second State action plans, Niger State OGP Secretariat incorporated several commitments related to accountability, information sharing among agencies, and open contracting procedure. Niger State has taken the second action as subnational level to

address accountability, such as enactment of the Fiscal Responsibility Commission Law to increase accountability and transparency in the public sector.

Transparency

Niger State executive proposed budget, enacted the budget, produced year-end report and audit the report publicly available as part of the State transparency initiative, through an open budget commitment action plans. Similarly, Niger State has room for growth in budget transparency and participation. Niger State scored a remarkable achievement in access to budget documents, such as the budget call circular, draft budget estimates, budget appropriation law, citizens' budget engagement, budget execution reports, and state auditor's report. Niger State has made progress with open government in recent years, the 2021-2023 *Open State Government Engagement* of Niger State is based on (i) whether the state will consolidate on its achievements, (ii) whether citizens have access to budget information, and (iii) whether citizens have access to contract information. The engagement notes that Niger State had published its budget online for years and had published contractual details online for state projects, such as the location, amount and contractors. The state government will also publish its audit accounts for 2021-2023. Niger State has made notable efforts to promote procurement transparency, the State public procurement law established the Public Procurement Board. The state also created a procurement portal that seeks to provide contract information according to the Open Contracting Data Standard.

III. Leadership and Multi-Stakeholder Process

Niger State instituted a co-creation process for its first and second action plan, the State Steering Committee and Technical Working Group meetings, as well as a consultation, facilitated strong public participation. The state OGP Secretariat continue to strengthen its co-creation process by formalizing OGP institutions and increasing documentation of deliberation and developments during the first and second action plan formation and implementation.

Leadership

This section describes the OGP leadership and institutional context of OGP in Niger State. The State and non-State actors coordinates Niger OGP activities, through the Co-Chairs of both State and non-State Actors representatives, the Government OGP point of contact (POC) is the OGP secretariat with a Focal Person (Director General or DG), which is responsible for engaging directly with government ministries, departments, and agencies that have commitments in the action plan via designated contact points that is co-chairs in those institutions to strengthen OGP coordination with representatives of non-State actors. The OGP contact points in relevant ministries hold responsibility for the joint development, implementation, and monitoring of the commitments of their respective ministries. State and non-State actor's representatives describe the POC as highly accessible and engaged, as they participate in most of the OGP activities organized by State and non-State actors. Niger State Executive Council approved the first OGP action plan in 2018, although OGP is coordinated centrally by the State OGP Secretariat, the implementation of the action plan rests with the State and non-State actors that drafted the commitments relevant to the State mandates. Presently, in the first and second action plans, there are six thematic and eight commitments leading the implementation of the State OGP action plan, with budget lines directly allotted for OGP activities.

Action plan co-creation process

Level of Public Influence

The SAP-II adapted the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) "Spectrum of Participation" to apply to Niger OGP, the spectrum shows the potential level of public influence on the contents of the action plan.

Level of public influence		During development of the 2nd action plan
Empower	The Government engaged public in decision-making.	✓
Collaborate	There was public dialogue in setting the agenda.	✓
Involve	The State & non-State actors gave feedback on how public inputs were considered.	✓
Consult	The public give their inputs.	✓
Inform	The State & non-State actors provided the public with information on the action plan.	✓
Consultation	There was consultation	✓

OGP Participation and Co-Creation Standards

2021-2023, Niger State OGP has adopted the Participation and Co-Creation Standards to support the participation and co-creation process by State and non-State actors at all stages of the OGP cycle. Niger State OGP-participatory process is expected to meet these standards, the standards aim to raise ambition and quality of participation during development, implementation, and review of OGP second action plan in the State.

Multi-stakeholder forum

Niger State had achieved an “Involved” level of participation in the co-creation of its first action plan and will continue to consolidate in the second action plan. The state’s multi-stakeholder forum is called the State Steering Committee (SSC) and the SSC constitutes the consultation platform for constant dialogue between the State and non-State actors, in order to shape the OGP agenda in the state. In the co-creation process, the SSC had 22 members, of 11 State and another 11 of Non-State actors. The co-creation process began with an SSC that determine the thematic and Commitments implementation drawn from action plan. Non-State representatives acknowledged Government efforts to communicate regarding OGP and the action plan’s development, the government largely provided responses to non-state actors’ feedback on the action plan technical working group engagements. The state OGP Secretariat had continued to strengthen the co-creation process by formalizing OGP institutions and increasing documentation, particularly, the creation and management of the State OGP website. The SAP-II will move forward an improve performance in these areas, the following actions will be considered SAP-II:

- *Improve documentation and information dissemination:* SAP-II will regularly update the OGP Niger website with developments and publish documents related to the OGP process, consultation, and action plans. The second action plan will provide materials in accessible format for local languages. The website can also be used to collect public input on action plans and to provide government responses to the public.

- *Establish a legal framework and increase budgetary provisions:* Niger State SAP-II will consider passing a legislation to provide a legal mandate for OGP activities. This would ensure continuity not only for OGP commitments, but also for other transparency and open governance initiatives in the state. The Government should also consider increasing budgetary provisions to facilitate the implementation of the second action plan activities.

- *Increase grassroots civic education and awareness:* The State and non-State actors in the second action plan will intensify citizens' education on open government processes, especially at the grassroots and local languages. The State and non-State actors should make available more platforms for citizen-government engagement beyond SSC and TWG meetings, which have limited reach to the general public.

IV. Commitments

Niger State OGP second action plan includes concrete commitments over a two-year period. The second action plan shared the existing efforts related to open government in the State, including specific strategies and ongoing programs. The State's commitments are appropriate due to circumstances and challenges, that are peculiar to the State. Niger OGP second action plan commitments is relevant to OGP values detailed in the *OGP Articles of Governance and Open Government Declaration* signed by the Governor as an OGP-participating subnational.

General Overview of the Commitments

Niger State second action plan features ten commitments in the areas of fiscal transparency on budgeting, procurement, revenue generation, access to information, citizen's engagement, service delivery in water, education, health and agriculture, Inclusiveness on Person with Disability & Gender Base Violence and finally Ease of Doing Business with impact on insecurity & climate Change. The ten commitments are expected to result in a moderate change in government practices. All commitments are relevant to Niger OGP values and are specific enough to be verifiable, the second action plan would benefit the intended actions and outcomes set as a strong foundation for increasingly ambitious open government reforms in future commitments.

Noteworthy commitments

Commitment description	Moving forward	Status at the end of implementation cycle
Commitment 1 Fiscal Transparency on Budgeting: Increase budget transparency and citizen participation through Community inputs of the state budget process	To maximize this commitment's impact in the 2 nd action plan, Niger State Planning Commission, who processes citizen's participation and input, should inform citizens of how their feedback was incorporated into the state budget. NSPC, should encourage citizen's involvement on budget, to be developed inclusively, ensuring that citizen's contributions are heard. The State government should provide citizens' guides and budgets in local languages and in formats accessible to non-literate citizens.	Continuous process.
Commitment 2 Fiscal Transparency on Procurement: Implement the Open Contracting Standard to improve accountability and transparency in the procurement processes	For effective implementation in SAP-II, the Public Procurement Board should ensure contract information is simplified, published in a user-friendly format, and available in offline formats. The SAP-II will expand procurement data to cover all Local Government Councils and streamlining complaint and dispute mechanisms to reduce the length of bureaucratic procedures.	Continuous process

<p>Commitment 3 Fiscal Transparency on Revenue Generation: Implement policy on increase revenue generation, utilization and accountability in tax processes</p>	<p>For effective implementation in SAP-II, Niger State Internal Revenue Service will ensure tax information is simplified, published in a user-friendly format, and available in offline formats. The 2nd action plan will expand tax data to cover all Local Government Councils and streamlining complaint and dispute mechanisms to reduce the length of bureaucratic procedures on tax processes.</p>	<p>Continuous process</p>
<p>Commitment 4 Access to Information: Pass Bill on Freedom of Information</p>	<p>For effective implementation of SAP-II, in educating civil society, media, and the public on their right to information. The State Government will produce simplified and translated versions of the FOI law and publicize them online and offline, this commitment should consider domesticating the law, with a dedicated Freedom of Information (FOI) Act Unit, staffed with trained officers.</p>	<p>Under consideration</p>
<p>Commitment 5 Citizens' Engagement & Empowerment: Increase and strengthen citizens-government engagement through multiple channels, such as Citizens Participation in Governance & Digital Technology platform (website)</p>	<p>To amplify this commitment's open government impact in SAP-II, the State Government will provide public responses to citizen's inputs and feedback received through participation in governance and other digital channels (radio, TV and social media), Niger State OGP website and the State official website will be enhance. SAP-II will proactively upload relevant information on the websites. The State Government will explore how to strengthen the legal mandate to respond to citizen feedback on technology platforms.</p>	<p>Continuous process</p>
<p>Commitment 6 Service Delivery: Improve Public Service Delivery in Education, Health, Water and Agricultural sector of the State.</p>	<p>Moving forward in the second action plan, the State Government will continue with its whole school's development approach of rehabilitating and renovating secondary schools, and also accommodating the newly transited Government's projects, programs and policies in 2023. SAP-II will also pursue the policy of upgrading the 274 wards Primary Healthcare centers (PHCs). The State water and sewage corporation should leverage on private sector participation in water sector reform and the State Agricultural mechanization scheme should be pursued rigorously in the second action plan.</p>	<p>Continuous process</p>
<p>Commitment 7 Ease of Doing Business with Impact on Insecurity:</p>	<p>Niger State SAP-II co-creation process will push for the institutionalization of community policing, improvement and enhancement of vigilante corps to address insecurity and humanitarian affairs to tackle IDPs for improving the State business-enabling environment and attracting and facilitating new investment in the State. SAP-II will be mapping businesses for licensing, business premises registration, access to land, construction permits and contract agreement vetting, with the view of reducing procedural delay and transaction cost.</p>	<p>New Commitment</p>

	SAP-II will be simplifying and automating processes that allow and reduce corruption.	
Commitment 8 Ease of Doing Business with Impact on Climate Change:	Niger State SAP-II co-creation process will push for the institutionalization of renewable energy use, improvement and enhancement of forest rangers to address and tackle poachers in destroying the environment for improving the State business-enabling environment and attracting and facilitating new investment in the State. SAP-II will be mapping businesses for licensing, business premises registration, access to land, construction permits and contract agreement vetting, with the view of reducing procedural delay and transaction cost. SAP-II will be simplifying and automating processes that allow and reduce corruption.	New Commitment
Commitment 9 Inclusiveness in Person with Disability (PWD):	SAP-II inclusiveness on PWD will improve civic participation in the state. This commitment is relevant to public participation and inclusion as it enables identified poor and vulnerable citizens, people living with disabilities to benefit from social services provided by government as a matter of right. This commitment is relevant to Public Accountability because it provides mechanism and systems to track social services provided by Government. This creates an open channel to report on services that are not efficiently provided and feedback to government for action by the non-state actors. SAP-II is geared to achieve credible social register of poor and vulnerable households by engaging community based targeting teams CBTT to saturate the entire State.	New commitment
Commitment 10 Inclusiveness in Gender Base Violence (GBV):	SAP-II inclusiveness on GBV will improve civic participation in the state. This commitment is relevant to public participation and inclusion as it enables identified gender inequality and vulnerable citizens, people living with gender violence to benefit from social services provided by government as a matter of right. This commitment is relevant to Public Accountability because it provides mechanism and systems to track social services provided by Government. This creates an open channel to report on services that are not efficiently provided and feedback to government for action by the non-state actors. SAP-II is geared to achieve credible social register for unequal gender and vulnerable by engaging community based targeting teams CBTT to saturate the entire State.	New Commitment

Commitment I: Fiscal Transparency in Budgeting

This commitment in Niger State, SAP-II consolidate and ensured that citizens participate and make inputs into the budget process starting with the pre-budget statement, and inclusion of zonal citizen's stakeholder consultative budget preparation (participatory budget and budgeting process), the executive budget proposal and budget debate through public hearings at Niger State House of Assembly, implementation, monitoring and reporting of the budget. The Budget information is always made accessible to all and available on time.

Milestones:

1. State budget calendar and engagement of stakeholders inputs from the state and non-state actors with public on budget preparation by the Planning Commission
2. Conduct budget town hall meetings and development of a framework for citizen's effective prioritization of their inputs and needs in the Community.
3. Publication, publicizing and distributing citizens guide and citizens budget to the citizens both online and offline
4. Issuance of quarterly budget performance and timely response to reported projects in the Monitoring and Implementation mechanism on budget implementation

Lead institution: Niger State Planning Commission

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

Commitment I in SAP-II aims to ensure that budget planning, approval, implementation, monitoring, and reporting calendar meet the needs of citizens. It also seeks to ensure that citizens have open access to budget information and that the information is in a usable format and provided in a timely manner by Niger State Planning Commission.

The performance of Niger state regarding provision of public budget information was moderate prior to this commitment, this commitment is relevant to the OGP values of access to information, citizen's engagement and use of technology and innovation for transparency and accountability. By engaging stakeholder's inputs in budget by the Planning Commission (Milestone 1) and developing a framework for citizens to prioritize their needs in the community through NSHoA public hearing (Milestone 2), the commitment contributes to improving citizen's participation in budget conduct. However, these milestones have enhanced Niger OGP values, citizens were engaged in the preparation of budget process. Milestone 3 aims to publish, publicize and distribute a citizens' guide and citizens' budget online and offline during the SAP-II implementation. It is relevant to improving access to information to citizens of Niger State and the use of technology and innovation for transparency and accountability.

Milestone 4 in SAP-II is aim at ensuring a timely State and non-state actors in Niger to response on citizen reports of state projects through use of a Monitoring and Implementation co-creation process. This milestone is directly relevant to citizen's participation because it commits the state actors to respond to requests from non-state actors and citizens for information on government projects, these mechanisms help ensure that government officials respond and give feedback to citizens, it also empower citizens to hold public officials accountable if officials do not respond or give feedback to citizens' requests.

Commitment I is expected to have a transformative potential impact on government practices, this commitment seeks to address citizen engagement and participation in the budget cycle across the preparation, approval, implementation, and auditing stages.

SAP-II Steps

The State's second action plan will prioritize this commitment that lay the groundwork for a significant opening of the budget process and potential future interactions with the following consideration:

- Niger State Planning Commission should inform citizens on how their feedback was incorporated into the state budget.
- The State actors should establish mechanism to ensure citizens inputs are developed inclusively, with an emphasis on ensuring community members are heard.
- The State actors should provide citizens' guides and budgets translated into local languages and in formats accessible to non-literate citizens.
- The State actors should establish an enforcement mechanism for failure to respond to citizens input through the Monitoring and Implementation Website Portal.
- The State actors should formulate future work plan of this commitment to ensure citizen inputs in all stages of the budget process.

Commitment 2: Fiscal Transparency in Procurement Process

Niger State Government is committed to progressive implementation of open contracting and the adoption of the open contracting data standards to enhance transparency, accountability and citizen engagement in public procurement and fiscal transparency, which will be continue and consolidated in this SAP-II.

Milestones:

1. Increase participation of the citizens and enhanced trust in the procurement process.
 - i. Improve public services.
 - ii. Increasing public integrity and accountability.
 - iii. Effective management of public resources.
2. Increase in contracts awarded through open competitive bidding.
3. Increase in the number of citizens participating in the procurement process by State and non-state actors
 - i. Increase in the flow of information to the public on procurement issues
 - ii. Development of a procurement data bank.
 - iii. Establishment of procurement portal

Lead institutions: Niger State Public Procurement Board

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

Commitment 2 in SAP-II is aim at ensuring full implementation of the fiscal transparency in public procurement processes, to improve accountability and transparency of the procurement process, making information on procurement publicly available, the state's public procurement law establishes the Niger State Public Procurement Board. The State Government has established the legislative and administrative framework to ensure fiscal transparency in procurement process. The state has an open contracting data portal that publishes contract data online. However, Niger State SAP-II will continue and consolidate the portal through a functional and accessible format to users.

The commitment entails progressive proactive disclosure of uniform procurement information by the State actors to citizens through the use of the Open Data Contracting Standard (OCDS), the commitment is aim at ensuring that the public can participate in the procurement process to improve accountability and transparency in contracting processes. This will enable citizens to ask questions about compliance with the OCDS and request information on procurement, the commitment fosters citizen's participation by demanding a bill of quantities from project contractors and to also notify the government of non-compliance. Niger State OGP SAP-II will ensure the State tenders for contracts are usually placed on ministry, department and agencies websites as well as in newspapers.

This commitment aligns with Niger State OGP values of citizen's engagement, access to information, and fiscal transparency and accountability. The milestones in this commitment are specific enough to be verifiable, the development of a procurement data bank and establishment of a procurement portal in SAP-II will creates mechanisms to increase public engagement in the procurement process. Specifically, an online feedback platform to allow citizens to report on procurement and open data compliance promises to citizens will be enhance in SAP-II through a non-state actors monitoring on open contracting compliance. All three milestones increase non-state actor's involvement in the prequalification phase for contractors, the tender process, and the monitoring of projects. This commitment is expected to have a transformative potential impact on government practices. The commitment aims to create an enabling environment and establish prerequisites for consistent and sustainable open contracting data standards in Niger State OGP SAP-II. Citizens will be updated through an increase flow of information on the principles of open contracting.

SAP-II Steps

Moving forward in the second action plan implementation of the Open Contracting Data Standard, the State actors should consider the following actions:

- Ensure that contract information provided to the public is simplified and published in a more user-friendly format, so citizens can understand it fully. The information should also be published and distributed offline, given internet accessibility deficiencies.
- Expand the procurement data made available to cover all the Local Government Councils in the state.
- Streamline the mechanisms for complaints or disputes over procurement decisions to reduce the length of bureaucratic procedures.

Commitment 3: Fiscal Transparency in Revenue Generation & Utilization

SAP-II will enhance the bureaucratic processes in government institutions involved in Revenue Generation, the second action plan will address the challenges and difficulties of potential and existing tax payers to ensure more effective and transparent revenue and it utilization. SAP-II will strengthen revenue generation by improving the low awareness of the people on its impact of revenue in public service delivery in Niger State.

Milestones:

1. Increase revenue generation through passage of new finance revenue bill to NSHoA
2. Establishment of comprehensive data base of tax payers for more people and businesses to pay their taxes
3. Harmonization of revenue generation process to avoid multiple taxation by having a voluntary tax compliance
4. Elimination of multiple taxation by addressing people complaining of double taxation

Lead institutions: Niger State Internal Revenue Service

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

Commitment 3 in SAP-II seeks to initiate and implement reforms that will increase internally generated revenue in Niger State through linkage between the public and the Government. Despite Niger State's good performance in revenue generation, there are still bureaucratic bottlenecks that make it difficult for potential and existing tax payers to pay. Commitment 3 in the second action plan seeks to establish an enabling environment for revenue and its utilization in Niger State. The streamlining and harmonizing the tax regime will be readily verifiable. Milestones 2 and 3 promote establishment of comprehensive data base of tax payers for more people and businesses to pay their taxes and harmonization of revenue generation process to avoid multiple taxation by having a voluntary tax compliance will pursue in SAP-II. Information needed for tax campaign to facilitate increased public engagement in tax reforms will be enhance in the second action plan. Similarly, milestone 4 which is elimination of multiple taxation by addressing people complaining of double taxation will inform the policy makers toward a change in government practices in the State taxation. SAP-II milestones 1 and 2, will fully implement and carry out expected result in minor changes in government revenue generation practices. SAP-II milestones 2, 3, and 4 relate to Niger State OGP value of Service Delivery, as they call for providing tax services to the public. Milestone 1 promises to transform and increase public revenue through a new State finance bill passage by the State House of Assembly (NSHoA).

SAP-II Steps

If this commitment in the second action plan is continued, it will place access to information and service delivery in revenue generation and utilization at the center of tax reforms. The SAP-II approach will include a tax portal that will be a public-private web platform that collates information on the state's revenue and its utilization. The portal should provide information on tax registration process, fees, business permit, tax exemptions and other tax-related information.

Commitment 4: Access to Information

This commitment in SAP-II seeks to promote and establish the legal right of the public to request and receive information about the activities and functions of the Government and establish the processes that mark the pathway to the right by members of the public to access government records and procedure to exercise such right.

Milestones:

1. Develop access to information policy, administrative, legal and legislative instruments by domesticating the Freedom of Information Act through the co-creation process by Niger State House of Assembly.
2. Identify, select, appoint and train access to information desk officers.
3. To design and develop an Executive Order on access to information and public participation of Bill Passed into Law and assented by the Governor.

Lead institutions: Niger State Ministry of Justice

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

This commitment in SAP-II seeks to promote and establish the legal right of the public to request and receive information about the activities and functions of government. The second action plan will also develop adequate administrative, legal and legislative instruments for effective implementation of the Bill on Freedom of Information. While the Nigerian Constitution guarantees freedom of information, most public officials and state institutions determine when and at what time to provide information. State actors in Niger State, as in most states in Nigeria, are obliged upon appointment to be guided by various oaths of secrecy under which they undertake not to disclose any information which comes to them in the course of the performing their duties.

Resultantly, a culture of secrecy exists among civil servants and public officials, available government-held information in combination with capacity for citizens to engage in the political process, has enhanced citizens to demand improvement in service delivery in Niger State. At present, the state does not have a legal framework that mandates the disclosure of information held by publicly funded institutions, the Government of Nigeria passed a federal Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill in 2011. However, the Court of Appeal ruled that the FOI law applies only to federal institutions.

This commitment acknowledges that the freedom of information law does not guarantee access to government-held information by the public, the state government has a website, <https://www.nigerstate.gov.ng> and <https://nigerstate.gov.ng>, where some information, such as laws, budgets, and procurement process is available to the public. However, the government do not respond to individual requests for other information held by the government in a timely manner. SAP-II will seek to redress the challenges where government officials will cooperate to provide requested information.

This commitment in the second action plan is considered to have a potential transformative impact on open government in Niger State, if the Bill on Freedom of Information would be passed, it will be a

significant achievement toward increased access to information in SAP-II. The commitment also recognizes the need to educate public officials on the importance and process of responding to public information requests.

SAP-II Steps

Niger State OGP SAP-II will integrate the action plan through resuscitation of FOI bill with more emphasis on the following:

- **Building the capacity of non-state actors, the media, and the public:** The commitment's aim to emphasize the need for freedom of information (FOI) law as well as citizens' rights and responsibilities under the law. It will also commit to building the capacity of citizens to use the law to demand the improvement of service delivery.

* SAP-II Running public awareness campaigns on the FOI law: One way to reach people is through awareness-raising activities, for example, posters, flyers, radio and television announcements, drama program, blogs, websites, Facebook, Twitter and mobile phone apps.

- **SAP-II Producing a simplified or abridged version of the FOI law:** A simplified version would enable citizens to understand the provisions of the law and increase the use of the law. The publication will be written in several local languages to make it easy for people to understand the provisions in the FOI law. The document will be publicized using both online and offline channels.

- **SAP-II Identifying a sanction to ensure compliance with the FOI law:** Adding sanctions to the commitment can strengthen its alignment with the public accountability OGP value.

- **SAP-II Establishing administrative structures to deliver on the FOI law:** Such structures will include a dedicated FOI Act Unit staffed with trained officers and governed by associated procedures.

Commitment 5: Citizens' Engagement & Empowerment

SAP-II will ensure a sustainable interaction platform for citizen's engagement and feedback to enhance culture of openness, in order to empower people to make informed decisions about their lives or provide them the basis for challenging policies which may include but not limited to:

- i. To give citizens a voice in governance and make government more responsive to their priorities
- ii. To build mutual trust and confidence between government and citizens
- iii. To include all members of the society including people living with disabilities and to improve service delivery."

Milestones:

1. Institutionalize citizen's forum in key MDAs
2. Advocacy in local languages for people to report concerns through town hall meetings and radio phone-in
3. Adopt a technology based citizen's feedback mechanism through a portal on the OGP website and radio contact program.
4. Increased participation of citizens in governance
5. Increased responsiveness by government to the people's needs.

Lead institutions: Ministry of Information & Strategy

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

This commitment in SAP-II is aimed at increasing and broadening the citizen-government engagement through the provision of multiple feedback channels. Like many states in Nigeria, Niger State had channels to share information and engage with citizens about ongoing government projects. This commitment in the second action plan seeks to use citizen's engagement platforms such as radio phone-in and advocacy to improve upon, the commitment relates to the OGP values of access to information for transparency and accountability. The SAP-II milestone 1 aims to institutionalize citizen's forum in key MDAs. Citizens are generally aware of these resources, milestone 3 is aimed at adopting a technology based citizen's feedback mechanism through a portal on the OGP website or radio contact program, in order to sensitize citizens digitally. The commitment also aims to establish a citizen feedback and provide technology feedback tools in term of phone-in program. The commitment is generally specific enough to be verifiable. However, SAP-II milestone 5 would benefit from a more concrete description of increasing responsiveness by government to the people's needs. If fully implemented, this commitment in SAP-II is expected to have a transformative impact on open government practices in Niger State.

SAP-II Steps

However, this commitment in SAP-II will improve on how the government track or respond to citizen feedback. Government responses to citizen requests are not guaranteed, with no legislation compelling public officials to respond and consider the inputs made by citizens on government projects, however SAP-II will enhance all avenue available to citizens. To amplify this commitment on open government impact, state and non-state actors should consider requiring a government response to citizen feedback through technology platforms. SAP-II will mandate the government to share responses publicly and proactively by disclosing relevant information.

Commitment 6: Service Delivery

SAP-II will ensure an improve public service delivery in education, health, water and agricultural sector of the state by enhancing culture of openness, in order to improve efficiency through the observance of service rules and regulations which may include but not limited to:

- i. To improve public service
- ii. To improve standard of living of the people in the public service delivery
- iii. To improve better service delivery by reducing waste and abuse.

Milestones:

1. Develop service charters in education, health, water and Agriculture
2. Reactivate of Servicom Directorate
3. Ensure development of teacher education policy as measure to address poor teacher quality in the state.

Lead institutions: Office of the Head of Service

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

This commitment in SAP-II is aimed at making the institutions more responsive to their responsibilities. There has been a decline in the quality of service delivery in the identified key sectors, with complaint on service failure, which the second action plan will address.

SAP-II Steps

However, this commitment in the second action plan is aim to improve public service and standard of living of the people in the public service delivery through better service delivery by reducing waste and abuses. SAP-II will implement by developing the service charters in education, health, water and agriculture and by reactivating the Servicom Directorate of the Office of the Head of Service. Also, in SAP-II, the commitment aims to ensure developing teacher education policy as measure to address poor teacher quality in the state.

Commitment 7: Ease of Doing Business with Impact on Insecurity

Niger State SAP-II has developed ease of doing business with impact on insecurity as part of Investment Promotion through a resourceful and coordinated fight against insecurity as medium to attracting investors and related activities in the State.

Milestones:

1. Improving the State business-enabling environment by fighting insecurity in all ramification
2. Attracting and facilitating new investment in the State.

Lead institutions: Ministry of Commerce & Investment in conjunction with Ministry of Security & Humanitarian Affairs

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

In the context of SAP-II in the State, this is a new commitment in investment sector being review as a key sectors by one stop shop investment agency as high potential for: • Agriculture & Agro-allied • Construction & housing • Solid minerals & mining • Transport & logistics • Energy (with a focus on renewable energy) • Health • Education • Services & ICT • Tourism.

Fighting insecurity and addressing the internal displace person IDPs will add to value chain analysis undertaken by the government that provides further granularity. The new commitment identified that fighting insecurity and addressing the issues of IDPs will enhance the value chains as a short-term high potential for the State to attract investors in: Mining, leather, staple crops, high value crops, poultry, ICT and renewable energy. Medium term high potential value chains include textile/cotton, meat, packaging, kaolin/ball clay & ceramics, sand glass & glass.

SAP-II Steps

Niger State SAP-II co-creation process will push for the institutionalization of community policing, improvement and enhancement of vigilante corps to address insecurity and humanitarian affairs to tackle IDPs for improving the State business-enabling environment and attracting and facilitating new investment in the State. SAP-II will be mapping businesses for licensing, business premises registration, access to land, construction permits and contract agreement vetting, with the view of reducing procedural delay and transaction cost. SAP-II will be simplifying and automating processes that allow and reduce corruption.

Commitment 8: Ease of Doing Business with Impact on Climate Change

Niger State SAP-II has developed ease of doing business with impact on climate change as part of Investment Promotion through a resourceful and coordinated fight against flooding and deforestation as medium to attracting investors and related activities in the State.

Milestones:

1. Improving the State business-enabling environment by fighting flooding & deforestation in all ramifications
2. Attracting and facilitating new investment in the State.

Lead institutions: Ministry of Commerce & Investment in conjunction with Ministry of Security & Humanitarian Affairs and also Environment

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

In the context of SAP-II in the State, this is a new commitment in investment sector being review as a key sectors by one stop shop investment agency as high potential for: • Agriculture & Agro-allied • Construction & housing • Solid minerals & mining • Transport & logistics • Energy (with a focus on renewable energy) • Health • Education • Services & ICT • Tourism.

Fighting flooding and addressing the deforestation issues will add to value chain analysis undertaken by the government that provides further impact on investors. The new commitment identified that fighting flooding and addressing the issues of deforestation will enhance the value chains as a short-term high potential for the State to attract investors in: Mining, leather, staple crops, high value crops, poultry, ICT and renewable energy. Medium term high potential value chains include textile/cotton, meat, packaging, kaolin/ball clay & ceramics, sand glass & glass.

SAP-II Steps

Niger State SAP-II co-creation process will push for the institutionalization of renewable energy use, improvement and enhancement of forest rangers to address and tackle poachers in destroying the environment for improving the State business-enabling environment and attracting and facilitating new investment in the State. SAP-II will be mapping businesses for licensing, business premises registration, access to land, construction permits and contract agreement vetting, with the view of reducing procedural delay and transaction cost. SAP-II will be simplifying and automating processes that allow and reduce corruption.

Commitment 9: Inclusiveness on Person with Disability PWD

Niger State SAP-II has developed inclusion on strengthening the Social Protection System in the State. Despite several efforts by the government, significant gaps in the provision of social protection services still exist in the state. Social protection is about upholding human dignity and promoting the overall wellbeing of individuals amidst socioeconomic adversity for person with disability. This commitment intends to bridge identified gaps in rendering social protection services for the PWD.

Challenges of PWD in the State

- High poverty levels in the state.
- Incoherent strategy towards addressing poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion.
- Poor access to education, health and nutrition

Action

SAP-II has committed itself by putting in place a social protection inclusiveness for PWD as a dedicated commitment to social protection program. The second action plan will Register person with disability as a primary database of the poor and vulnerable household for all pro-poor interventions.

Milestones:

1. Establish an agency for social protection of PWD.
2. Establish a social security trust fund for PWD.
3. Develop and forward an Executive Bill on Social Protection to the State House of Assembly.

Lead institutions: Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

A life of dignity for all residents of Niger State is paramount by reducing the level of poverty in the state. SAP-II will increase the number of vulnerable residents able to access social protection services on the basis of right, the plan will increase the number of beneficiaries who graduate from the social register on account of improved standard of living. SAP-II will provide a life of dignity for all Primary Policy Area of Inclusion, Safety Nets & Economic Inclusion, Primary Sector Aid and Public Services for PWD in the state.

SAP-II Steps

SAP-II inclusiveness on PWD will improve civic participation in the state. This commitment is relevant to public participation and inclusion as it enables identified poor and vulnerable citizens, people living with disabilities to benefit from social services provided by government as a matter of right. This commitment is relevant to Public Accountability because it provides mechanism and systems to track social services provided by Government. This creates an open channel to report on services that are not efficiently provided and feedback to government for action by the non-state actors. SAP-II is geared to achieve credible social register of poor and vulnerable households by engaging community based targeting teams CBTT to saturate the entire State.

Commitment 10: Inclusiveness on Gender Base Violence GBV

Niger State SAP-II has developed inclusiveness on strengthening the Social Protection System in the State. Despite several efforts by the government, significant gaps in the provision of social protection services still exist in the state. Social protection is about upholding human dignity and promoting the overall wellbeing of individuals amidst socioeconomic adversity for Gender Base Violence. This commitment intends to bridge identified gaps in rendering social protection services for the GBV.

Challenges of GBV in the State

- High moral decadence levels in the state.
- Incoherent strategy towards addressing gender inequality, vulnerability, and social exclusion.
- Poor access to education, health and nutrition.

Action

SAP-II has committed itself by putting in place a social protection inclusiveness for GBV as a dedicated commitment to social protection program. The second action plan will Register person with GBV problems and issues as a primary database for pro-active interventions.

Milestones:

4. Establish an agency for social protection of GBV.
5. Establish a social security trust fund for GBV.
6. Develop and forward an Executive Bill on Social Protection to the State House of Assembly.

Lead institutions: Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

Start Date: 2021

End Date: 2023

Context and Objectives

A life of dignity for all residents of Niger State is paramount by reducing the level of moral decadence in the state. SAP-II will increase the number of vulnerable gender inequality able to access social protection services on the basis of right, the plan will increase the number of beneficiaries who graduate from the social register on account of improved standard gender equality. SAP-II will provide a life of dignity for all Primary Policy Area of Inclusion, Safety Nets & Economic Inclusion, Primary Sector Aid and Public Services for GBV in the state.

SAP-II Steps

SAP-II inclusiveness on GBV will improve civic participation in the state. This commitment is relevant to public participation and inclusion as it enables identified gender inequality and vulnerable citizens, people living with gender violence to benefit from social services provided by government as a matter of right. This commitment is relevant to Public Accountability because it provides mechanism and systems to track social services provided by Government. This creates an open channel to report on services that are not efficiently provided and feedback to government for action by the non-state actors. SAP-II is geared to achieve credible social register for unequal gender and vulnerable by engaging community based targeting teams CBTT to saturate the entire State.

V. SAP-II Implementation

SAP-II implementation of action plan will be guided in the existing Niger State OGP reform process. The implementation will be through a thorough and interactive dialogue between State and non-state actors. Niger State OGP process is focus on formalizing and documenting open government efforts, by inculcating reforms in the ten commitments. The implementation will help ensure the sustainability of the open government movement over time. It will also help Niger State document its achievements and growth by going forward. The implementation of the commitments chosen will reflects stakeholders' thematic priorities; however, the commitments can be improved by increasing their specificity and scope. This will enable Niger State to make more ambitious commitments in future action plans.

The implementers of Niger State's SAP-II are the State Steering Committee and Technical Working Groups constituted to significantly achieve reforms. OGP Secretariat has institutionalized and carried out OGP processes to ensure sustainability of the open government movement over time. The implementers of SAP-II in the State have documented a clear role and mandate for the State Steering Committee and Technical Working Group with a budgetary provision.

Additionally, an Executive framework backing the formulation and implementation of OGP reform initiatives in Niger State, through the Governor signing as subnational have promoted accountability,

this has ensured continuity, not only for OGP undertakings, but also for other transparency and open governance initiatives within the state government and Nigeria such as SFTAS.

Niger State had achieved a notable level of dialogue between the State and non-state actors during the co-creation process of 2018-2020, and will continue to consolidate in 2021-2023 through SAP-II. Niger State’s SAP-II co-creation process will focus on documenting interactive dialogue to ensure non-state actors and the public understand the feedback being incorporated into the action plan. Going forward, the Steering Committee and Technical Working Groups’ agendas, minutes of meeting, member’s thematic grouping and selection processes will be continuing and consolidated in a timely manner. The state’s SAP-II will enhance local languages to increase public understanding of documentation of engagement and activities as part of open government process of public identification of opportunities for participation.

VI. SAP-II Methodology and Sources

Niger State SAP-II methodology and sources is derived and developed from the independent reporting mechanism of 2018-2020 first action plan implementation year, written by Niger State OGP co-creation actors. The methodology and source are analysis of progress on Niger State OGP first action plans activities, programs and interactions among the OGP actors. The IRM report builds on the evidence available in Niger State’s OGP repository engagement which is compiled in volume 1,2 & 3. Findings of the self-assessment reports and other assessments of process and progress put out by co-creation actors. The IRM compiled activities reports, minutes of meetings to ensure an accurate portrayal of events. The IRM summarized OGP activities in the State in the first action plan under review period of activities in volume 1 & 2 OGP’s engagement.

SAP-II Independent Reporting Mechanism

Niger State SAP-II Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM) will adhere strictly to keys of tracking OGP’s stakeholders progress of participation as part of quality control mechanism.

Annex I. Overview of Niger State Performance throughout the First Action Plan Development SAP-I

Key:

Green = Meets standard

Yellow = in progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)

Red = No evidence of action

State Steering Committee	Status
1a. State Steering Committee established: There is a SSC to oversee the OGP process.	Green
1b. Regularity: The SSC meets at least every quarter, in person or remotely.	Green
1c. Collaborative mandate development: Members of the SSC jointly develop its membership and governance structure.	Green
1d. Mandate public: Information on the SSC membership and governance structure is available on the OGP website.	Yellow

2a. Co-creation: The SSC includes both State and non-state actors.	Green
2b. Parity: The SSC includes an even balance of State and non-state actors.	Green
2c. Transparent selection: Non-state actors of SSC are selected through a fair and transparent process.	Yellow
2d. High-level State actor representation: The SSC includes high-level State actor representatives with decision-making authority.	Green
3a. Openness: The SSC accepts inputs and representation on the action Plan process from non-state actors.	Green
3b. Remote participation: There are opportunities for remote participation in at least some meetings and events.	Green
3c. Minutes: The OGP SSC proactively communicates and reports back on its decisions, activities and results to wider State and non-state actors TWG.	Green

Key:

Green = Meets standard

Yellow = in progress (steps have been taken to meet this standard, but standard is not met)

Red = No evidence of action

Action Plan Development	
4a. Process transparency: There is Niger State OGP website or webpage Where information on all aspects of the state OGP process is proactively published.	Yellow
4b. Documentation in advance: There is information about OGP in the State For people to participate in all stages of the process.	Green
4c. Awareness-raising: There is awareness-raising activities in the State on OGP process, such as advocacies and radio phone-in.	Yellow
4d. Communication channels: The State actors facilitates direct Communication with non-state actors to respond to action plan process on OGP activity.	Green

5a. Repository: The State actor collects and publishes a document repository on Niger State OGP website. The repository provides record of and access to all documents related to the State's OGP processes.

Yellow

Editorial note: SAP-II is a rollout of the second action plan of Niger State OGP process.