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Niger HC3N Assessment

Institutional Mapping for I3N and Recommendations
for Improved Implementation

February, 2013

This publication was produced by the Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program (Africa Lead) for review by the United States Agency for International Development

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Contracted under EDH-I-00-05-00004/TO. AID-OAA-TO-10-00045

Africa Leadership Training and Capacity Building Program

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ACRONYMS

ASCU	Agriculture Sector Coordinating Unit (Kenya)
CAADP/PDDAA	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program
CAPAN	Niger Pastoralist Association Collective
CAPED	Cellule D'Analyse et de Prospective (Strategic Planning Unit)
CCA	Cellule de Crise Alimentaire (Food Crisis Management Unit)
CIO	Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (Comite Interministeriel d'orientation)
CILSS	Comite Inter Etat de Lutte Contre la Secheresse au Sahel (Inter State Committee against drought in the Sahel)
CM	Council of Ministers (Conseil de Ministres)
CMP	Comite Multi Sectoriel de Pilotage (Multi Sectoral Steering Committee)
CNEDD	Conseil National Pour un Environnement et Developpement Durable (Climate Change and Sustainable Development Council)
CORAF	Council for Agricultural Research and Development
CRC	Consultation Committee (Comite Restreint de Concertation)
DNPGCCA	Dispositif National de Prevention et Gestion des Catastrophes et Crises Alimentaires (Food Crisis and Disaster Prevention and Management System)
ECOWAP	Economic Community of West African States Common Agriculture Policy
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GON	Government of Niger
HASA	Haute Autorité à la Sécurité Alimentaire/ High Authority for Food Security
HC3N	High Commission for the 3N Program
3N (i3N)	The Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens Initiative
IDF	The Institutional Development Framework (IDF)
INGO	International Non Governmental Organization
	Ministere de L'Agriculture (Ministry of Agriculture)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEL	Ministere de L'Elevage (Ministry of Livestock)
NAIP	National Agriculture (and Food Security) Investment Program

Nepad	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPC	Nepad Planning and Coordinating Agency
OCHA	Office for Humanitarian Coordination Affairs
PAU	WAEMU Agriculture Policy
PDES	Economic and Social Development Plan
PDC	Plan de Developpement Communal (Communal Development Plan)
PDR	Plan de Developpement Regional (Regional Development Plan)
PROSE	The Participatory, Results-Oriented Self-Evaluation (PROSE)
RECA	National Network of Chambers of Agriculture in Niger
SAP	Systeme Alerte Precoce (Early Warning System)
SG	Secretary General
SGA	Secretary General (Adjoint)
SISAN	International Symposium on Food and Nutritional Security in Niger
WAEMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA in French)
WFP	World Food Program

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Niger government, through the High Commissioner of the High Commission for the 3N (Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens) Initiative asked USAID/West Africa for a review of capacity building needs of the HC3N (High Commission for the 3N program). USAID/West Africa passed this request on to Africa Lead via AID/Washington, which approved resources for a two week assignment in country. Niger's 3N Initiative is essentially the equivalent of the National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans (NAIPs) that many countries in Africa have developed under the African Union-led and NPCA-coordinated Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

Africa Lead fielded a three person team to conduct the assessment. This report is the result of a two week assignment, which took place from 21 January to 1 February in Niamey.

Purpose and objectives of assessment. The purpose of the assessment was to collect and process information from the HC3N itself and from key partners – technical ministries, donors, regional and communal commission, producer associations, NGOs and INGOs, and other stakeholders identified in the various foundational documents of the 3N Initiative and the HC3N – in order to make recommendations to the HC3N and to USAID on capacity building and organizational structure that can ensure that the High Commission effectively plays the coordinating, mobilizing and learning role within the 3N Initiative that is expected of it.

Country profile. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Nigerien 2011 per capita GDP is US\$416, with annual growth of 5.4% and an inflation rate of 3.8%. Niger's economy relies on subsistence crops, livestock, official development assistance (e.g., the European Union (EU), USAID, and other donors), and some of the world's largest uranium deposits. Subsistence farming, small trading, seasonal migration, and informal markets provide the majority of income for its population; few formal sector jobs exist.

Niger is landlocked and therefore economically dependent on its regional neighbors for trade and access to ocean ports. Its economy is highly dependent on currency fluctuations between Niger's FCFA and the Nigerian Naira, driving arbitrage activity across the border.

With a large percentage of Nigeriens living near or below the poverty line—estimated at 60.8% in 2008—negative shocks frequently lead to hunger, malnutrition, and the inability to build human capital through education and adequate health care/nutrition.

Agriculture and food security context in Niger. The agricultural sector accounts for more than 80% of Niger's population but only 40% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). By any measure, food insecurity is pervasive in Niger. During the 2010 food crisis, almost half (47.7%) of the Nigerien population was moderately or severely food insecure, and 22% were severely food insecure (i.e., nearly half of the food insecure population).

Niger suffers drought-related food insecurity roughly one out of every three years. The 2005/6 crisis forcefully directed international attention to Niger's acute vulnerability. The 2009/10 crisis was also severe, with nearly half of the country's population affected and with long term impacts on pastoralists.

Levels of public and private investment in the agriculture sector are very low. The lack of productive and marketing infrastructure is aggravated by the scarcity of financial resources. Quality and availability of GoN extension services and improved inputs are rudimentary. Enabling conditions are not in place to help producers' associations (where they exist) transition to viable agribusiness entities or to attract the entry of domestic or foreign capital into the sector.

Niger is making real progress in lowering infant and child mortality. Undernutrition and chronic malnutrition nonetheless remain pervasive, especially in rural areas, and Niger is not on track to achieve the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG1).

Nigerien women face systematic discrimination in terms of access to land, livestock and other assets. Official legislation aims to ensure women have equal access to household assets (e.g., National Women's Advancement Policy). Yet customary laws still hold sway in rural areas and these customary laws often discriminate against women in conflict resolution, inheritance and other legal negotiations. Discrimination extends to household attitudes and practices.

SUMMARY OF 3N PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH

3N rationale, vision, goals and objectives. The rationale for the 3N Initiative is that to get out of what could be considered a vicious circle of poverty, famine and malnutrition, what some might call a poverty trap, Niger needs a large, concentrated investment program that brings together action in the key subsectors – agriculture, livestock, water and environment – in nutrition and in key rural and agriculture infrastructure in a comprehensive and coordinated approach.

As stated in the Strategic Framework document for the 3N Initiative, the vision of 3N, captured in the full name of the initiative, “Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens,” is of a Niger that has achieved the ability to feed itself, “...in a country rebuilding itself economically, able to avoid food and nutritional insecurity, and where the agriculture sector fully plays its role in the transformation of society and economic development.”

Development of 3N and relationship to other programs. Niger has been trying to develop a comprehensive policy for years that will move the country to a more sustained level of agricultural production and food security. This has included the design of the Strategy de Développement Rural (SDR), which was the immediate predecessor policy to the 3N Initiative. The SDR provided a platform for coordinated efforts and resources mobilization for broad rural development, including agriculture and food security.

In March 2011, the GoN hosted the International Symposium on Food and Nutritional Security in Niger (Symposium Internationale sur la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle au Niger, SISAN). Through the symposium and the resultant “Niamey Declaration on Food Security and Nutrition in Niger”, the GoN signaled a political intent to more effectively understand and address chronic food insecurity and malnutrition in Niger. Additionally Niger put in place a fairly well developed policy and strategy framework for guiding development efforts, although implementation and funding were weak. The authorities of the 7th Republic designed and agreed to implement the 3N Initiative “Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens” with Presidential backing.

According to the 3N strategy document, the 3N Initiative is aligned with CAADP (which targets a rate of annual agricultural growth of at least 6%, allocation of 10% of the national budget to agriculture, and an evidence-based approach to policy making and implementation), with the Common Agricultural Policy of

ECOWAS (ECOWAP) and the Agricultural Policy of WAEMU (PAU). These policies have been encapsulated in Niger through the National Agricultural Investment Plan (PNIA) 2011-2015. The 3N Initiative is a means to accelerating implementation of the PNIA so as to achieve the 11.9% agricultural growth rate needed if Niger is going to meet the MDG1 by 2015. The 3N Initiative is an integrated set of investments that will enable Niger to accelerate the pace at which it achieves the Millennium Development Goals, especially MDG 1 and MDG 7. It will also contribute to the achievement of MDG 3, MDG 4 and MDG 5.

3N Strategic Pillars (“Axes”). The 3N Initiative is based on four technical pillars and one management and coordination pillar:

- Pillar (“Axe”) 1: Growth and diversification of agro-silvo-pastoral and fisheries production
- Pillar 2: Regular supply of agriculture and food products in rural and urban markets
- Pillar 3: Improvement of resilience to climate change, food crises and natural disasters
- Pillar 4: Improvement in nutritional status
- Pillar 5: Leadership and coordination of the 3N Initiative

These pillars have been translated into five strategic plans (PS), further subdivided into 12 operational programs (PO) and 23 operational sub-programs (SPO), which are described in the main text as they fit into the 3N results framework. The budget for these 23 operational sub-programs, which themselves are broken down into 50 projects, is approximately \$2 billion USD over four years (2012–2015).

ESTABLISHMENT OF HC3N

The HC3N, which is attached to the President’s Office, is mandated with the overall delivery of results targeted by the 3N Initiative. The HC3N is set up by Decree No. No. 2011-407/PRN as an “Administration de Mission,” meaning that it is not intended to be a permanent government agency but will cease to exist once the main goals of its “mission” are achieved. The High Commission is overseen at the highest level by the Council of Ministers, a high-level decision-making body that is part of the Niger government’s regular decision making structure.

Direct governance of the HC3N and its coordinating role for the 3N Initiative is ensured by the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (CIO), which has the mandate to facilitate the implementation of the 3N Initiative. The HC3N is led by a High Commissioner who has the rank of Minister but who is not a cabinet member. He has a cabinet of technical advisors and is supported by a Secretary General (SG) who is responsible for managing the five Departments and any regional activities of the HC3N.

The form and nature of HC3N presence or representation at the local level—region, department and commune—is not yet set. Some see “mini HC3Ns” in each of the 8 regions while others expect that as an agile organization made up of a relatively small number of highly skilled and capable staff, the HC3N will need to work through existing structures at the local level.

METHODOLOGY

To conduct this assessment the Africa Lead team used a combined methodology of institutional assessment frameworks and an institutional mapping to assess the High Commission responsible for the

3N Initiative. In order to develop an institutional map that identifies key institutions and key drivers of change within 3N, the team created a detailed, visual diagram of critical relationships.

In order to better understand the mandate, structure and roles of the HC3N, the team utilized an institutional assessment framework based upon a combination of USAID established frameworks:

- The USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation, Associated Guidance on how to Measure Institutional Capacity
- The Institutional Development Framework (IDF)
- The Participatory, Results-Oriented Self-Evaluation (PROSE)
- The CAADP Capacity Development Framework

LIMITATIONS

It is a truism that in two weeks of interviews, observation and document review, no matter how much in depth these are done, a team of outsiders will not be able to fully appreciate all the nuances of an organization or the institutional and political environment in which it operates.

Thus, several limitations may have affected findings within this assessment, these include possible political bias since the assessment team visited key stakeholders using official protocols and official venues this may have led to some degree of selection bias. Another limitation was the likelihood that due to the limited time and scope of this assessment, the team did not capture the political landscape and conditions under which the HC3N structure was established. There may have been viewpoints that were not captured or adequately understood by the assessment team. The assessment team interviewed a cross section of ministries, regional and local government, civil society, HC3N staff, public sector, and the general public; however, the team could not have taken into considerations all of the viewpoints of those initially participating in the 3N strategic planning process.

FINDINGS

Institutional Mapping of Key 3N Actors. To understand the environment in which a new organization like the HC3N is to operate, it is important to map the roles and responsibilities of the various institutions (“partners”) that have or will play a role in the articulated goals, namely, in this case, food security. Implementation of the strategy should effectively involve a variety of actors whose functions are complementary and useful in achieving results. Key types of institutions involved are: Public Administration, National Assembly and Local authorities (municipalities and regions), the Private Sector Organizations of Civil Society Organizations of Producers, Technical and Financial Partners, Regional Cooperation Institutions.

Public Administration. The role of public administration is to provide national policy, political leadership, ensure the adoption of standards and regulations, business planning, resources mobilization, the implementation, supervision, control, capacity building, research and support / advice. Within the public administration there are six types of offices playing a role in policy making and implementation in relation to food security—The Presidency and Prime Minister’s Office; The High Commission for the 3N Initiative (HC3N); Services connected to the Prime Minister’s Office (DNPGCCA, CNEDD, CAPEDE); Support Ministries—Ministry of Planning, Spatial Planning and Community Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation; Sectoral ministries (Agriculture, Livestock,

Environment, and Health), including decentralized technical services; and Research and Training Institutions. Their relationships are spelled out in the i3N documents.

National Assembly and Other National Representative Bodies. The national assembly will deliberate on and adopt the laws that create the enabling environment for the achievement of the I3N (vote the reforms, law and programs, supplementary budget, etc.). Members of the parliament as national politicians will play a significant role in social mobilization for the implementation of this initiative. They will also make and support the international advocacy for resource mobilization, and will play a role in monitoring the extent to which government funds used in the 3N Initiative are achieving the expected results.

Local Authorities (Municipalities and Regions). The municipal/communal level has been identified as the gateway to the implementation of the activities of the Initiative. The Municipal Council is supposed to be the body that receives, centralizes, performs preliminary analysis of small scale projects and submits them for approval further up the territorial administration ladder. All projects operating at the municipal level set up committees to approve projects submitted by commune (or municipality). This process is expected to continue for projects undertaken under the 3N Initiative. But, the way commune will access the various “kits” funded under GoN budget for i3N is not yet clear. For investments involving several communities in a region, the Regional Council is the body responsible for planning and programming. Municipal and regional councils provide project management for planned investments in local development plans. Local authorities contribute to the social mobilization and financing 3N Initiative.

Producer Organizations (POs). Producer organizations are a critical part of the process for various reasons. They provide real on-the-ground knowledge of the factors constraining production and productivity. They give legitimacy to the programs. And, they have a strong incentive to achieve results. POs will identify and sometimes implement projects for their members e.g., infrastructures, inputs to support production: central fertilizer supply, central supply for animal feed, animal feed bank, shop of inputs, irrigation, marketing and warehouse receipt, etc.). Producer organizations are beneficiaries, financial contributors and / or service providers. They will be involved in consultative bodies designed to ensure mutual accountability, monitoring and evaluation and as a group or individually may be involved in bidding on specific projects. POs, given their deep knowledge of the realities on the ground will play a critical role in identifying and defining policies, program development and execution of activities.

Of the POs in Niger, from the perspective of i3N the most important ones are RECA, the national network of chambers of agriculture, CAPAN, the Niger Pastoralist Association Collective, and Moriben, the small producers’ organization (Moriben, means “misery is finished” in the djerma language). In addition to its national representation, RECA has regional-level agriculture chambers (including livestock) called CRA (Chambre Regionale d’Agriculture) that will play a role at the regional level.

Private Sector. The private sector is the engine that will drive agricultural production and any efforts to increase production aimed at real markets that can lead to increase incomes of farmers large and small. The larger, major operators can help ensure that new technologies are expanded to smaller farmers and livestock producers. While, beyond the Agriculture Chambers there is not a very well organized private agribusiness sector, the private sector is expected to play a role in the I3N process both as participants in consultative meetings as well as implementers (individually) and beneficiaries (as a group) of projects and programs. In addition to the agribusiness enterprises other private sector participants are consultants and consulting firms (“bureaux d’etudes”) that will provide critical implementation, studies and consulting services as service providers for the programs under the 3N Initiative.

Civil Society Organizations. Civil Society Organization are critical representations of citizen’s voice and as such compose part of the institutional mapping and environment within which agriculture and food security programming in general and the 3N Initiative in particular, take place. CSOs will contribute to the definition of policies and programs, social mobilization, research funding and implementation of the 3N Initiative as implementing agencies and / or providers. They could play a significant role in term of advocacy and promoting social change expected from and by leaders and citizens. Some of them will also play significant roles as service providers. Among the civil society organization and NGOs most active in Niger’s food security, agriculture and nutrition space are, MPCR (Mouvement pour la Promotion de la Citoyennete Responsable), and Alternative Espace Citoyens.

Technical and Financial Partners. Technical and financial partners (“PTFs” the initial for the French term, partenaires techniques et financieres”) are major players in the context of the implementation of the Strategy. In addition to their substantial financial contribution, they participate in the consultation, monitoring and outcome evaluation. Their involvement in communication and advocacy as well as their suggestions and proposals will be crucial to achieving the expected objectives. Through the Consultative Framework (“Cadre de Concertation”), set up by the HC3N, they will play significant roles in challenging the HC3N in order to perform and promote performance across systems and structures. This group meets sometimes with the SGs of Ministries involved in 3N. The donors also participate in an early warning consultative body set up by DNPGCCA. This is called the CRC (“Comite Restreint de Concertation”) and involves a select group of Niger government and donor early warning and Disaster management structures, and is led by the Prime Minister’s Chief of Staff.

Institutions for Regional Cooperation. Within the francophone West African context there are a number of institutions for regional cooperation that play a role as facilitators (advocacy or support partners), donors and agencies to mobilize funding for the 3N Initiative. They may also be involved in the implementation of policy coherence and fluidity of trade and the establishment of regional mechanisms for stockpiling. They include the African Union, in particular its Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, the Nepad CAADP team, ECOWAS, UEMOA (WAEMU), as well as CILSS and CORAF. The participation of regional bodies is particularly sought after for the agriculture products processing and marketing PIP given the importance of regional markets for Niger products and the need to harmonize standards and improve regional trade.

HC3N Capacity Assessment. The High Commission is a new organization that is just getting established. Now is the time to assess what the best structure, systems and staff capacity should be for the HC3N to cost effectively play its central role in the 3N Initiative. Below are the general findings of the team’s assessment of HC3N with respect to its structure and culture, operations/administrative systems, technical program and individual (staff) capacity needs. The team includes a section on how other countries in Africa have approached setting up coordination mechanisms for their food security initiatives.

STRUCTURE AND CULTURE

Scale of Overall Performance – Structure and Culture:

Grossly Underperforming	Slightly Underperforming	Adequate Performance	Above Average Performance	Outstanding Performance

Under the Structure and Culture category, the consultants conducted a rapid evaluation of HC3N’s organizational identity and culture, vision and purpose, leadership capacity and style, organizational values, organizational structure, and governance approaches.

Although the 3N Initiative had political support and backing in 2010, the program took shape largely in 2011. Based upon the majority of respondent feedback, the initiative began formally in April 2012, as SDR activities came to a halt. After approximately 9 months of operation at the coordination level, The High Commission and General Secretariat responsible for implementing the 3N Initiative are still in the early stages of operationalizing its organogram, roles and structures. Nevertheless, the assessment team was able to synthesize various early perspectives from 9 of its anticipated 38 staff on the future organizational structure, mandate, and functions of HC3N.

Overall, there were several points of positive feedback on the 3N Initiative and the High Commission. The most laudable aspect of the process has been the successful participatory approaches used to obtain input and feedback into 3N strategic plans and investment plans. Respondents unanimously agree that it was a highly satisfactory strategic planning documentation and investment planning documentation for those who were involved. From these successful exercises, there is adhesion of the actors and stakeholders for the 3N concept. The majority of stakeholders interviewed are satisfied with the availability of a single strategic document that takes a cross sectoral approach to food security. Several members of HC3N staff are also pleased that the 3N documentation goes beyond a political movement to highlight specific activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Additionally, several HC3N staff are confident in the collective institutional knowledge and educational background of the current 9-person HC3N team.

OPERATIONS/ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

Scale of Overall Performance – Operations and Administrative Systems:

Grossly Underperforming	Slightly Underperforming	Adequate Performance	Above Average Performance	Outstanding Performance

Under the Operations and Administrative category, the consultants conducted a rapid evaluation of HC3N’s financial management (budgeting, accounting, fundraising, and sustainability), human resource management (staff recruitment, placement, and support), information management, knowledge management and M&E systems, communications and public relations systems, regional coordination mechanisms, and administrative procedures and management systems. HC3N lacks systems across various operational domains.

Individual (Staff) Capacity Needs. The assessment team distributed questionnaires to HC3N staff to solicit recommendations and opinions on courses that could enhance the efficiency of the Commission. Nearly all staff promptly responded with comments, recommendations, and suggestions. From the exercise, it became quite clear that HC3N staff is eager to improve operations and learn professional techniques on how to improve their performance on the job.

Furthermore, HC3N staff has an excellent understanding of the required functions and mandate of their peers and Departments.

Therefore, the gaps remain in actualization and operationalization of work plans on a daily basis that leads to impact.

Synthesizing questionnaire responses from staff, we found that several management and technical courses were more frequently recommended than others. In general, the five most desired and most recommended courses were (in order of priority):

- Database Management (14 mentions)
- Techniques in Program Planning (13 mentions)
- Techniques in Coordination, Consultation, and Facilitation (13 mentions)
- Methods in Resource Mobilization (13 mentions)
- Techniques in Effective Communication (12 mentions)

In addition to these core courses, the assessment team recommends Advanced Leadership and a Practical Results-Based Management Course.

Examples from Rwanda, Ethiopia and Kenya. Every country and jurisdiction has its own idiosyncracies, institutional culture and history of governance, thus the team presents examples from other countries realizing full well that they grow out of different circumstances, environments and pressures. That said, governance systems evolve and can improve over time as lessons are learned internally, and approaches from elsewhere are considered and tested. It is in that spirit that the team presents approaches to coordinating similar agriculture and food security programs in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Kenya.

The main lesson from the experiences in these countries is that one size does not fit all. But the goal of coordination of disparate efforts must be balanced against cost reasonableness and the goals must also be realistic.

In Rwanda, the Agriculture Sector Working Group (ASWG) is the main coordinating body for Rwanda's CAADP-aligned National Agriculture Investment Plan, called the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA). The ASWG includes representation from each line ministry, development partners/donors and key stakeholders. The ASWG is co-chaired by the Minister/Permanent Secretary of Agriculture and a representative of a lead donor agency, currently the World Bank. The ASWG has ten prioritized policy actions tied to five key indicators with annual targets that reach down through the Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Finance is the hub where annual targets, resources and accountability are managed for each sector. Cabinet members have a target setting exercise with the President where they make a personal commitment to performance achievement and are held accountable

In Ethiopia, the body responsible for coordinating the CAADP-aligned National Agriculture Investment Plan, called the Agriculture Sector Policy and Investment Framework (PIF), is effectively a government-donor body called the Rural Economic Development and Food Security Working Group (REDFS). The REDFS, which focuses on agriculture, food security and natural resources management, was formally established in April 2008 and is one of several government-donor sector working groups in Ethiopia established under the Development Advisory Group (DAG). The DAG coordinates development assistance in furtherance of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which places an emphasis on country-owned and led processes, harmonization and alignment of external assistance with national policies and programs, and promotion of mutual accountability for results. The REDFS coordinates and approves all development partner food security support to Ethiopia

The government of Kenya has established the Agriculture Sector Coordinating Unit (ASCU). The ASCU is a secretariat of ten ministries that supports and coordinates the implementation of the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy 2010 – 2020 (ASDS) and its Medium-Term Investment Plan (2010–2015). It was created in 2005, and was formally established and given legal status in February 2009. The ASDS and its investment plan are aligned with the African Union’s Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Millennium Development Goals.

As of late 2011, ASCU had fourteen staff. ASCU is headed by a Coordinator who oversees the day to day running of the Unit. The Coordinator is assisted by three Deputy Coordinators: Finance and Administration; Policy and Planning; and Monitoring and Evaluation. Program Officers work under each Deputy Coordinator and support staff are included as part of the administrative team. The Unit also has an Information Communication Officer and a Procurement Officer. For procurement management, ASCU operates under the guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture’s (MoA) Supply Chain Division. Some of ASCU’s staff are seconded from and paid by the MoA.

The ASCU has an annual operating budget of approximately US \$1.6 million. Some of this funding is provided by development partners. The proposed Agricultural Sector Medium-Term Investment Plan is USD 3.09 billion (2010-2015).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HC3N conducted a highly participatory and successful process towards the development of the 3N concept, strategic framework and investment plans. However, the current organization does not demonstrate results-based evidence nor is it structured optimally. The general stakeholder perspective of HC3N is that its beginning efforts were commendable, however, the organization is negatively folding onto itself due to:

- Inability to communicate results and demonstrate value-added attributes of HC3N
- severe deficits in internal and external communications
- delayed operationalization of structures and systems
- limited quality assurance and management of structures and systems
- duplication of consultative structures and decision-making bodies
- overconfidence in stakeholder perception

HC3N needs to establish better structures and systems to operate – more specifically in the areas of communications, project management, organizational work-planning, information communication technology, human resources management, resource mobilization, information sharing with financial and technical partners, and regional coordination.

Most importantly, the secretariat general requires immediate management support to plan, track and manage other operational departments. This will result in a clearer indication and documentation of how departments are performing and progress towards desired impacts.

Specific recommendations are outlined in terms of near-term, medium term, and long-term:

NEAR TERM (within the next 60 days)

- Reevaluate the Organizational Structure
- Use existing mechanisms and structures both within the ministries and at the regional and communal levels
- Implement a communications (internal and external) strategy
- Determine targets and baseline values for a condensed list of indicators that demonstrate clear result
- Assign an additional human resource solely assigned to the SG to document and track resource mobilizations efforts, maintain global work plans, monitor departmental work plans, track results from M&E, and schedule consistent internal meetings to ensure that results are being achieved across departments
- Outsource website maintenance to a skilled company and create a more dynamic website with links to the HC3N M&E database
- Ensure that an information technology team should assign emails, and establish a core intranet platform where information is centralized on HC3N meetings , conferences, and internal staff travel schedules
- An information technology resource person should assign emails, and establish a core intranet platform that provides information on HC3N meetings , conferences, and internal staff travel schedules

MEDIUM TERM (within the next 120 days)

- Develop an M&E data aggregation training program
- Ensure that there are dedicated resources towards policy reforms and creating enabling environments
- Develop a performance management system that allows senior management to monitor and focus on results from its departments and divisions
- Offer professional development courses onsite and by knowledgeable consultant trainers who can assist with practical implementation

LONGTERM (within the next 180 days)

- Develop structured human resource practices to ensure high caliber staff with results oriented approaches
- Actively identify lessons learned from the Rural Development Strategy efforts
- Continue offering professional development courses based upon individual professional development plans

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

The Niger government, through the High Commissioner of the High Commission for i3N (Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens Initiative) asked USAID/West Africa to support a review of capacity strengthening needs of the HC3N (High Commission for the 3N program). USAID/West Africa passed this request on to Africa Lead via AID/Washington, which approved resources for a two week assignment in country. Niger's 3N Initiative is essentially the equivalent of the National Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plans that many countries in Africa have developed under the African Union-led and NPCA-coordinated Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP). These are investment plans that take as a point of departure the multisectoral nature and institutional complexity of the actions and investments that need to be taken in order to secure long-lasting food and nutritional security. Most countries have set up or are preparing to set up coordinating units to ensure that the investments managed by various ministries, authorities and departments add up to a development "whole" that is greater than the sum of individual "parts."

The 3N Initiative and the High Commission for 3N (HC3N) are fairly new, with the HC3N still in the process of organizing its team and how it will work in support of the innovations of the 3N Initiative. In some ways this means that the assessment comes at a pivotal time. In other ways it means there is relatively little track record and behavior to assess.

Africa Lead fielded a three person team to conduct the assessment. The team included a highly experienced Nigerien consultant with critical relevant technical and institutional experience, a PhD Agricultural Economist with deep experience working with Ministries of Agriculture and other government agencies, and an organizational development expert who is currently leading a capacity development program with two major regional agriculture organizations – CORAF and CILSS.

This report is the result of a two week assignment, which took place from 21 January to 1 February in Niamey. It also included a day trip by two members of the team to the Dosso Region capital, where the team met with the Governor, his operational deputy, the Secretary General Adjoint (SGA), and the regional Department Directors (Agriculture, Livestock, etc.).

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the assessment was to collect and process information from the HC3N itself and from key partners – technical ministries, donors, regional and communal administrations, producer associations, NGOs and INGOs, and other stakeholders identified in the various foundational documents of the 3N Initiative and the HC3N – in order to make recommendations to the HC3N and to USAID on capacity building and organizational structure that can ensure that the High Commission effectively plays the coordinating, mobilizing and learning role within the 3N Initiative that is expected of it.

COUNTRY PROFILE

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Nigerien 2011 per capita GDP is US\$416, with annual growth of 5.4% and an inflation rate of 3.8%. Despite this noted economic growth and other positive factors, Niger is still one of the poorest countries in the world. It ranks 167th out of 169 countries in the UN 2010 Human Development Report. Niger has an estimated population of 16 million (Population Reference Bureau, 2011), and the majority of Nigeriens live along a narrow band of arable land (15% of Niger's land) in the southern part of the country.

Niger's economy relies on subsistence crops, livestock, official development assistance (e.g., the European Union (EU), USAID, and other donors), and some of the world's largest uranium deposits. Subsistence farming, small trading, seasonal migration, and informal markets provide the majority of income for its population; few formal sector jobs exist. Livestock production represents 14% of Niger's GDP, and includes camels, goats, sheep, and cattle. However, recurring drought, desertification, and high population growth rates have halted or delayed much of the country's potential economic growth.

Niger is landlocked and therefore economically dependent on its regional neighbors for trade and access to ocean ports. Its economy is highly dependent on currency fluctuations between Niger's FCFA and the Nigerian Naira, driving arbitrage activity across the border.

With a large percentage of Nigeriens living near or below the poverty line—estimated at 60.8% in 2008—negative shocks frequently lead to hunger, malnutrition, and the inability to build human capital through education and adequate health care/nutrition. Furthermore, a prolonged political crisis (a military coup in February 2010, followed by successful democratic elections at the end of 2010) threatened the continued flow of much-needed donor assistance. The free elections of March 2011 have brought some internal stability and normalized relationships with neighboring countries and donors.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY CONTEXT IN NIGER

The agricultural sector accounts for more than 80% of Niger's population but only 40% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Cereals are Niger's primary subsistence crops, especially millet and sorghum. Small quantities of fonio, wheat (in the eastern part of the country), and rice (along the Niger River) are also grown in small quantities, for home consumption. Cowpeas, beans, onions, sesame, carrots, tiger nuts, spices, and peanuts are grown for export.¹

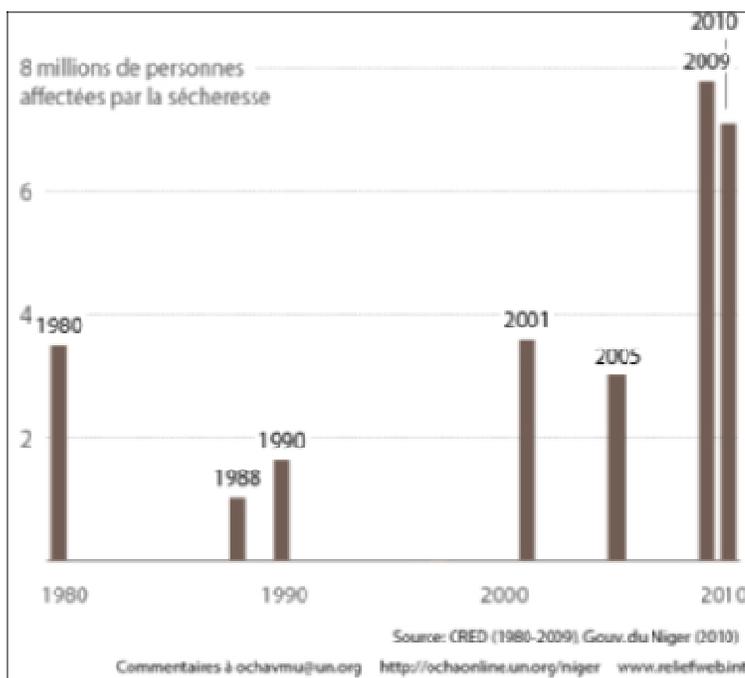
Niger suffers from chronic food insecurity, and production levels vary according to reoccurring shocks. The country's most recent shock, (due mostly to poor and irregular rainfall,) contributed to the below-average 2009 harvest. Ironically, Niger's 2010 harvest was its best ever, at 5.154 million metric tons (MT) of cereals (much higher than the country's average 2006-2010 annual production of 4.250 million MT).²

¹ Niebe is the local term for cowpeas in Niger, and Souchet refers to tiger nuts.

² WFP/Niger Niamey office.

By any measure, food insecurity is pervasive in Niger. During the 2010 food crisis, almost half (47.7%) of the Nigerien population was moderately or severely food insecure, and 22% were severely food insecure accounted (i.e., nearly half of the food insecure population).³ In contrast, 2011 saw a significant improvement, with only 17.3% of the national population projected to face moderate or severe food insecurity.⁴ The geographic distribution of food insecurity among the country's 16 million inhabitants varies seasonally and inter-annually. Seasonally, food insecurity peaks for farmers between June and September, while pastoral food insecurity rises after November when livestock are taken southward in search of water and pasture. Historically, the most common food crises scenario in Niger is one in which widespread food insecurity is precipitated by drought, which reduces food supply, elevates livestock mortality and distress sales, causes spikes in cereal prices and plummeting livestock prices, and increases supply of unskilled labor on domestic and regional labor markets.

FIGURE 1: DROUGHT-AFFECTED POPULATIONS IN NIGER



As a broad observation, it appears that chronic food insecurity is most widespread among agro-pastoral communities for whom agriculture is tenuous and unreliable at best, market access is weak, and livestock holdings are limited. Unfortunately, the 2009-2010 pastoral crisis may have eroded livestock assets sufficiently to have fundamentally undermined the pastoral economy as well. The distribution of chronic and acute malnutrition in Niger does not clearly coincide with that of food insecurity (as measured by inadequate food access). Food insecurity (measured by inadequate food access) is higher among urban than rural populations, while acute and chronic malnutrition are higher among rural populations. Farming communities in the “breadbasket” departments of Maradi and Tahoua have high rates of acute malnutrition even in “normal” years.

HEALTH, NUTRITION AND FOOD INSECURITY

Niger is making real progress in lowering infant and child mortality. However, undernutrition and chronic malnutrition are pervasive, especially in rural areas, and Niger is not on track to achieve the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG1). Poor nutritional outcomes are principally determined by suboptimal infant and young child feeding and care practices, abysmal water and sanitation conditions, an inadequate health care access and quality (Section 3.3). Almost half (45%) of children under five were underweight in 2006, with nearly the same (48%) rate was found for stunting in 2010. In 2010, a shocking 1.2 million children were estimated to be affected by moderate acute malnutrition, and an additional

³ GoN, Annual Household Food Security Survey, June 2010.

⁴ GoN (2011). Enquête sur la Sécurité Alimentaire des Ménages au Niger.

384,000 were estimated to suffer from severe acute malnutrition.⁵ A national maternal and child health survey conducted in 2007 estimated the coverage of exclusive breastfeeding to six months of age at a dismal 9%, placing young infants at high risk of growth failure in the early months.⁶ Less than half (46.4%) of women report having one or more antenatal care visits during their most recent pregnancy. Almost one in five women is undernourished (chronic energy deficiency prevalence is 19.2%), and almost one in two is anemic. Widespread maternal under-nutrition and inadequate access to services account in part for the very high maternal mortality ratio (820). High fertility aggravates maternal mortality: Nigerien women have 7.1 children on average. Even the adolescent fertility rate is a high 199 births/1000 women ages 15-19. Early marriage among young women is normative across Nigerien traditional cultures, accounting in part for the high fertility rate (throughout women's childbearing years) and the nutritional burden imposed by frequent pregnancies.

GENDER AND FOOD INSECURITY

Nigerien women face systematic discrimination in terms of access to land, livestock and other assets. Official legislation aims to ensure women have equal access to household assets (e.g., National Women's Advancement Policy). Yet customary laws still hold sway in rural areas and these customary laws often discriminate against women in conflict resolution, inheritance and other legal negotiations. Discrimination extends to household attitudes and practices. Male spouses often serve as de facto gatekeepers to financial resources, essential health and other services, social contacts for their wives. While women bear the disproportionate burden of responsibility for household care and subsistence labor, this inequality is not reflected in cash earnings: women only earn 34% of the cash income that men earn, the lowest female to male earned income ratio in the world. In terms of household decision making, while women report making decisions on how to use income they themselves earn, over 70% report that their spouse has the last word on decisions regarding the wife's health care daily and important household purchases, and visits to family or neighbors. With regard to preparation of daily household meals, around 40% of women report having the final word, but a surprising 48% of women report that their spouses have the final word on what is prepared.

PROGRAMS PRECEDING THE 3N INITIATIVE

Significant resources have been invested in Niger's agriculture since independence, but with little to show in the way of improved food security; food production deficits persist, subjecting populations to food insecurity every year.

Niger has been trying to develop a comprehensive policy for years that will move the country to a more sustained level of agricultural production and food security. This has included the design of the Strategy de Développement Rural (SDR), which was the immediate predecessor policy to the 3N Initiative. The SDR provided a platform for coordinated efforts and resources mobilization for broad rural development, including agriculture and food security.

The political transition boosted the political will of the GoN to address the country's dual crises of food insecurity and malnutrition. In March 2011, the GoN High Authority for Food Security (Haute Autorité à la Sécurité Alimentaire, HASA) hosted the International Symposium on Food and Nutritional Security in Niger (Symposium Internationale sur la Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutritionnelle au Niger, SISAN). Through the symposium and the resultant "Niamey Declaration on Food Security and Nutrition in Niger",

⁵ UNICEF Niger (2011). 2010 Consolidated Emergency Report, p. 4.

⁶ GoN (2008). Rapport d'Enquete Nationale Nutrition et Survie de l'Enfant Niger.

the GoN signaled a political intent to more effectively understand and address, through well-coordinated and funded large-scale initiatives, chronic food insecurity and malnutrition in Niger.⁷ Additionally Niger put in place a fairly well developed policy and strategy framework for guiding development efforts, although implementation and funding were weak.

⁷ Niamey Declaration.

II. SUMMARY OF 3N PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH

3N RATIONALE

The rationale for the 3N Initiative is that to get out of what could be considered a vicious circle of poverty, famine and malnutrition, what some might call a poverty trap, Niger needs a large, concentrated investment program that brings together action in the key subsectors – agriculture, livestock, water and environment, nutrition – in a comprehensive approach. The aim of this comprehensive approach is to put an end to the inability of Niger to feed itself and to care for members of its population who continue to suffer from periodic famines and food shortages and chronic malnutrition.

3N VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As stated in the Strategic Framework document for the 3N Initiative, the vision of 3N, captured in the full name of the initiative, “Nigériens Nourissant Nigériens,” is of a Niger that has achieved the ability to feed itself, “...in a country rebuilding itself economically, able to avoid food and nutritional insecurity, and where the agriculture sector fully plays its role in the transformation of society and economic development.”⁸ The vision for food security in Niger, captured in the 3N Initiative, is part of a broader vision for Niger that is captured in the economic and social development program (PDES), which envisions Niger as:

- an emerging country built on a dynamic, diversified, sustainable and equitably dispersed economy
- a modern, democratic, civil and well governed country
- a nation rich in its culture and shared values
- a society open to the world, valuing knowledge and technological innovation, free of corruption and poverty, prosperous, equitable and unified, ethical, united, peaceful and engaged in African integration.⁹

DEVELOPMENT OF 3N AND RELATIONSHIP TO CAADP AND OTHER PROGRAMS

Sensing that substantial political will needed to be brought to bear on the problem of low agricultural production and high food insecurity, the authorities of the 7th Republic designed and agreed to implement the 3N Initiative “Nigériens Nourissant Nigériens” with strong Presidential backing.

This strategy draws its essence from the Renaissance program of the President of Niger. The strategy was developed in a recognized participatory planning results-based approach. The entire development process

⁸ Niger Republic, Presidency, High Commission for the 3N Initiative, “ Initiative “3N” Pour la Sécurité Alimentaire et le Développement Agricole Durable: “Les Nigériens Nourissent les Nigériens,” Cadre Stratégique et Coût Estimatif des Programmes de L’Initiative Pour La Période 2012 – 2015 (translation from p. 18).

⁹ Niger Republic, Presidency, High Commission for the 3N Initiative, “ Initiative “3N” Pour la Sécurité Alimentaire et le Développement Agricole Durable: “Les Nigériens Nourissent les Nigériens,” Cadre Stratégique et Coût Estimatif des Programmes de L’Initiative Pour La Période 2012 – 2015 (translation from p. 18).

was conducted under the leadership of the High Commission to the 3N Initiative (HC3N) by a taskforce of Advisors to the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister's Offices and Heads Departments reporting to them (CCA and SAP), officials (Permanent Secretaries, Inspectors, consultants, Directors General and Directors) of key Ministries identified to play a major role in the implementation of the strategy and resource persons. The draft strategy has been subjected to a process of broad consultation enrichment with all key stakeholders (local and regional elected members, producers' organizations, private sector, civil society, government, development partners) at national and regional levels.

The 3N Initiative articulates the shared conviction that Niger can rise to and meet the current and future challenges of food and nutrition security to begin a real modernization of production systems and the agricultural sector to play its role as the engine of economic growth. It tackles the root causes of food insecurity and nutrition while providing appropriate responses to emergencies and economic insecurity that a large segment more or less of the population could be facing. The 3N Initiative is a coherent set of legislative measures and actions to make investments in short, medium and long term. The 3N Initiative should enable Niger to make both a qualitative leap from the point of view of investment in the rural development sector and related sectors of local agribusiness and agro-forest-pastoral products trade. These investments would enable to align the supply of agricultural and agribusiness products and the growing demand more and more demanding about the quality of the products. The Strategy has been translated into investment plans with key project ideas to be shared with key donors during the Paris round table. Donors expressed interest and announced their contribution but this needs to be presented into bankable projects. FAO offered to support the HC3N to design these projects along with its initiative "faim zero" inspired from Brazil's experience. The time horizon for the planned "faim zero" type of approach recommended by FAO, however, appears to be at odds with that of the 3N Initiative, which is into the second year of a 4 year program and which needs to begin to show concrete results very soon.

According to the strategy document, the 3N Initiative is aligned with CAADP principles, approaches and targets (e.g., at least 10% national budget to agriculture in order to achieve an average annual agriculture sector GDP growth rate of 6%). It is also aligned with the Common Agricultural Policy of ECOWAS (ECOWAP) and the Agricultural Policy of WAEMU (PAU). These policies have been encapsulated in Niger through the National Agricultural Investment Plan (PNIA) 2011-2015

The 3N Initiative could be a means to accelerating implementation of the PNIA so as to achieve the 11.9% agricultural growth rate needed if Niger is going to meet the MDG1 by 2015.

The 3N Initiative is a program of investment that will enable Niger to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially MDG 1 and MDG 7. It will also contribute to the achievement of MDG 3, MDG 4 and MDG 5.

The Millennium Development Goals

- MDG1: To eliminate extreme poverty and hunger
- MDG2: To ensure a primary education for all
- MDG 3: To promote the equality of sexes and the empowerment of women
- MDG 4: To reduce infant mortality
- MDG 5: To improve maternal health
- MDG 6: To fight against HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- MDG7: To ensure a sustainable environment
- MDG 8: To establish a global partnership for development

3N STRATEGIC PILLARS (“AXES”)

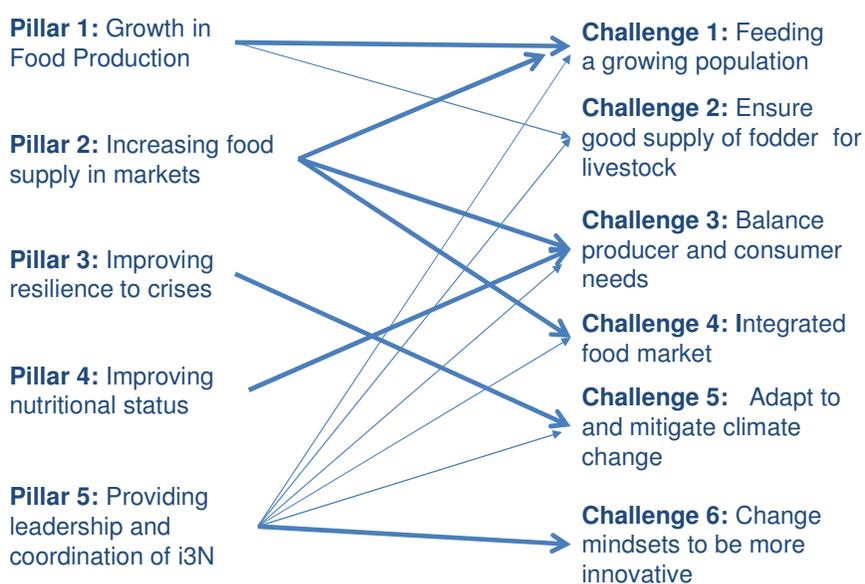
The 3N Initiative is based on four technical pillars and one management and coordination pillar. These are designed to address the six challenges identified in the Strategic Plan as the main constraints to ensuring food security in Niger:

1. Feeding a growing population and adapting to urban demand for food.
2. Ensure a regular supply of good quality feed for rapidly growing livestock population (national herd)
3. Balance the income needs of producers with the need of consumers for reasonable food prices
4. Establish a national agriculture market integrated at the regional and international levels
5. Adapt to climate change and mitigate its effects
6. Change the mindset of Nigeriens from the passivity that has fostered food insecurity to a more active, innovative, problem solving mindset

The pillars listed here, and the graph below shows how they align with the challenges listed above:

- Pillar (“Axe”) 1: Growth and diversification of agro-silvo-pastoral and fisheries production
- Pillar 2: Regular supply of agriculture and food products in rural and urban markets
- Pillar 3: Improvement of resilience to climate change, food crises and natural disasters
- Pillar 4: Improvement in nutritional status
- Pillar 5: Leadership and Coordination of the 3N Initiative

The strategic pillars have been translated into five strategic plans (PS), further subdivided into 12 operational programs (PO) and 23 operational sub-programs (SPO), which are described in the section below as they fit into the 3N results framework. The budget for these 23 operational sub-programs, which themselves are broken down into 50 projects, is approximately \$2 billion USD over four years.

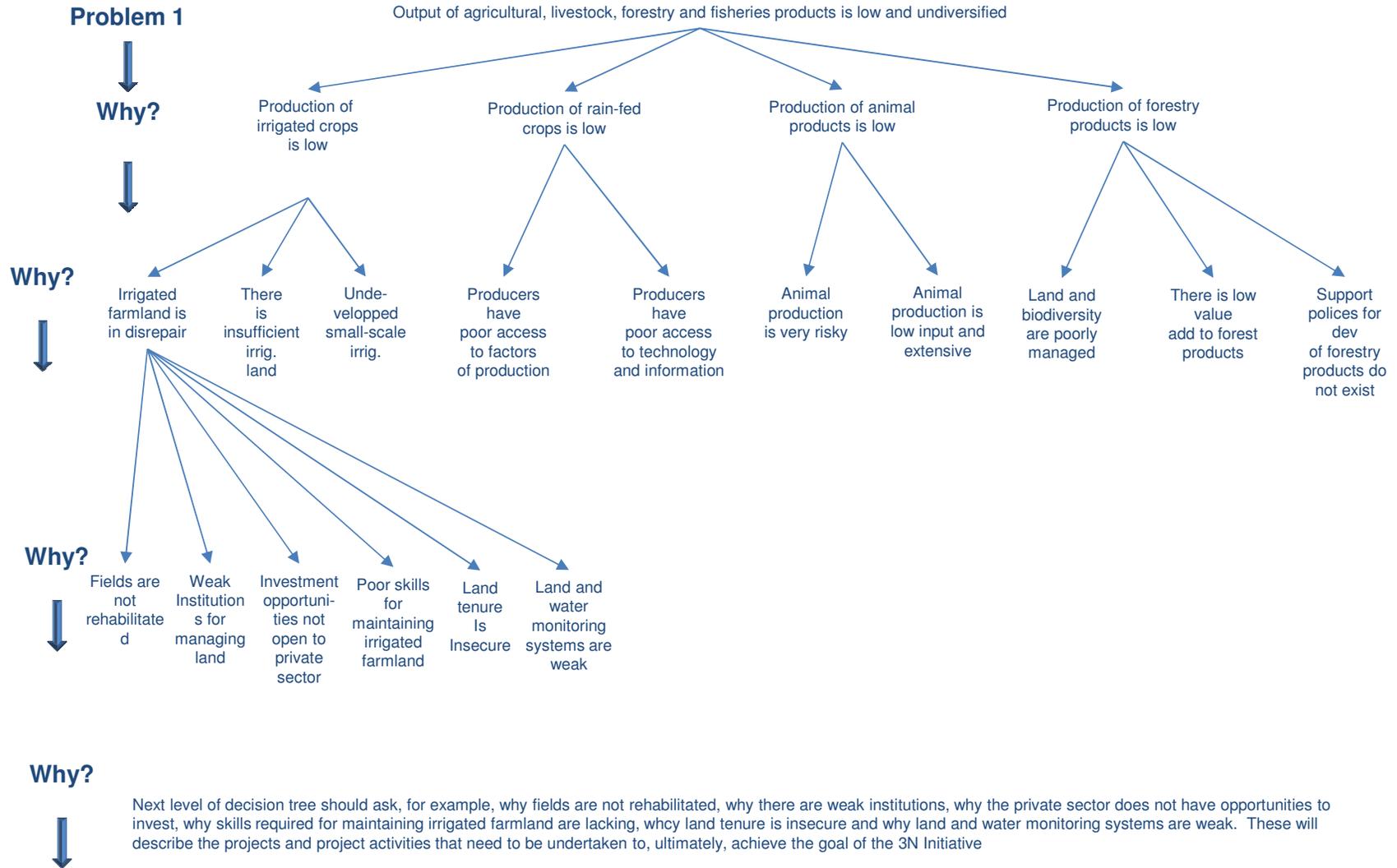


3N PROGRAMMING AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

The 3N Initiative has a clearly stated results framework that shows the anticipated link between activities, outputs (“produits”), outcomes (“effets spécifiques”), and impact (“effets généraux”). The reproduced table is presented in annex. Having a clearly presented and articulated results framework allowed the team to “reverse engineer” the results framework into a problem tree and a results tree as an exercise to more clearly understand the logic underlying the choice of strategy, strategic pillars, programs, sub-programs and projects.

The partial results of a problem tree and a solutions tree are included below for some of the issues and proposed solutions (programs) for Pillar 1. The most fundamental answers to the “why” questions will be at the level that determines specific project activities, and it is crucial that these questions be answered with the best evidence available both from scientific studies as well as highly experienced practitioners.

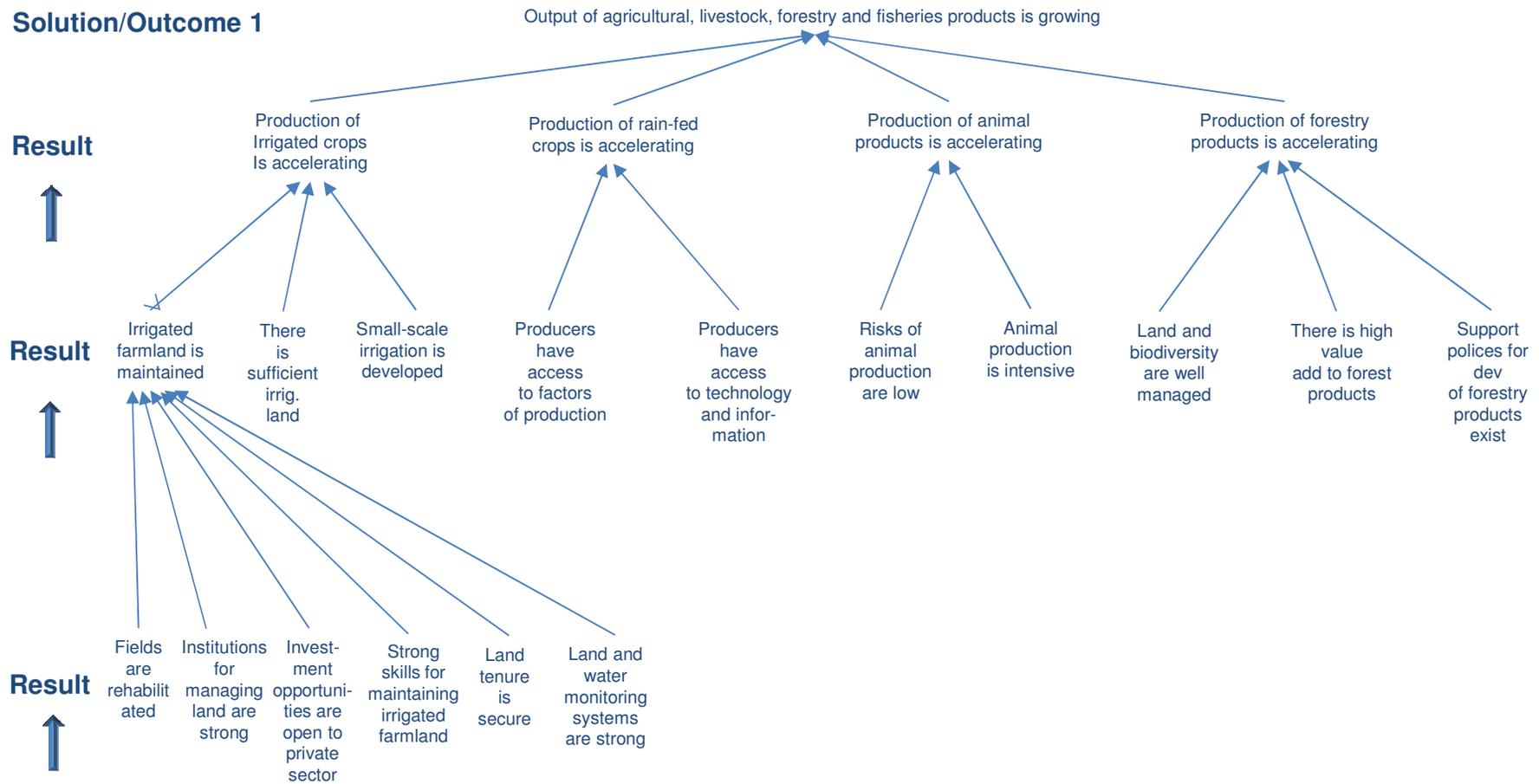
I3n Problem Tree (Reverse Engineered From Results Framework)



Next level of decision tree should ask, for example, why fields are not rehabilitated, why there are weak institutions, why the private sector does not have opportunities to invest, why skills required for maintaining irrigated farmland are lacking, why land tenure is insecure and why land and water monitoring systems are weak. These will describe the projects and project activities that need to be undertaken to, ultimately, achieve the goal of the 3N Initiative

i3N Solution Tree (reverse engineered from results framework)

Solution/Outcome 1



III. ESTABLISHMENT OF HC3N

HC3N RATIONALE

Similar to governments elsewhere in Africa, where there has been an agreement that achieving greater agriculture productivity and food security was a high priority, the Niger government determined that it was necessary to create an organization with the responsibility of driving the 3N Initiative. The rationale was that left to existing government agencies the coordination, consultation, learning and mobilization of resources was not going to be sufficiently robust or have sufficient political clout to achieve the ambitious goals of the 3N Initiative. Thus a special body, the High Commission for the 3N Initiative (HC3N), was created and structured.

MANDATE OF THE HC3N

The HC3N, which is attached to the President's Office, is mandated with the overall delivery of results targeted by the 3N Initiative. The decree that created the HC3N specified that it would¹⁰:

- Coordinate 3N projects and program design
- Oversee implantation and monitoring and evaluation of project and programs related to 3N initiatives including strategy associated to the food security kits at commune, village and household levels
- Conduct socio economics studies and surveys contributing to 3N initiatives and food security
- Ensure alignment of current and future strategies and policies to 3N Initiative
- Validate and communicate annual food security balance and estimates
- Ensure resources mobilization (human, financial and physical) needed to achieve 3N objectives.
- Coordinate donors efforts through a process of consultation and dialogue
- Oversee and monitor grants, contracts and international agreements
- Ensure participation of key stakeholders in order to ensure understating and buy in of 3N concepts and initiative.
- Communicate and advocate to ensure full participation of the population including civil society and private sectors
- Assess the impact of overall 3N impacts

CURRENT STRUCTURE OF THE HC3N

The HC3N is set up by Decree No. 2011-407/PRN of 11 September 2011 as an “Administration de Mission,” meaning that it is not intended to be a permanent government agency but will cease to exist once the main goals of its “mission” are achieved. The High Commission is overseen at the highest level by the Council of Ministers, a high-level decision-making body that is part of the Niger government's

¹⁰ See Decret 2012-515/PRN signed on November 29th 2012 and Decret 2011-407 /PRN September 6th 2011

regular decision making structure. The HC3N reports to the Council of Ministers on the I3N progress no less than once per quarter.

Direct governance of the HC3N and its coordinating role for the 3N Initiative is ensured by the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee, which has the mandate to facilitate the implementation of the 3N Initiative. The Steering Committee is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the ministries involved in the implementation of the Initiative. The secretariat /note taking will be provided by the 3N High Commission. The Steering Committee will report regularly to the Council of Ministers.

The HC3N is led by a High Commissioner who has the rank of Minister but who is not a cabinet member. The decret structuring the High Commission includes a cabinet with four Technical Advisors for the High Commissioner as well as a Secretary General (SG), who is responsible for managing the five Departments and any regional activities of the HC3N.

The form and nature of HC3N presence or representation at the local level, region, department and commune is not yet set. Some see “mini HC3Ns” in each of the 8 regions while others expect that as an agile organization made up of a relatively small number of highly skilled and capable staff, the HC3N will need to work through existing structures at the local level.

IV. METHODOLOGY

ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The team used a combined methodology of institutional assessment frameworks and an institutional mapping to assess the High Commission responsible for the 3N Initiative.

In order to develop an institutional map that identifies key institutions and key drivers of change within 3N, the team created a detailed, visual diagram of critical relationships.

In order to better understand the mandate, structure and roles of the HC3N, the team utilized an institutional assessment framework based upon a combination of USAID established frameworks:

- The USAID Center for Development Information and Evaluation, Associated Guidance on how to Measure Institutional Capacity
- The Institutional Development Framework (IDF)
- The Participatory, Results-Oriented Self-Evaluation (PROSE)
- The CAADP Capacity Development Framework

The following 2-part adapted framework served as the team's overarching guide towards evaluating HC3N capacities, roles, and structures:

Structure and Culture

- Organizational identity and culture
- Vision and purpose
- Leadership capacity and style
- Organizational values
- Organizational Structure
- Governance approach

Operations/Administrative Systems

- Financial management (budgeting, accounting, fundraising, sustainability)
- Human resource management (staff recruitment, placement, support)
- Information Management, Knowledge Management and M&E Systems
- Communications and Public Relations Systems
- Regional Coordination Mechanisms
- Administrative procedures and management systems

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The team used the following data collection methods in conducting the institutional map and institutional assessment:

TABLE 6.0: SUMMARY OF DATA COLLECTION METHODS, RESPONDENTS AND SOURCES

	Quantitative (QT) or Qualitative (QL)	Data Collection Method	# of Respondents / Sources
A	QL/QT	Literature Review / Desktop Review of Secondary Data	3N Strategic Plan, Investment Plans, HC3N Decrees, Agricultural Development Plan Best Practices
B	QL	Key Informant Interviews	HC3N Staff Niger Ministries Regional/District Government Financial and Technical Partners Civil Society General Public
C	QT	Semi-structured Questionnaire	HC3N – 9 staff persons
D	QL	Focus Groups	Niger Ministries Regional and District Level Government Financial and Technical Partners– HC3N Staff
E	QL	Direct Observation	Direct Observation through Site Visits

The assessment team carried out the following field visits:

TABLE 7.0: SUMMARY OF FIELD VISITS

Meetings with government ministries and agencies	Day 1: HC3N, SG Working Group,	Day 2: Min. Agriculture, Min. Livestock	Day 3: Min. Environment, Min. Trade, Prime Minister Counselors, Perm. Sec. Crisis Prevention	Day 5: SG Min. of Plan Day 7: High Commissioner of HCME
Meetings with development partners	Day 2: US Embassy, USAID Rep.	Day 3: FAO mission, development partner consultative group	Day 5: European Union	Day 6: EU and Danida consultants to HC3N
Meetings with international NGOs		Day 6: INGOs – CONCERN, CARE, Mercy Corps, Red Cross, etc.		
Meetings with national NGOs and producer organizations	Day 4: Producer organizations – RECA, CAPAN, MORIBENE, etc.	Day 7: Local NGOs and development associations – CODDAE, MPCR, Chamber of NGOs, etc.		
Meetings with local government officials	Day 3: Presidents of regional councils	Day 6: Mayor of Commune of Hamdallaye	Day 8: Trip to Dosso. Meeting with Governor, SGA and Regional Directors of technical ministries	
Meetings with private sector representatives	Day 7: Private agribusiness operators			

V. LIMITATIONS

Several limitations may have affected findings within this assessment, particularly:

1. **Political bias** – the USAID assessment team visited key stakeholders using official protocols and official venues. This may have introduced interview bias where respondents felt obligated to make politically safe comments about made about 3N and HC3N. Therefore, the views and perspectives obtained may not fully reflect the opinions and sentiment of stakeholders.
2. **Unknown factors within the political landscape** – during several interviews, respondents alluded to the politics surrounding the set up the H3CN. Due to the limited time and scope of this assessment, the team did not capture the political landscape and conditions under which the HC3N structure was established.
3. **Views and perspectives reflected in this assessment may not be reflective of all key stakeholders**– The assessment team interviewed a cross section of ministries, regional and local government, civil society, HC3N staff, public sector, and the general public; however, the team did not take into considerations all of the viewpoints of those initially participating in the 3N strategic planning process.

VI. FINDINGS

The Key Findings section represents the perspectives of the team supported by key informant interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and a desktop literature review.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From consultation with the HC3N and partners the team observed the following key points of relevance to an effective and efficient function of the High Commission.

Across all stakeholders interviewed there was a sense that development of the Strategic Framework for the 3N Initiative was highly participatory and that information about the vision and goals of i3N were clearly articulated. Many interlocutors from across the spectrum of actors interviewed praised the level of participation through the November Paris Roundtable, where donors pledged financial support to the programs outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Many stakeholders, however, believed that the High Commission, in establishing its structure and approach for ensuring good governance of the Initiative, had not taken sufficiently into consideration the experience of the Rural Development Strategy (SDR), which preceded the 3N Initiative, and had a brief period of co-existence with the i3N before ceding space to the new President's initiative, i3N. In fact, the assessment team was told that there had been no clear communication as to what were the weaknesses of the SDR that led to its replacement by i3N. The main lessons from the SDR appear to be:

- Cross institutions learning
- Cross ministry coordination
- Identified program but sometimes the thrust seems too complex except Hydraulic program which is still functioning
- Risk of overlap with existing institutions at regional level

The organizational structure of the High Commission does not seem to align directly with the specific tasks given to the High Commission in the Programming Framework of the Strategic Framework for i3N:

- SPO 19: Facilitating access to financing
- SPO 20: Promoting reforms and aligning policies and strategies
- SPO 21: Mobilization and empowerment of stakeholders
- SPO 22: Process management and coordination
- SPO 23: Monitoring and evaluation

The organizational structure of the High Commission looks on the face of it, to be heavier than would be expected of an organization which is expected to be “souple,” relatively light and nimble. This was an observation of the team based on the High Commission's first order (Arrete No. 001/HC3N, 10 January 2013), which sets the organization of HC3N below the Department level. In the Arrete the High Commission is further subdivided into 18 Divisions under five Departments. In discussions with the

Department Directors it was clear that they understood that each Division would at least have a Division Chief and additional supporting staff. If this was to be the case and the High Commission was to have an institutional presence in the eight regions, there would likely be a staff of at least 70 plus the High Commissioner and his cabinet of four Technical Advisors, a Chief of Staff and a secretary. In subsequent discussions with the High Commissioner and the Secretary General the team was told that there would be no staff below the Division Chiefs, and the High Commissioner stated that the HC3N presence in the regions would be a light 2-person team of a Coordinator and a Nutrition Advisor. Notably, however, the final decision on unit names and structure did not closely follow the outcome of a workshop on the topic which was written up in a CAPED report. What is in a name? Departments and Divisions closely mirror Ministry structures and do not convey the temporary, nimble structure that would make the HC3N more similar to coordinating structures in other countries that have implemented such structures to coordinate implementation of their, by definition multisectoral, NAIPs.

The roles and responsibilities of the High Commission at the local level – region, department and commune – are not clearly defined or understood by staff, the key technical ministries – MAG, MEL, Ministry of Environment, by territorial staff or by other key stakeholders, many of whom have a first reaction that the High Commission should not get directly involved in implementation of projects. Of course, what constitutes getting involved in the implementation of projects depends to a great extent on one's perspective.

The technical ministries for the most part do not see a role for the High Commission at the level of regions, departments and communes, stating often that HC3N should not be involved directly in project implementation and/or that there are existing coordination structures at the territorial level. At the regional level there are the following structures: SGA, Directions of Plan, Health, Agriculture, Environment, Trade, Livestock, Hydraulic, Committee for Disaster management (under SGA). At the department level there are Direction for Agriculture, Environment, Livestock, Plan, Health, and at the commune level there are services for Agricultural, Environment and Health. Yet, there is clearly a plan to have an HC3N presence at the regional level and one compelling argument for that from one interlocutor was that without some presence “on the ground,” the High Commission would risk appearing in its actions to be too removed from the day-to-day realities close to where projects are actually being implemented.

The presidents of regional commissions and the mayors, their equivalents at the commune level, do not feel that they are as involved in the 3N Initiative as they should be nor do they have a clear sense of what role is expected of them in the i3N. During a meeting the team had with them they gave various examples of activities such as delivery of seeds that were considered to be i3N actions but about which they knew nothing at the time.

Producer organizations and private sector associations have the impression that they have no clear role in the implementation of the i3N programs and projects. In the team's interviews with representatives of both groups, the consensus view was that there was genuine consultation during strategy development and the run-up to the November 2012 Paris Round Table. But since that there has been “radio silence” and the lack of communication has them wondering whether they will have a role. Both groups reminded the team, and by extension the High Commission, that they (producer and processor associations) are the ones that actually “do” the “Nigeriens Nourishing Nigeriens” slogan of the initiative.

While monitoring and evaluation is one of the main areas of focus for the High Commission, which will be expected to use data from monitoring reports and impact evaluation studies to draw up reforms and

suggest reorientation of projects and programs, neither the overall i3N nor the High Commission itself have clear targets for the numerous indicators that are listed for the different programs. The results framework for i3N is good and clear, although if presented as a problem and solutions tree it is possible that other priority activities related to the goals of the 3N Initiative would have been identified such as the role of the private sector in providing many of the services – inputs, processing, etc. – needed for producers to increase their output.

Communication, both internal to the HC3N and external, appears to be problematic. Internally, this is made evident with the lack of knowledge about whereabouts and upcoming meetings or meetings that are being held. There appears to be no server and no central place to store or share files. While the consultants were told that staff had “office” email, most seemed to use Yahoo email accounts. The team found no evidence of regularly scheduled staff meetings led by either the Secretary General or a designee.

The lack of clarity expressed by numerous i3N partners and stakeholders is evidence of insufficient external communication. The website, while functional, is not information rich or up to date. It is not designed in such a way as to ensure that an internet search using a search engine such as Google, will quickly find the site. Links to the sites of key partners are not included nor is the HC3N site found on the government portal.

INSTITUTIONAL MAPPING OF KEY 3N ACTORS

To understand the environment in which a new organization like the HC3N is to operate, it is important to map the roles and responsibilities of the various institutions (“partners”) that have or will play a role in the articulated goals, namely, in this case, food security. Implementation of the strategy should effectively involve a variety of actors whose functions are complementary and useful in achieving results. Key stakeholders identified are: Public Administration, National Assembly and Local authorities (municipalities and regions), the Private Sector Organizations of Civil Society Organizations of Producers, Technical and Financial Partners, Regional Institutions cooperation.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

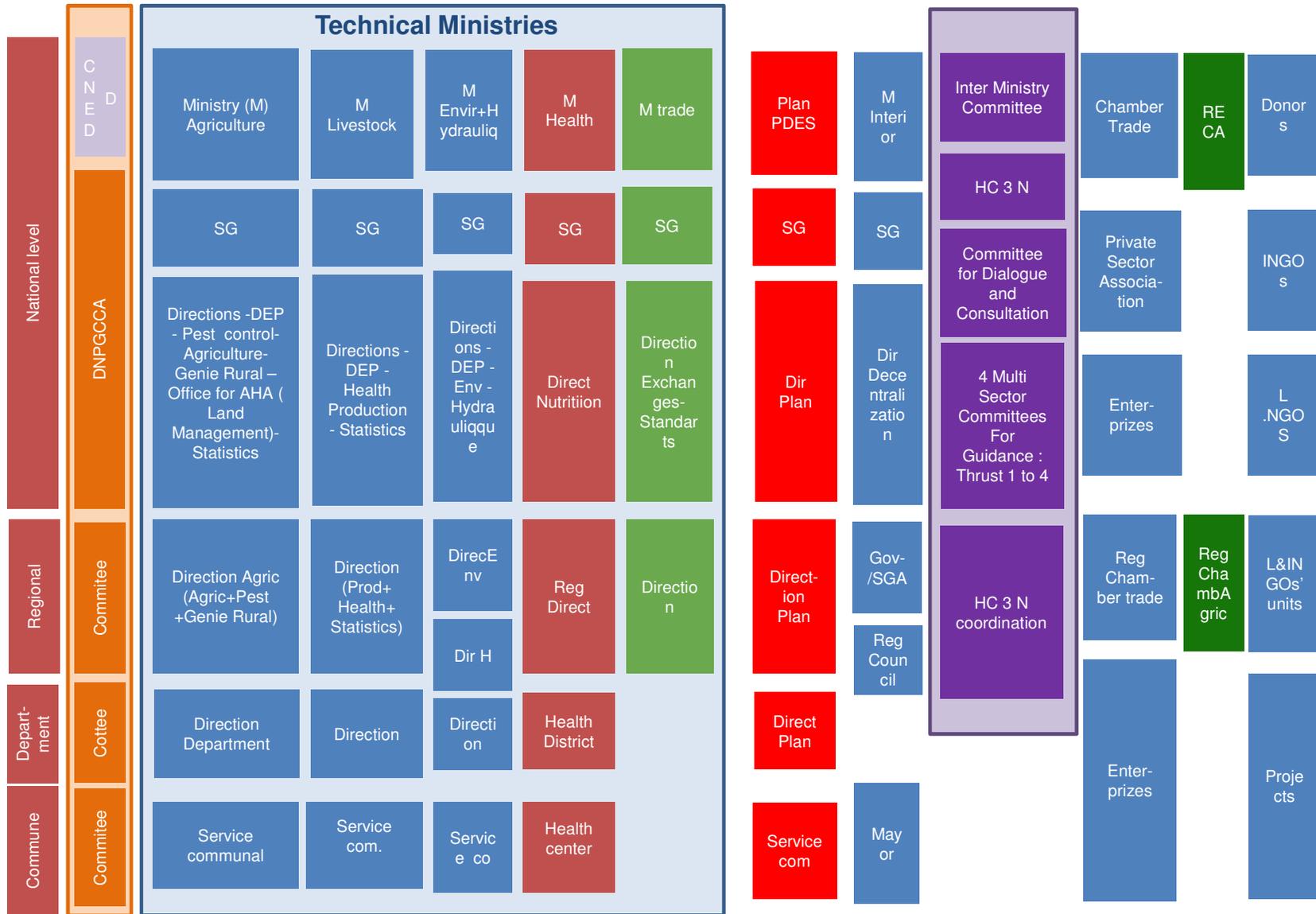
Within the public administration there are six types of offices playing a role in policy making and implementation in relation to food security -- The Presidency and Prime Minister’s Office; The High Commission for the 3N Initiative (HC3N); Services connected to the Prime Minister’s Office (DNPGCCA, CNEDD, CAPED); Support Ministries -- Ministry of Planning, Spatial Planning and Community Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation; Sectoral ministries (Agriculture, Livestock, Environment, and Health), including decentralized technical services; and Research and Training Institutions. Their relationships are spelled out in the i3N documents.

Presidency and Prime Minister of the Republic: These institutions will set direction and provide the impetus and political support necessary to achieve the objectives of the 3N Initiative.

High Commission for the 3N Initiative (HC3N): This is the structure (the team’s focus) that is responsible for coordination, planning, technical studies, economic and financial mobilization of funding, mobilization of actors (public, private and PTF) for the implementation of the 3N Initiative well as monitoring and evaluation. HC3N is a member of the interdepartmental committee guidance, the National Council of dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders Steering Committees and other technical bodies of different sectoral policies and strategic programs affecting the i3N.

Prime Minister's Office

Institutions identified by 3 N

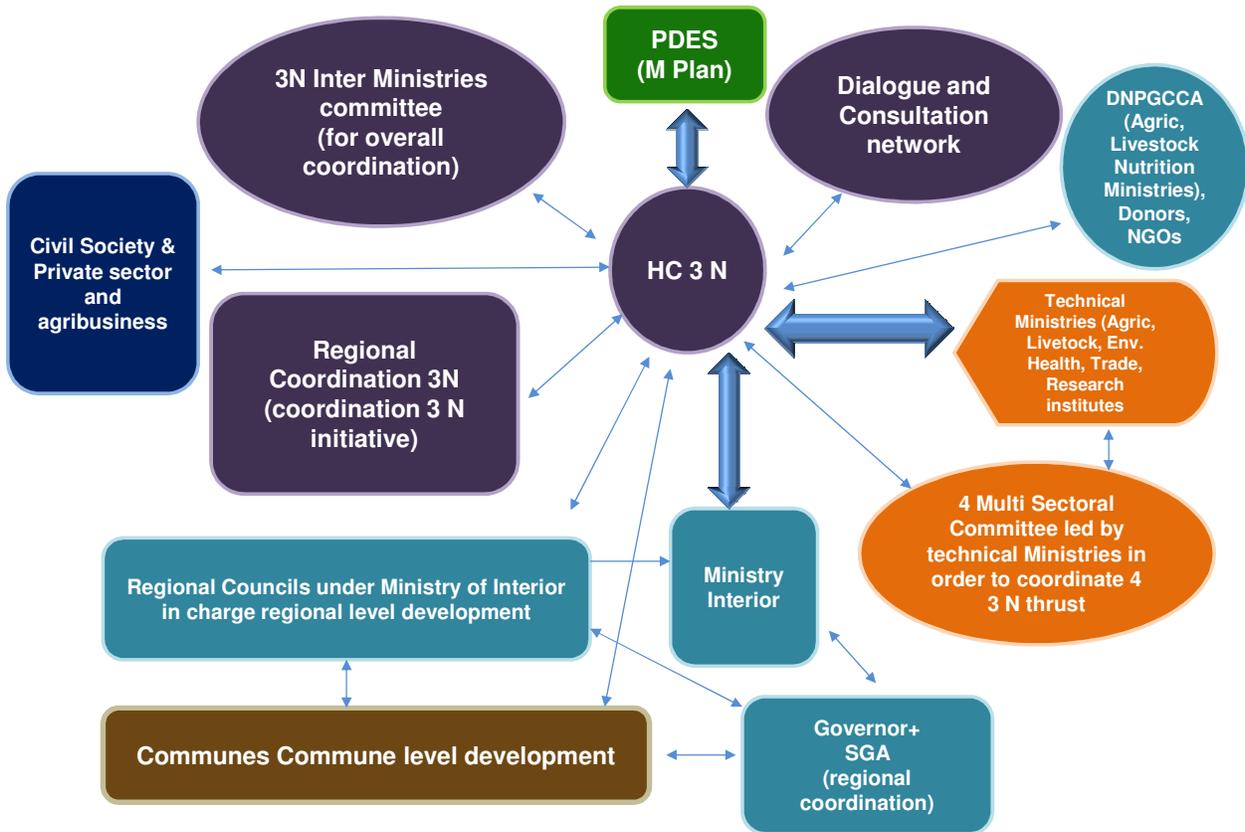


Services connected to the Prime Minister (DNPGCCA, CNEDD, CAPED): These bodies contribute to the mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of activities under their responsibilities including Disaster Prevention and Management.

- The DNPGCCA, for example, has its own structures set up down to the commune level. The DNPGCCA is responsible for coordinating early warning, disaster response and social protection efforts of all actors. This role is directly relevant to Pillar 3 of the 3N Initiative, which addresses risk management and disaster response.
- The CNEDD is responsible for climate change and adaptation therefore is leading the policy change process that will make Niger better able to mitigate the impact of climate change. CNEDD is implementing pilot projects across the country. CNEDD is also supposed to conduct policy research related to climate change and adaptation, which is directly relevant to Pillars 1 and 3 of i3N.
- CAPED is the Strategic Planning Unit established to provide long term strategic development planning expertise to the GON. As the Initiative’s objective will be achieved over medium and long term period CAPED has a role to play in helping HC3N shape and update the 3N Initiative and provide support to the work of the “Department d’Etudes et Programmes et Prospectives”. CAPED facilitated the workshop that led to the current structure of the HC3N. In order to succeed CAPED should have a stronger role to support and lead strategic thinking.

Support Ministries—Ministry of Planning, Spatial Planning and Community Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation: The role of these ministries is to collaborate with HC3N to mobilize internal and external funding for the implementation of the 3N Initiative. They are members of the governing body of the proposed Food Security and Nutrition Investment Fund (FISAN) as well as the interdepartmental committee guidance. Both ministries also play important roles in process modification as Finance has to consider budget implications and Plan has the capacity to support planning and programming. The Ministry of Planning is responsible for coordinating and guiding programs related to the PDES of which the i3N is a subset. At the regional level the Ministry of Planning appoints the SGA who helps governors coordinate the development effort. The Ministry of Finance coordinates all budgeting and expenses, they also oversee all public expenses such government contribution to the 3 N. In some cases they oversee some donor’s contribution for development such as EU. In that case special account is opened in private banks but the Ministry of Finance has to monitor the expenses.

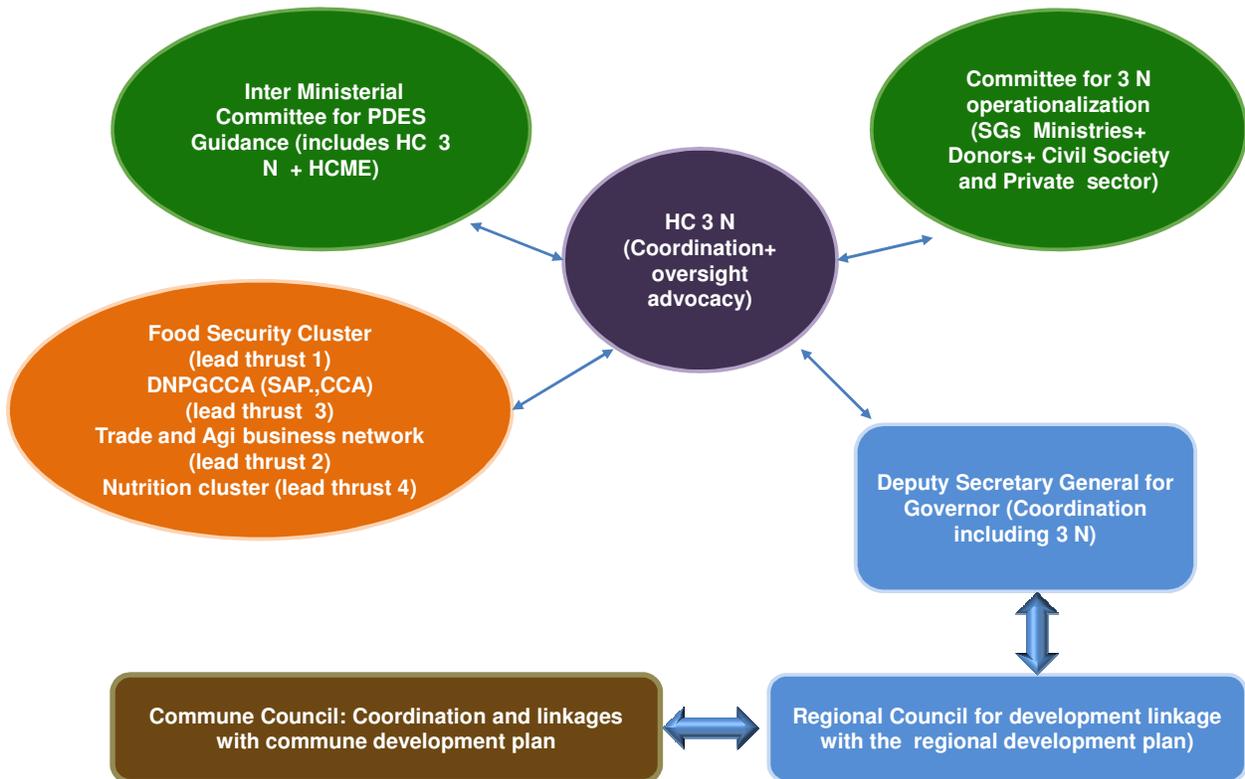
Institutions Identified by the 3 N Strategy



Sectoral ministries (Agriculture, Livestock, Environment, Health etc.) and decentralized technical services: The sectoral ministries and their decentralized services are the project implementers. Under i3N they are to contribute to the mobilization of funds and ensure the compliance to standards and regulations while implementing and or monitoring and supervising the activities done by service providers (private operators, NGOs / DA, CSOs and POs) as well as the implementation of activities under their jurisdiction. Some of them will lead the coordination, the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of work in one of the four technical pillars (Comite Multi-Sectoriels de Pilotage). How each technical ministry plays its role at the local level (region, department and commune) remains to be determined precisely. Their roles at regional and commune levels should be reviewed in line with the roles and expectations expressed by others actors such as private sectors and communes. For example what is their role with regards to the kits design, distribution, monitoring and evaluation? These ministries have staff and structures at regional, department and commune levels.

The Ministry of Agriculture has the following departments and coordinating groups of relevance to the 3N Initiative. It is in charge of extension services, pest control and rural engineering (“Genie Rural”) which manages, among other works, irrigation systems (“amenagement hydro agricole (AHA)”. The AHA program represents over 70% of the i3N budget. This represents a massive investment in irrigated lands and irrigation infrastructure. The Ministry is also in charge of the design and targeted distribution of the commune, village and household level agriculture “kits.” The Ministry of Agriculture is expected to lead and coordinate the work in Pillar 1 which involves livestock and environment as well as agriculture investments. This will be done through the Ministry’s leadership in the Strategic Program Multisectoral

Suggested Institutions and Roles



Committee (“Comite Multisectoriel du Programme Strategique,” of CMPS). The Ministry of Agriculture will also be responsible for the operation of the Priority Investment Program Steering Committee (“Comite de Pilotage de Programme d’Investissement Prioritaire”(COP-PIP)) of the purely crop-focused PIPs, PIP 1&2, which it will ensure along with the lead PTF partner. This Ministry is also overseeing the Unit in charge on inputs imports and distribution which has structure up to some commune. This sometime conflicts with private sectors initiatives.

The Ministry of Livestock is in charge of managing Priority Investment Programs (PIP) 3-5, which are focused on the actions and investments needed to stabilize and intensify animal production. This implies an important role in fund mobilization, animal health control, setting up and ensuring controls and hygiene for meat and related products. It also includes responsibility for targeting and ensuring the distribution of “livestock kits” and the communal, village and household levels as well as provision of technical services to producers. As the body responsible for program implementation for PIP 3-5, the Ministry of Livestock will be responsible for running the relevant livestock COP-PIP, working alongside the designated Technical and Financial Partner (PTF).

The Ministry of Environment (MHE) is in charge of managing PIP 6&7, which relate to sustainable land management and biodiversity as well as adding value to forestry products. This includes a role in fund mobilization and the protection of soil fertility and reforestation and dune stabilization efforts across the country. The Ministry is tasked with the management of “kits” related to their sector. It is the lead agency for the environment and forestry COP-PIP, working closely with other groups such as CNEDD and the designated PTF partner. The MHE also provides services to fisheries and surface water point management, and are responsible for forest management including community access to these resources.

The Ministry of Health (MSP) has the lead role for Pillar 4 of the Initiative, and as such they will chair the CMPS for Pillar 4, working closely with DNPGCCA, which will have primary responsibility for the resilience PIP (PIP 9). The MSP will also play the lead role in PIP 10, the Nutrition PIP, taking responsibility for the relevant COP-PIP, for funds mobilization and monitoring. Other sectors including the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Environment as well as NGOs and UNICEF will be deeply involved in these PIPs as well.

The Ministry of Trade and Promotion of the Private Sector (MC) leads Pillar 2 of i3N, which focuses on processing and marketing of agriculture products. The MC will have to work closely with the technical ministries responsible for production and with the Ministry of Finances which oversees Customs. It is also critical that the MC brings the regional organizations – WAEMU, ECOWAS, and other regional bodies to bear on matters related to cross-border trade. The MC will be responsible for coordinating the players involved in PIP 8 and will run the relevant COP-PIP. The Ministry has technical oversight of the Chamber for Trade, Handicraft and Industry, which, along with producer organizations and private sector agribusiness operators, will play an important role in program design and implementation. With respect to that it is charge of creating and monitoring enabling environment for private and agribusiness development. The have structure up to the region level.

The Ministry of Interior and Decentralization is at the forefront of the decentralization effort. They oversee the 8 Governors at regional levels, and the Prefects at the department levels. They provide technical support to communes and monitor compliance with government rules and regulations. Given that communal and regional commissions are a relatively new phenomenon of the decentralization effort, and that the mandate for i3N implementation is at the commune level. The Ministry of Interior has an important oversight and capacity building responsibility with respect to the development of quality development plans at the regional (PDR) and communal (PDC) levels.

Research and training Institutions. Research and training institutions, while not having a lead role in implementation of the 3N Initiative, do play a role in the acquisition of knowledge and skills necessary to implement the Strategy. They are expected to participate in technology creation, capacity building for operators and producers, monitoring and evaluation as well as in advising the political decision-making and implementation of the various programs of the Strategy. The most important ones are the National Institute for Agriculture (INRAN with linkage to CORAF), Agrhymet and units of CILSS, ICRISAT and LABOCEL livestock laboratory which produce vaccines and provides animal health test. They are expected to develop specific and on demand research and training curriculums that will directly support the 3N.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND OTHER NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE BODIES

The national assembly will deliberate on and adopt the laws that create the enabling environment for the achievement of the I3N (vote the reforms, law and programs, supplementary budget, etc.). Members of the parliament as national politicians will play a significant role in social mobilization for the implementation of this initiative. They will also make and support the international advocacy for resource mobilization, and will play a role in monitoring the extent to which government funds used in the 3N Initiative are achieving the expected results. The National Assembly will be highly involved in the policy actions that the HC3N is expected to lead under the High Commission's central role of capacity building for implementation of the 3N Initiative (PIP 11). For example, the HC3N will have to work closely with the National Assembly on the proposed law on Food and Nutrition Security. A close working relationship

will need to be established so as to address the range of laws that may be needed to address land and other reforms needed to ensure innovation and transformation of the agriculture sector.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONS)

The municipal/communal level has been identified as the gateway to the implementation of the activities of the Initiative. The Municipal Council is supposed to be the body that receives, centralizes, performs preliminary analysis of small scale projects and submits them for approval further up the territorial administration ladder. All projects operating at the municipal level set up committees to approve projects submitted by commune (or municipality). This process is expected to continue for projects undertaken under the 3N Initiative. But, the way commune will access the various “kits” funded under GoN budget for i3N is not yet clear. For investments involving several communities in a region, the Regional Council is the body responsible for planning and programming. Municipal and regional councils provide project management for planned investments in local development plans. Local authorities contribute to the social mobilization and financing 3N Initiative. Both the regional and municipal levels produce development plans at their levels, respectively the Regional Development Plan (“Plan de Developpement Regional” (PDR)) and the Communal Development Plan (“Plan de Developpement Communal” (PDC)). The way in which these plans feed into the PIPs and their subordinated programs and projects is not clear. At the regional level, coordination of development actions of the decentralized ministries is assured by the SGA, working on behalf of the Regional Governor and supported by the Ministry of Plan.

PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS (POS)

Producer organizations are a critical part of the process for various reasons. They provide real on-the-ground knowledge of the factors constraining production and productivity. They give legitimacy to the programs. And, they have a strong incentive to achieve results. POs will identify and sometimes implement projects for their members e.g., infrastructures, inputs to support production: central fertilizer supply, central supply for animal feed, animal feed bank, shop of inputs, irrigation, marketing and warehouse receipt, etc.). Producer organizations are both beneficiaries, financial contributors and / or service providers. They will be involved in consultative bodies designed to ensure mutual accountability, monitoring and evaluation and as a group or individually may be involved in bidding on specific projects. POs, given their deep knowledge of the realities on the ground will play a critical role in identifying and defining policies, program development and execution of activities.

Of the POs in Niger, from the perspective of i3N the most important ones are RECA, the national network of chambers of agriculture, CAPAN, the Niger Pastoralist Association Collective, and Moriben, the small producers’ organization (Moriben, means “misery is finished” in the djerma language). In addition to its national representation, RECA has regional-level agriculture chambers (including livestock) called CRA (Chambre Regionale d’Agriculture) that will play a role at the regional level.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector is the engine that will drive agricultural production and any efforts to increase production aimed at real markets that can lead to increase incomes of farmers large and small. The larger, major operators can help ensure that new technologies are expanded to smaller farmers and livestock producers. While, beyond the Agriculture Chambers there is not a very well organized private agribusiness sector, the private sector is expected to play a role in the I3N process both as participants in consultative meetings as well as implementers (individually) and beneficiaries (as a group) of projects and programs. In addition to the agribusiness enterprises other private sector participants are consultants and

consulting firms (“bureaux d’études”) that will provide critical implementation, studies and consulting services as service providers for the programs under the 3N Initiative.

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CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

Civil Society Organization are critical representations of citizen’s voice and as such compose part of the institutional mapping and environment within which agriculture and food security programming in general and the 3N Initiative in particular, take place. CSOs will contribute to the definition of policies and programs, social mobilization, research funding and implementation of the 3N Initiative as implementing agencies and / or providers. They could play a significant role in term of advocacy and promoting social change expected from and by leaders and citizens. Some of them will also play significant roles as service providers. Among the civil society organization and NGOs most active in Niger’s food security, agriculture and nutrition space are, CODDAE,

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PARTNERS

Technical and financial partners (“PTFs” the initial for the French term, partenaires techniques et financières”) are major players in the context of the implementation of the Strategy. In addition to their substantial financial contribution, they participate in the consultation, monitoring and outcome evaluation. Their involvement in communication and advocacy as well as their suggestions and proposals will be crucial to achieving the expected objectives. Through the Consultative Framework (“Cadre de Concertation”), set up by the HC3N, they will play significant roles in challenging the HC3N in order to perform and promote performance across systems and structures. This group meets sometimes with the SGs of Ministries involved in i3N. The donors also participate in an early warning consultative body set up by DNPGCCA. This is called the CRC (“Comite Restreint de Concertation”) and involves a select group of Niger government and donor early warning and Disaster management structures, and is led by the Prime Minister’s Chief of Staff. The i3N Strategy document anticipated participation of the PTFs in each of the COP-PIPs, where are planned for each of or some combinations of the 11 Priority Investment Programs (PIPs).

INSTITUTIONS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

Within the francophone West African context there are a number of institutions for regional cooperation that play a role as facilitators (advocacy or support partners), donors and agencies to mobilize funding for the 3N Initiative. They may also be involved in the implementation of policy coherence and fluidity of trade and the establishment of regional mechanisms for stockpiling. They include the African Union, in particular its Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, the Nepad CAADP team, ECOWAS, UEMOA (WAEMU), as well as CILSS and CORAF. The participation of regional bodies is particularly sought after for the agriculture products processing and marketing PIP given the importance of regional markets for Niger products and the need to harmonize standards and improve regional trade.

OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES FOR THE 3N INITIATIVE

The Council of Ministers is the primary decision-making body. It ensures guidance and the overall coherence of the i3N and related sectoral policies. It provides the strategic vision of the 3N Initiative nationally. It is supposed to ensure coherence and complementarity of sectoral policies and measures for their implementation. It also has the responsibility to initiate and adopt policies and sectoral strategies,

multi-year budgets and annual reports, laws and regulations to promote the implementation of the i3N and achieving results. No less than once a quarter the HC3N on behalf of all the actors in the 3N Initiative is to make a report (“bilan”) on the state and progress of implementation of the Strategy.

The Inter-Ministerial Oversight Committee (“Comite Inter-Ministeriel d’Orientation”) has a mandate to facilitate the implementation of the 3N Initiative as per the decret 2012-541 /PRN of 13 December 2012. To this end, it is responsible for providing the HC3N and other i3N actors what they need to implement programs. The Inter-Ministerial Committee also provides strategic guidance and operational structures to enhance HC3N performance. The Committee is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the ministries involved in the implementation of the 3N Initiative. The Secretariat will be provided by the 3N High Commissioner. The Inter-Ministerial Committee will report regularly to the Council of Ministers.

OTHER EXISTING BODIES WITH SIMILAR MANDATE AND/OR ROLES

At the National level there is another inter-ministerial body established to oversee the PDES,¹¹ which is also led by the Prime Minister. The HC3N commissioner is a member of this committee, and since the 3N Initiative is a component of the PDES, its food security agenda should naturally be addressed and discussed on a regular basis as part of the PDES other initiatives during these meetings. The fact that the HCME (Haut Commissariat a la Modernisation de l’Etat) is a member of that entity provides a platform for the HC3N to benefit from their expertise in order to lead systematic changes across institutions involved in implementing the 3N Initiative. There is overlap between the i3N and the PDES Inter-Ministerial Oversight Committees and it consequently would be advisable to keep only one and ensure that it works instead of creating additional bodies.

The HC3N has created a transitional coordination body with the Secretary General of key Ministries. This has to date been the main instrument by which the Strategy, other documents, and activities to date have been coordinated. It is expected that this “3N SG Committee” will cease to exist once the CMPS and COP-PIP structures are made operational. The assessment team, however, believes that this is a useful structure to maintain and that it can periodically be extended to include the key donors (Partenaires Techniques et Financiers PTF). The model for this is the “Comite Restreint de Concertation” used by the DNPGCCA.

The Ministry of Agriculture who is supposed to lead the CMP 1 is currently leading the Food Security Cluster. It will be worthwhile to explore ways to improve and review the mandate of the food security cluster in order to ensure full alignment to the 3N Initiative. If this is done properly then the CMPS is not needed.

The Ministry of Trade also leads a network which aims to improve trade, set environment for value chains and cross border trade. Similarly, the National Disaster Management Committee (Early warning Disaster response and social protection units) has a long experience and extended structures down to the communes. The Ministry of Health leads the Nutrition cluster which involves almost all key players in that area. It will be useful to strengthen these existing structures and ensure full alignment to 3N so they covers Pillars 2, 3 and 4. This could involve guidance and support from HC3N.

At the regional level the SGA (Deputy General Secretary) is supposed to coordinate all development activities. Actually he or she is leading the regional disaster management committee. In this role, SGAs receive technical support from UNDP for Disaster Risk management and from OCHA for information

¹¹ Decret 2012-566/PRN December 21st 2012.

management. Such models should inspire the HC3N in order to coordinate, monitor and promote 3N initiative within the regions, department and communes.

HC3N CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

STRUCTURE AND CULTURE

Scale of Overall Performance – Structure and Culture:

Grossly Underperforming	Slightly Underperforming	Adequate Performance	Above Average Performance	Outstanding Performance

Under the Structure and Culture category, the consultants conducted a rapid evaluation of HC3N’s organizational identity and culture, vision and purpose, leadership capacity and style, organizational values, organizational structure, and governance approaches.

Although the 3N Initiative had political support and backing in 2010, the program took shape largely in 2011. Based upon the majority of respondent feedback, the initiative began formally in April 2012, as SDR activities came to a halt. After approximately 9 months of operation at the coordination level, The High Commission and General Secretariat responsible for implementing the 3N Initiative are still in the early stages of operationalizing its organogram, roles and structures. Nevertheless, the assessment team was able to synthesize various early perspectives from 9 of its anticipated 38 staff on the future organizational structure, mandate, and functions of HC3N.

Overall, there were several points of positive feedback on the 3N Initiative and the High Commission. The most laudable aspect of the process has been the successful participatory approaches used to obtain input and feedback into 3N strategic plans and investment plans. Respondents unanimously agree that it was a highly satisfactory strategic planning documentation and investment planning documentation for those who were involved. From these successful exercises, there is adhesion of the actors and stakeholders for the 3N concept. The majority of stakeholders interviewed are satisfied with the availability of a single strategic document that takes a cross sectoral approach to food security. Several members of HC3N staff are also pleased that the 3N documentation goes beyond a political movement to highlight specific activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. Additionally, several HC3N staff is confident in the collective institutional knowledge and educational background of the current 9-person HC3N team.

Organizational Structure

The provisional HC3N team held a retreat in November 2012 to examine the 3N strategic plan and devised a more detailed organizational structure to respond to the mandate of 3N. The output of the retreat was the development of an organizational structure (see diagram below). The organization structure within the diagram is supported by several official texts in the form of decrees and arêtes:

- Decree No. 2012-515/PRN of 29th November 2012
- Arrete No. 001/HC3N of January 10th 2013

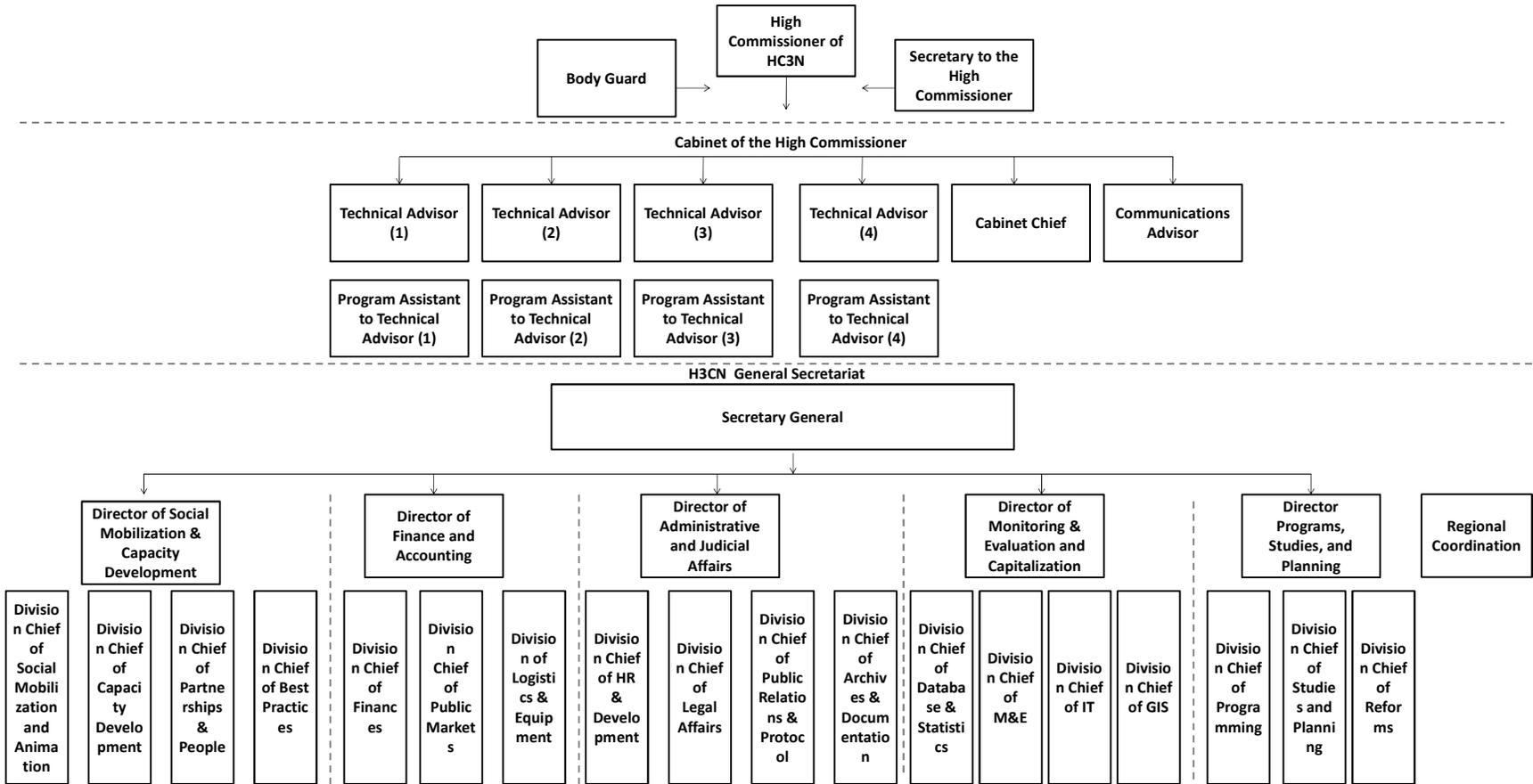
As described within these 2 documents, the HC3N is led by the High Commissioner with 4 Technical Advisors, 4 Assistants to the Technical Advisors, a Communications Advisor, a Cabinet Chief, a Secretary to the High Commissioner, and a body guard. The Secretary General then leads as the direct manager of a departments and divisions supporting the operationalization of the 3N Initiative. Additionally, each department then has three to four division heads. The Secretary General has a supporting secretary/office assistant and he manages the following 5 Department Heads and a Regional Coordination Unit:

- 1) Department of Programs, Studies, and Strategic Planning
- 2) Department of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Best Practices
- 3) Department of Social Mobilization and Capacity Development
- 4) Department of Finance and Accounting
- 5) Department of Administrative and Judicial Affairs

During interviews with HC3N staff, there was some disagreement on the existence of staff beyond the level of Division Chiefs. Although several HC3N Department Heads had an understanding that there would be 2 to 4 staff supporting each division chief, the Cabinet confirmed that there will no staff supporting Division Chiefs.

Overall, the staff strength of the planned organizational structure totals 38 (to the exclusion of additional regional coordination and communal staff, HC3N level security guards, janitors, and groundskeepers). (see diagram below).

Current Planned Organizational Structure
38+ Staff



A key strength of the organizational structure is the consultative processes that HC3N used to develop it. HC3N staff convened and consulted each other and worked together to carefully consider functions and responsibilities such as archives, documentation, protocols, information technology, M&E, communications, planning, administration, finances, logistics, social mobilization, and other domains. However this consultation process did not necessarily result in the ideal organizational structure that is best suited for the coordination of the 3N mandate. This point of feedback is based upon comparison with similar African coordinating bodies with the same mandate. Also, this point of feedback is reflective of the assessment team's experience in evaluating structures that have a clear mission or results and assessing whether the structure supports and enable the mission.

Another strength of the organizational structure is the composition and positioning of the 4-person technical advisory team that supports the High Commissioner. Each technical advisor, however, should ensure to represent a strategic pillar of the 3N strategic plan and provide clearly-defined advice and support to the High Commissioner.

At the same time, the assessment team found the organizational structure too similar to structures found in traditional Ministries. Given the limited mandate and execution period of the 3N initiative, the structure should take on a more results-oriented, functional approach.

Secondly, the total number of expected staff within the planned HC3N structure totals 38 persons excluding regional coordination staff, HC3N level security guards, janitors, and groundskeepers. A wide cross-section of respondents expressed concerns about the Commission's ability to remain 'light and agile' in order to coordinate functions with this current planned structure. Therefore, the Commission should ensure that it does not create heavy, permanent infrastructures that operate too similarly to the Ministries.

Thirdly, instituting the same nomenclature for departments and divisions as found in the Ministries has the potential to send the wrong message to stakeholders. This communicates that HC3N intends to 'substitute', 'take over', and/or 'create parallel' departmental systems to the Ministries. The HC3N may want to reconsider its naming strategy for its departments to send a clearer, stronger message of 'support, service, and coordination' to its stakeholders.

Finally, when examining the overall organizational structure and governance style of the Commission, it sends yet another message of a longer trajectory than its 2015 mandate. The majority of respondents is cognizant that the 3N initiative and high commission is 'time-bound' with a finite start and end date. Therefore, stakeholders felt that the 'light and agile' organizational structure should already be operational and that the current focus should be on monitoring and providing useful information on the full suite of active 3N-related projects.

Identity and Culture

In terms of the overall identity and culture of HC3N, respondents have reported that they appreciate the HC3N's earlier approach and working style to coordinate key stakeholders in the public sector, private sector, civil society, and general public to clearly justify the need for 3N. However for many stakeholders, the role of 3N and the Ministry of Agriculture are still confusing and quite unclear. Respondents report that since the Round Table in November 2012, HC3N has visibly declined in its effort to coordinate and communicate with stakeholders. In response to these perceptions, HC3N should take precautionary measures to preserve its reputation as coordinators and communicate more often. While disseminating a consistent message of which coordination, service, and support.

As a final point of feedback, the physical layout of the HC3N offices poses direct challenges to its capacity to coordinate. Currently the Commission is physically divided into 2 buildings, the HC3N Secretariat is located in one area of town while the Annex (the old SDR offices) is located in another area of town. Staff within the secretariat are divided between these two buildings and meeting, communication and collaboration are affected due to this physical separation. Furthermore, each department and division is separated by a series of closed, individual office doors. This physical separation of offices has the potential to impose barriers to open coordination and communication between departments and divisions.

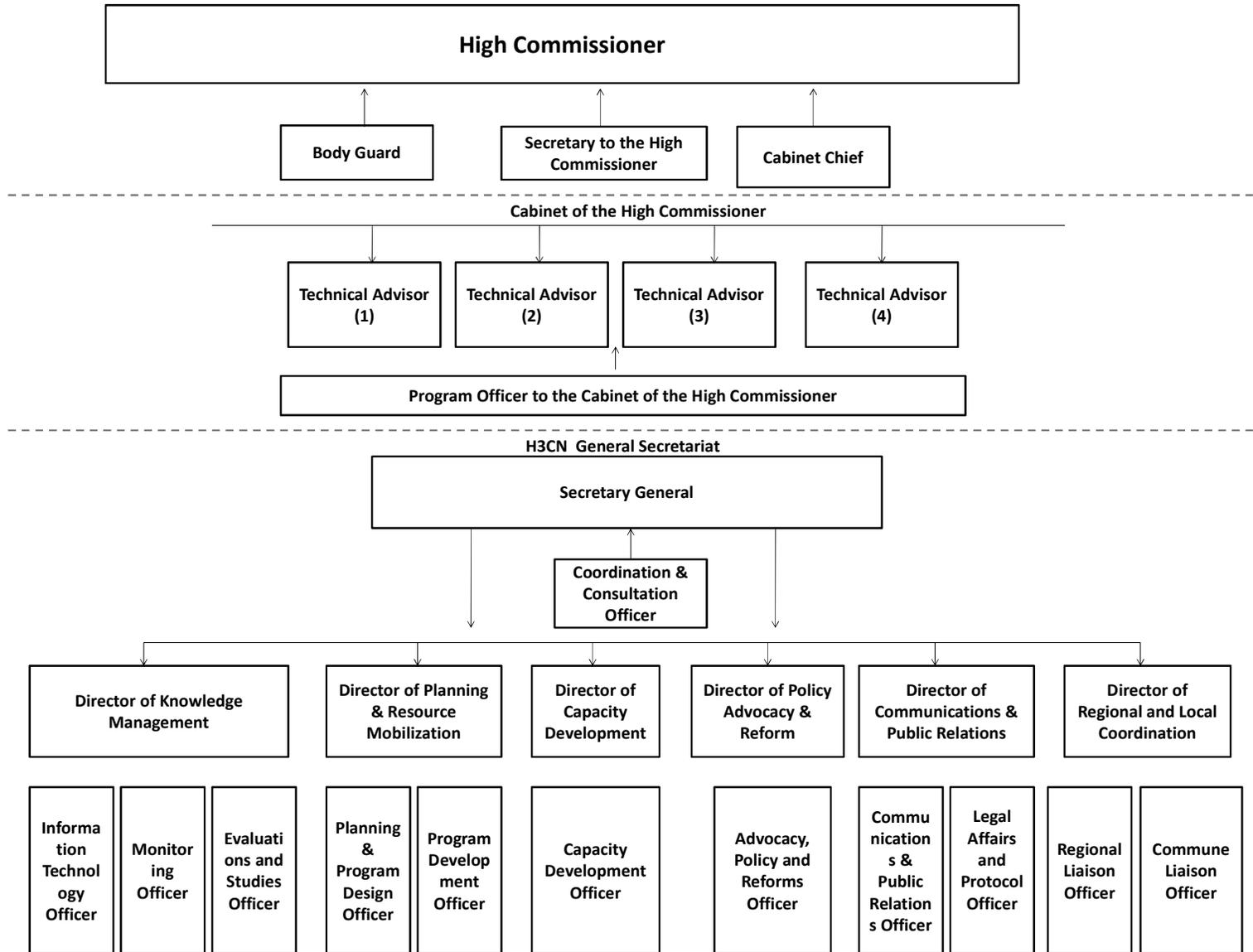
To encourage a more cohesive spirit of collaboration while achieving results under a short period of time, the Commission should reevaluate its current office layout and physical positioning of departments and divisions. It would be advisable to occupy 1 larger office building that can accommodate all HC3N staff under one roof. Also, the commission can entertain organizational practices such as an open-door policies and open work-spaces that can increase levels of cross-departmental collaboration and communication.

Taking all these points of feedback into consideration, there may be a need to be re-evaluate the organizational structure to one of a more condensed, service-oriented, results-based, coordinating body all working together in one building. Based upon interviews with the High Commissioner for the Modernization of the State, these organizational practices and approaches are indeed possible and highly encouraged and supported. Therefore, the HC3N should be encouraged to go beyond the comfort zone of Ministry-like reporting lines and systems and develop stronger linkages with the Ministry of Modernization to transform HC3N into a lean, functional unit focused on short-term results and impact.

The assessment team has developed the diagram below as an alternative yet realistic recommended structure based upon the immediate functions of HC3N. Synthesizing interview responses from the High Commissioner, the Secretary General, and other key senior staff, HC3N has a prioritized mandate to:

- Mobilize Resources
- Coordinate Stakeholders
- Monitor & Evaluate Projects
- Communicate Results and Information for Decision-Making
- Reform Policies and Create Enabling Environments

Revised and Recommended Organizational Structure (realistic option)
28+ staff



The commission is expected to mobilize resources, provide M&E data, reform policies, communicate across stakeholders, and contribute to the planning of projects, while facilitating, regional and communal participation. Therefore, the proposed alternative structure directly captures these functions. As a last point of recommendation within the suggested diagram, note that staff strength is 28 as opposed to 38, with a lower number of functional positions in highly performing coordination roles.

OPERATIONS/ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

Scale of Overall Performance – Operations and Administrative Systems:

Grossly Underperforming	Slightly Underperforming	Adequate Performance	Above Average Performance	Outstanding Performance

Under the Operations and Administrative category, the consultants conducted a rapid evaluation of HC3N’s financial management (budgeting, accounting, fundraising, and sustainability), human resource management (staff recruitment, placement, and support), information management, knowledge management and M&E systems, communications and public relations systems, regional coordination mechanisms, and administrative procedures and management systems. HC3N has yet to implement various systems across several operational domains.

Financial Management

According to the 3N available documentation, the overall projected cost of 3N Initiative programs is currently estimated at 1 trillion FCFA or 2.1 billion USD for the period spanning 2012 to 2015. Within this budget, the HC3N coordinating budget is assigned approximately 5% of the grand total or 101 million USD. In 2012, the HC3N coordination operating budget exclusive of salaries was 1.2 million USD. For 2013, the planned HC3N coordination operating budget exclusive of salaries is approximately 1.1 million USD. Therefore, the commission has only been utilizing 5% of its planned HC3N budget; although it had projected plans for an HC3N budget of 20 million USD per year. It is also important to note that salaries are not factored within these budgets figures, thereby grossly misrepresenting the overall HC3N budget. According to respondent interviews, salaries for HC3N staff largely come from civil service and are fully covered by the Ministry of Finance Budget. Salaries come directly from the Ministries, particularly from where the HC3N ministry staff person was transferred. It is also important to note that any salary increase or adjustment as a result of transferring to HC3N is also born by the Ministry of Finance.

In terms of generation of funds, fundraising and resource mobilization efforts are largely the responsibility of the High Commissioner and his higher-level Cabinet. The High Commissioner and his Cabinet appear well-positioned politically to secure funds and commitments. According to Cabinet interviews, the HC3N has successfully secured approximately 25% (540 million USD) of its 2.1 billion USD target through sources outlined in the Donor Pledges List below. Funding amounts below, however, may not exclusively reflect funds for the purposes of 3N.

DONOR PLEDGES LIST AS OF FEBRUARY 1ST, 2013

	Donor/Sponsor	Funding Amount in USD
1	WAEMU/OEMOA	50 million USD
2	Germany	7 million Euro in new money + 65 million Euro
3	France	200 million (not exclusive)
4	Belgian Humanitarian	20,000,000 Euro
5	World Bank	311 million USD
6	Banque Africaine de Developpement	200,000 million USD
7	Denmark	56 million USD
8	Spain	27.3 million USD
9	EU	64 million Euro (not exclusive)
10	United Nations	340 million USD
11	FIDA	150 million USD
12	Italy	25 million Euro
	TOTAL	546 million USD

Although the systems for lobbying and advocacy are well underway within the Commission, there are recognizable gaps in the ongoing management of the donor pledges list, donor profiles, donor documentation, funds tracking tables, and resource mobilization documentation.

Human Resources Management

In terms of human resources management systems, this Division of Human Resources and Training will officially operate as a subdivision of the New Department of Administrative and Judicial Affairs. Under the provisional organizational structure, Human Resources falls under the Department of Administration and Finance which included Finance, Accounting, Procurement/Logistics, and all other Administrative Affairs.

From key informant interviews of staff and staff backgrounds, the overall education profile and qualifications of current staff demonstrate an understanding of the agricultural and food security context, however professional management and coordination skills of senior-level staff are not clear. What appeared most lacking were expectations of each director and division along with clear results, expectations, activities and plans.

When examining hiring practices, according to several key informants, the processes for recruitment and selection of staff are not consistently publicized or systematic. Hiring and recruiting practices, for the most part, have mostly involved the practice of ‘mise a disposition’, the special appointment of Ministry staff by a high-ranking official. In order to better align with human resources practices encouraged by the Ministry of Modernization, HC3N should enforce more systematic hiring processes with evidence of advertised job postings, shortlisted resumes, and criteria for selection to maintain and manage high caliber staff and results. This approach also creates an environment of expected performance on the job, where staff would most likely to continuously produce results in order to maintain their jobs. The approach of “mise a disposition” has the potential to ultimately work against a results-oriented environment where staff may feel politically entitled to titles/positions and feel less pressure to produce results.

Another point of consideration is the homogeneous profile and background of HC3N staff. Currently staff largely come from the ministries and civil service. In order to be more representative of the wide range of food security stakeholder perspectives and backgrounds, HC3N senior management should require diverse backgrounds reflected in the HC3N structure. As indicated by the Ministry of Modernization, HC3N can hire private sector and civil society consultants with varying perspectives and social networks to enhance the HC3N team. Several ministries in Niger have previously established examples of hiring non-civil servants on a contract basis for specified scopes of work, therefore this is very possible. This decision to diversify staff and encourage varying perspectives requires strong leadership and commitment on the part of senior management as well as a highly professional human resources staff to execute this approach. . In conclusion, adding staff from various backgrounds and perspectives beyond ministry staff would significantly enhance HC3N environment and work culture. Most importantly, having a variation in staff backgrounds will enhance the understanding of the coordination mandate along the agricultural value chain.

Once employed at HC3N, the organization is in critical need of a structured performance management system. This will encourage management practices focused on **results and performance** linked to M&E indicators from the HC3N mandate. The purpose of this performance management system would be to demonstrate clear links between 3N results and specific departments and divisional staff persons within the organizational structure. For example, achievements made in policy reforms could be clearly linked to the Department of Policy Advocacy and Reforms, which then links to SPO 20: Promoting reforms and aligning policies and strategies.

In this way, departments and divisions could have clear activities and tasks that directly contribute to expected published results. Ultimately, the performance management system ensures direct accountability for results from each staff person and operationalizes the concept of ‘results based management’. Instituting a performance management system led by the High Commissioner, managed by the Secretary General, and executed by the human resources division has the strongest potential to create a more results-based environment. Within HC3N, the performance-based management system would be best instituted by the Secretary General using electronic software, supporting human resources, and structured management techniques.

M&E, Information Management, and Knowledge Management

The Department of M&E and Lessons Learned (“Capitalisation”) oversees database systems, monitoring systems, and evaluation systems. In terms of information management, knowledge management and M&E, the current HC3N M&E Department demonstrates a strong understanding of how the system is supposed to work but respondents cite limited evidence of disseminated information from the M&E department. Currently, the monitoring and evaluation department has an excellent command of indicators that are to be tracked at the regional/communal level, ministerial level, and at HC3N/impact level. The department has developed detailed indicators that are to be monitored across all three levels.

The Director’s demonstrated understanding of the relationship between databases and M&E will provide great future benefits to the accessibility and quality of information for reporting on results. However the current concern is “where is the data and how does it translate into useful information?”, “What will be the interesting findings that will enhance food security debates in Niger and will HC3N be the ones to provide this cutting-edge information?”, “Will HC3N be at the forefront of providing this critical information in a timely and useful manner to necessary stakeholders? “. “What reports do the department plan to produce and for whom and for which purposes?”. “Is there any information that the M&E

department can be currently analyzing and providing to stakeholders today to show the value of HC3N?" Perhaps it is too early for the assessment team to ask such questions; yet, this results-driven approach and aggressive communication style needs to better resonate across the entire organization.

The M&E department should gain a near perfect understanding of the data and reports that will be expected from it by confirming with collaborating financial and technical partners and stakeholders. Meeting the information demands and expectations of stakeholders will greatly enhance the perception of success of HC3N.

There are, however, several points of feedback for the M&E Department. Although impact indicators at the HC3N level are few in number, the total of number of indicators that are to be tracked within the M&E system total to 365. These indicators may need to be reduced or condensed to determine what is as critical and necessary for decision-making. Following this condensing exercise, the Department should then immediately determine and widely publicize these indicators specifically along with baselines values and targets values. This open communication of indicators will implicate the HC3N into consistently communicating results to its stakeholders.

In terms of the operationalization of the M&E Department, there are some ongoing concerns. The department director has a realistic understanding of the required data collection system and training requirements needed to make the system work. There will be a need to inform and train personnel at the communal, regional, and ministerial level to collect specific information related to the 3N initiative. The coordination and cooperation of data aggregators are critical to the success of the M&E Department. Therefore, the assessment team advises that the Director document a systematic and structured process for training data aggregators to manage the up flow of data from the field level to the High commission level. The department is advised to seek the services of qualified trainers to work alongside all those collecting data for quality assurance purposes. This also includes the consideration of a remuneration system and supporting budget that encourages timely and accurate collection of data with a focus on quality data.

Communications and Public Relations

Perhaps one of the most common points of criticism from respondents was the growing deficit of communications and information from HC3N after the roundtable in Paris. Although the Cabinet did an excellent job in communicating the processes for creating the strategic framework and investment plans before the roundtable, the role of HC3N has not been well communicated, advertised, or explained to stakeholders. Simply put, stakeholders do not understand the purpose, mission, role or expected outputs of HC3N.

Through interviews with the Cabinet, the assessment team found that the team was well versed on its mandate internally; however those interviewed externally do not share the same level of confidence in the HC3N role and mandate. Information also seems centralized at the senior level Cabinet, and the status of resource mobilization efforts, projects underway, and organizational plans, are not always systematically communicated to all directors and divisions. This indicates deficits in internal communications and information sharing, hence the need for the organization to remain small and well-coordinated under one roof. There is a critical need to systematically share information and plans from the HC and SG levels to all other levels of the organization.

Moreover, the Communications Advisor will have the immediate task of strengthening internal communications with a structured system for advertising internal meetings, internal schedules, and internal policies and procedures. Similarly, the Communications Advisors will need to develop a high

quality approach towards communicating the value-added benefit of the HC3N. Whilst communicating the value of HC3N, the Advisor will need to manage and alter perceptions and growing concerns that ‘activities have not started at HC3N’. If activities have indeed started, the Communications Advisor would need to demonstrate and share these activities by linking with the M&E department.

It is also advisable that the High Commissioner =, Secretary General and Cabinet work closely with the Communications Advisor to consistently update its financial and technical partners. Most importantly, the HC3N may want to develop a motto or slogan reiterating and establishing its role of “coordination, service, and support”. Such approaches may help to better communicate the purpose, role, and value of HC3N amongst stakeholders.

Information Technology Systems and Structures

Currently, the website is acceptable because it offers generic information on the initiative. It appears that a high level of initial effort was made to erect the website. However, the expectations of financial and technical partners are that the website is maintained with real-time information and data. Moreover, the website should link to a database management system and provide a more dynamic experience of accessing 3N data. This kind of website requires a dedicated resource in the form of an out-sourced web master or an in-house information communication technology expert.

Further to information technology systems, the M&E Department may need to evaluate the best software to store its data. For example, there are significant benefits and disadvantages to using Excel versus Access versus Oracle software. Also, the data can be linked to internal administration systems that manage other operations. What software is being used by the Finance Department, the Human Resources Department, and the Department of Planning? Can these systems be merged so that results can be more centrally tracked and managed? These questions of architecture of software systems require leadership and forethought from highly qualified information technology specialists that understand software but rather value architecture and planning of information systems.

As a final point of feedback, several HC3N staff is currently using personal yahoo accounts for the exchange of professional information. This should become an unacceptable practice and does not reflect the professionalism and coordination of the organization or the initiative. The core information technology team should assign emails, and establish a core intranet platform where information on HC3N meetings, conferences, and internal staff travel schedules are accessible and available.

Regional Coordination Mechanisms

Respondents consistently reported a shortfall of HC3N to harness regions and communes in a structured and impactful way. Interviews with a sample cohort of regional and communal representatives resulted in two clear messages:

- (1) Communication is not systematic and is limited, so regional and communal structures do not necessarily know what is going at the HC3N level
- (2) Existing structures are in place at the regional and communal levels, and respondents encourages that the structures be used as opposed to introducing temporary structures.

From the level of HC3N, the assessment team has also noted slight confusion on planned coordination structures for regional coordination. From interviews, the assessment team captured different views on HC3N plans to structure regional coordination. One suggestion is to have a mini-HC3N structure

operating at the regional level. While, there is another suggestion to have one Regional Coordinator at the HC3N National level and three-person teams operating at the regional level.

Project Management and Administrative Functions

The SG should have a clear command of the expected results of the commission, and stratify those results across departments. Departments should more frequently report to the SG and provide regular updates on activities and tasks within clear time frames. This ongoing management of performance and results should be clearly documented by the SG and consistently communicated to the High Commissioner on a weekly basis. Given the workload and commitments of the current SG, an additional human resource should be solely assigned to the SG to document and track resource mobilizations efforts, maintain global work plans, monitor departmental work plans, track results from M&E, and schedule consistent internal meetings to ensure that results are being achieved across departments. Hence, the importance for HC3N to operate under one building and in close collaboration.

One current example of improved performance involves work planning. According to assessment team observations, the HC3N team is still in the process of finalizing its work plan for the year 2013. From this work plan, department –wide work plans, activities, tasks, and job descriptions will emerge. The process for rolling out these critical management documents is somewhat on a slow trajectory as January 2012 comes to a close. The team may need to institute stronger deadlines with faster turnaround times so that departments and divisions can take immediate action.

INDIVIDUAL (STAFF) CAPACITY NEEDS

The assessment team distributed questionnaires to HC3N staff to solicit recommendations and opinions on courses that could enhance the efficiency of the Commission. Nearly all staff promptly responded with comments, recommendations, and suggestions. From the exercise, it became quite clear that HC3N staff is eager to improve operations and learn professional techniques on how to improve their performance on the job.

Furthermore, HC3N staff has an excellent understanding of the required functions and mandate of their peers and Departments.

Therefore, the gaps remain in actualization and operationalization of work plans on a daily basis that leads to impact.

Synthesizing questionnaire responses from staff, we found that several management and technical courses were more frequently recommended than others. In general, the five most desired and most recommended courses were (in order of priority): See Diagram xx

- Database Management (14 mentions)
- Techniques in Program Planning (13 mentions)
- Techniques in Coordination, Consultation, and Facilitation (13 mentions)
- Methods in Resource Mobilization (13 mentions)
- Techniques in Effective Communication (12 mentions)

In addition to these core courses, the assessment team also recommends Advanced Leadership and a Practical Results-Based Management Course. The leadership course will help to inspire staff as a coordination unit and motivate the team to make the necessary organizational changes to meet its

mandate. The practical course on results-based management will force all staff to evaluate their individual work plans and how their daily outputs link to the results of HC3N. Currently, the rhetoric on RBM is quite high, yet results are still not documented, shared, and demonstrated despite this theoretical appreciation of RBM.

Also, each department would benefit from the following capacity development courses.

PROPOSED SCHEMA OF COURSES FOR INCREASED RESULTS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

	High Commission, Technical Advisors, and Secretary General	Dept. of Programs, Studies, and Strategic Planning	Dept. of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Best Practices	Dept. of Social Mobilization and Capacity Development	Dept. of Finance and Accounting	Dept. of Administrative and Judicial Affairs	Administrative Level
1	Advanced Leadership	Advanced Leadership	Advanced Leadership	Advanced Leadership	Advanced Leadership	Advanced Leadership	Practical Results Based Mgmt
2	Practical Results Based Mgmt	Database Mgmt.	Database Mgmt.	Practical Results Based Mgmt	Practical Results Based Mgmt	Practical Results Based Mgmt	Techniques In Effective Communication
3	Techniques In Coordination, Consultation & Facilitation	Practical Results Based Mgmt	Practical Results Based Mgmt	Techniques In Coordination, Consultation & Facilitation	Methods In Resource Mobilization	Techniques In Effective Communication	Database Mgmt.
4	Methods In Resource Mobilization	Techniques In Coordination, Consultation & Facilitation	Techniques In Effective Communication	Performance Mgmt. & Staff Development	Techniques In Effective Communication	Website Mgmt. & Social Media For Improved Communication	English As A Second Language
5	Techniques In Effective Communication	Methods In Resource Mobilization	Project Mgmt. - Planning Of Work	Techniques In Effective Communication		Performance Mgmt. & Staff Development	
6	Project Mgmt. - Planning Of Work	Techniques In Effective Communication	Website Mgmt. & Social Media For Improved Communication				
7	Performance mgmt. & staff development	Project Mgmt. - Planning of work					
8	Website Mgmt. & Social Media for improved Communication	Impact Assessments					
9		Policy Analysis & Reform					

It is important to note that training courses should not be excessively longer than one-week nor should they remove staff from their post for a significant period of time. Efforts should be made to bring

practical, results-oriented training consultants on-site to train, assist and coach staff in the office and on-the-job.

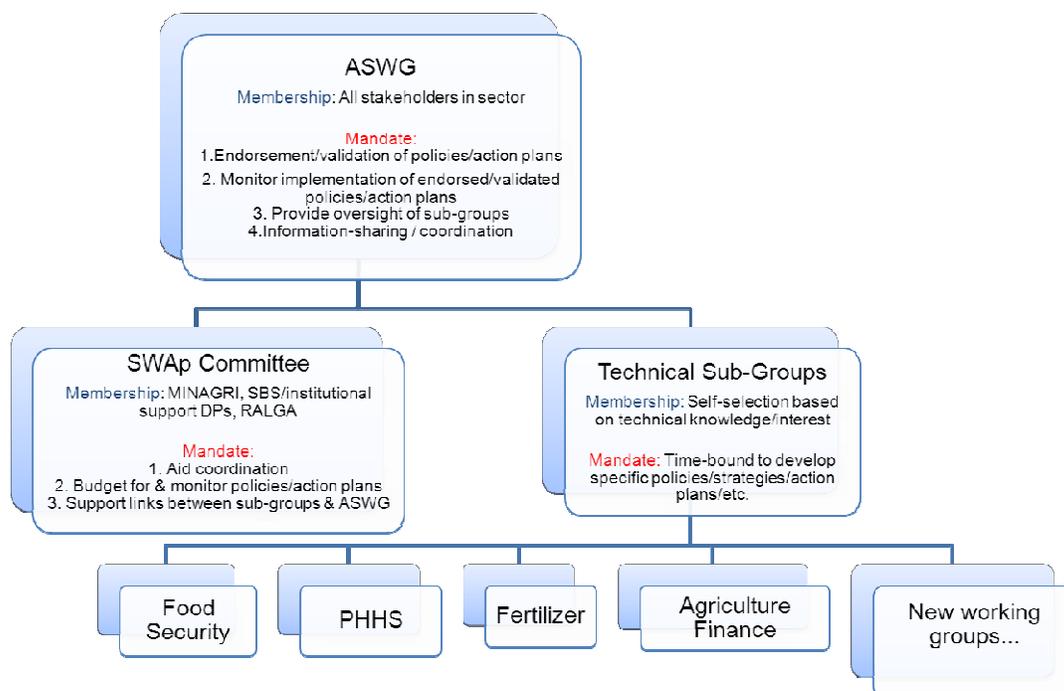
EXAMPLES FROM RWANDA, ETHIOPIA AND KENYA

Every country and jurisdiction has its own idiosyncracies, institutional culture and history of governance, thus the team presents examples from other countries realizing full well that they grow out of different circumstances, environments and pressures. That said, governance systems evolve and can improve over time as lessons are learned internally, and approaches from elsewhere are considered and tested. It is in that spirit that the team presents approaches to coordinating similar agriculture and food security programs in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Kenya.

The main lesson from the experiences in these countries is that one size does not fit all. But the goal of coordination of disparate efforts must be balanced against cost reasonableness and the goals must also be realistic.

In Rwanda, the Agriculture Sector Working Group (ASWG) is the main coordinating body for Rwanda’s CAADP-aligned National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP), called the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PSTA). As the chart below shows, the ASWG includes representation from each line ministry, development partners/donors (DP) and key stakeholders. The ASWG is co-chaired by the Minister/Permanent Secretary (PS) of Agriculture and a representative of a lead donor agency, currently the World Bank. The ASWG has ten prioritized policy actions tied to five key indicators with annual targets that reach down through the MoA. The Ministry of Finance (MoF) is the hub where annual targets, resources and accountability are managed for each sector. Cabinet members have a target setting exercise with the President where they make a personal commitment to performance achievement and are held accountable.

The Common Performance Accountability Framework (CPAF) indicators and priorities set the agenda for the ASWG. The ASWG has ten prioritized policy actions tied to five key indicators with annual targets that reach down through the Ministry. The lead donor provides secretariat support to the ASWG that



includes working jointly with the MoA lead on the development and circulation of a meeting agenda, documentation for meetings, list of participants and minutes. The ASWG meets at a minimum every two months with Technical Working groups meeting as appropriate (e.g., monthly).

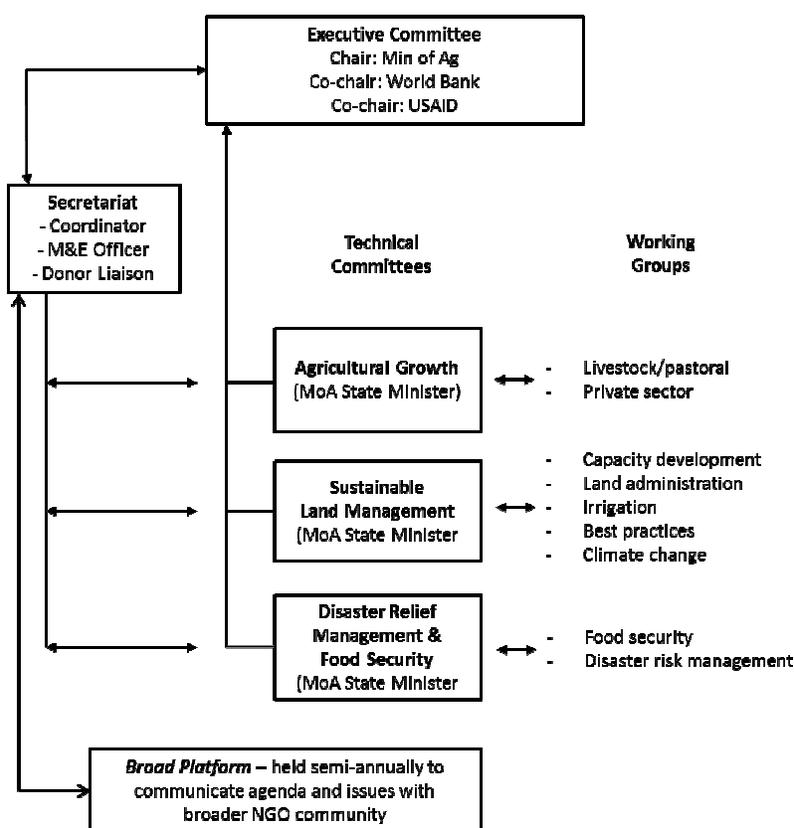
The ASWG predated CAADP but was used as the structure to respond to CAADP goals.

In Ethiopia, the body responsible for coordinating the CAADP-aligned National Agriculture Investment Plan, the Agriculture Sector Policy and Investment Framework (PIF), is effectively a government-donor body called the Rural Economic Development and Food Security Working Group (REDFS). The REDFS, which focuses on agriculture, food security and natural resources management, was formally established in April 2008 and is one of several government-donor sector working groups in Ethiopia established under the DAG. The DAG coordinates development assistance in furtherance of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which places an emphasis on country-owned and led processes, harmonization and alignment of external assistance with national policies and programs, and promotion of mutual accountability for results. The REDFS coordinates and approves all development partner food security support to Ethiopia.

The REDFS has a governance and operational structure that includes an Executive Committee, a Secretariat, three Technical Committees, and a number of Task Forces/Working Groups. The ExCom meets a minimum of four times per year and the GoE has defined the responsibilities of the REDFS as follows:

- Program and Policy Review and Reform: Direct, monitor and discuss implementation progress and policy reform initiatives within the sector
- Implementation: Identify ways for enhancing capacity for program planning and implementation.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Monitor PIF implementation and the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- Harmonization: Dialogue and promote harmonization on donor procedures, align aid to GoE priorities, promote the use of national systems, and ensure government ownership and leadership within the sector.

Table 1: CAADP/Ethiopia Management Structure: The DAG Sector Working Group on Rural Economic Development and Food Security



REDFS Secretariat: A full-time Secretariat manages and coordinates the day-to-day work of the REDFS ExCom, TCs and Working Groups. The Secretariat has three full-time positions: Coordinator, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer, and Donor Liaison. The Coordinator and M&E Office work out of an office within the MoA, which is adjacent to the office of one of the MoA’s State Ministers.

The government of Kenya has established the Agriculture Sector Coordinating Unit (ASCU). The Agricultural Sector Coordination Unit (ASCU) is a secretariat of ten ministries that supports and coordinates the implementation of the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy 2010 – 2020 (ASDS) and its Medium-Term Investment Plan (2010–2015). It was created in 2005, and was formally established and given legal status in February 2009. The ASDS and its investment plan are aligned with the African Union’s Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the Millennium Development Goals.

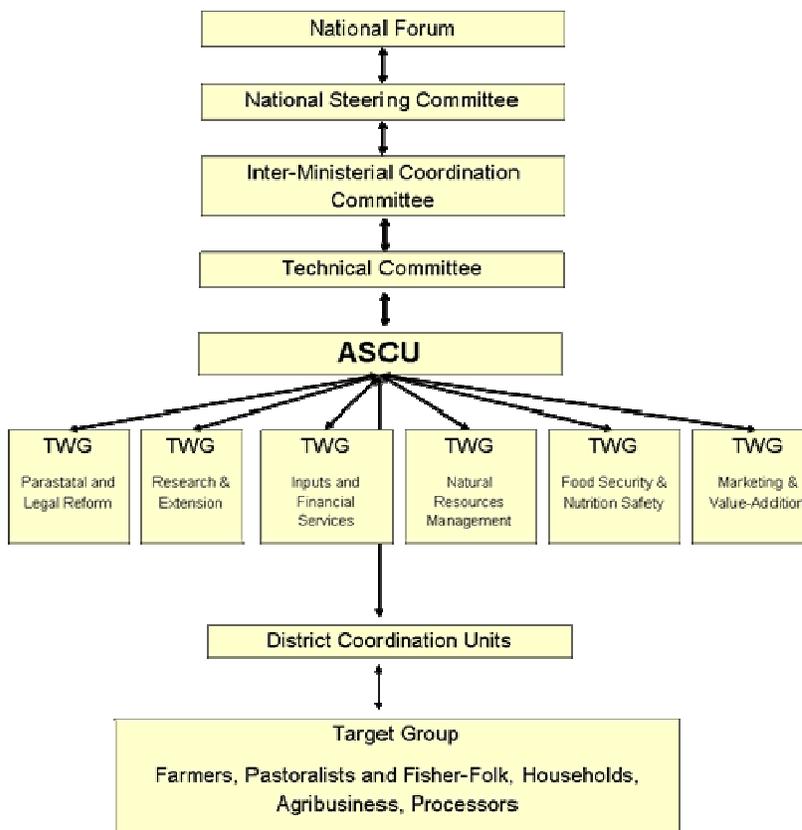
As of late 2011, ASCU had fourteen staff. ASCU is headed by a Coordinator who oversees the day to day running of the Unit. The Coordinator is assisted by three Deputy Coordinators: Finance and Administration; Policy and Planning; and Monitoring and Evaluation. Program Officers work under each Deputy Coordinator and support staff are included as part of the administrative team. The Unit also has an Information Communication Officer and a Procurement Officer. For procurement management, ASCU operates under the guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture’s (MoA) Supply Chain Division. Some of ASCU’s staff are seconded from and paid by the MoA.

The ASCU has an annual operating budget of approximately US \$1.6 million. Some of this funding is provided by development partners. The proposed Agricultural Sector Medium-Term Investment Plan is USD 3.09 billion (2010-2015).

Purpose: ASCU’s objective is to coordinate and align the work of Kenya’s various agriculture sector institutions in support of the ASDS’ objectives. ASCU’s purpose includes removing duplication of effort and promoting efficiency, harmonization and private sector participation.

Mandate and Activity: The primary role of ASCU is to:

- Provide policy advice to the national ministries and institutes, including initiating studies to inform policy formulation and program implementation;
- Monitor and fast-track the implementation of the ASDS across the agricultural sector;



- Influence resource allocation to areas of highest impact; and
- Coordinate activities of the sector ministries and other stakeholders in implementing the vision of the agricultural sector.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

HC3N conducted a highly participatory and successful process towards the development of the 3N concept, strategic framework and investment plans. However, the current organization does not demonstrate results-based evidence nor is it structured optimally. The general stakeholder perspective of HC3N is that its beginning efforts were commendable, however, the organizational is negatively folding onto itself due to:

- Limited ability to communicate results and demonstrate value-added attributes of HC3N
- severe deficits in internal and external communications
- delayed operationalization of structures and systems
- limited quality assurance and management of structures and systems
- duplication of consultative structures and decision-making bodies
- overconfidence in stakeholder perception
- failure to lead by example with new ways of doing business and modernization (meetings, communication, reporting and performance management, HR management etc.)

HC3N needs to establish better structures and systems to operate – more specifically in the areas of communications, project management, organizational work-planning, information communication technology, human resources management, resource mobilization, information sharing with financial and technical partners, and regional coordination.

Most importantly, the secretariat general requires immediate management support to plan, track and manage other operational departments. This will result in a clearer indication and documentation of how departments are performing and progress towards desired impacts.

Specific recommendations are outlined in terms of near-term, medium term, and long-term:

NEAR TERM (within the next 60 days)

- Reevaluate the Organizational Structure
- Use existing mechanisms and structures both within the ministries and at the regional and communal levels
- Implements a communications (internal and external) strategy
- Determine targets and baseline values for a condensed list of indicators that demonstrate clear result
- Assign an additional human resource solely assigned to the SG to document and track resource mobilizations efforts, maintain global work plans, monitor departmental work plans, track results from

M&E, and schedule consistent internal meetings to ensure that results are being achieved across departments

- Outsource website maintenance to a skilled company and create a more dynamic website with links to the HC3N M&E database
- Ensure that an information technology team should assign emails, and establish a core intranet platform where information is centralized on HC3N meetings , conferences, and internal staff travel schedules
- An information technology resource person should assign emails, and establish a core intranet platform that provides information on HC3N meetings , conferences, and internal staff travel schedules

MEDIUM TERM (within the next 120 days)

- Develop a M&E data aggregation training program
- Ensure that there are dedicated resources towards policy reforms and creating enabling environments
- Develop a performance management system that allows senior management to monitor and focus on results from its departments and divisions
- Offer professional development courses onsite and by knowledgeable consultant trainers who can assist with practical implementation

LONGTERM (within the next 180 days)

- Develop structured human resource practices to ensure high caliber staff with results oriented approaches
- Actively identify lessons learned from the Rural Development Strategy efforts
- Continue offering professional development courses based upon individual professional development plans

VIII. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: SCHEDULE IN NIGER (JANUARY 20–FEBRUARY 2 2013)

CALENDRIER DE TRAVAIL ET DES RENCONTRES AVEC LES INSTITUTIONS IMPLIQUEES DANS LA MISE EN ŒUVRE INITIATIVE 3 N

Jour	Horaire	Institution	Lieu
Dimanche 20 janvier		Arrivée Equipe	
		Rencontres préliminaires	Hôtel
Lundi 21 janvier	8h00_10h	Rencontre équipe de Consultants	Hôtel
	10h_10h30	Rencontre avec le Haut commissaire Initiative 3 N	HC 3N
	11h-12h	Discussions avec l'équipe HC 3 N	HC 3 N
	16h-17h	Rencontre avec le Groupe de travail des SG des Ministères (participation présentation concept note FAO et Discussion avec mission)	HC 3 N
Mardi 22 Janvier	8h30_11H	Visite Ambassade US	Ambassade
	14h30_16h30	Ministère Agriculture	Ministère
	16h45_17h30	Ministère Elevage	Ministère
Mercredi 23 janvier	8h30_9h30	Ministère Environnement	Ministère
	11h30_12h30	Ministère Commerce	Ministère
	13h_14h	Rencontre Equipe FAO et Partenaires techniques et Financiers	HC 3N
	15h_15h30	Secrétariat Permanent du dispositif Prévention et Gestion des Catastrophes et Crises Alimentaires et les Conseillers du Premier Ministre	Cabinet Premier Ministre
	18h30_19h30	Présidents des Conseils régionaux	HC3 N
Jeudi 24 janvier	11h_12h	Rencontre avec les Organisations des producteurs RECA, CAPAN, MORIBENE etc.	Bureau RECA
Vendredi 25 Janvier	09h	Union Européenne	EU
	11h	SG Plan	Ministère
		Discussions équipe Consultants	HC 3 N
Samedi et ou Dimanche 27 janvier		Rencontre Equipe Consultants	Hôtel

CALENDRIER 2 EME SEMAINE

Jour	Horaire	Activités et rencontres	Lieu
Lundi 28 Janvier	8h30_9h30	Rencontre avec les assistants techniques rattaches au HC 3 N (Mathias)	Bureaux Annexes
	10h_11H	Rencontre avec SG HC 3 N revue du programme de travail des consultants et partage d'informations	HC 3 N
	12h_13h	Restitution et Bilan Mi-parcours avec HC 3 N	HC 3 N
	15h_16h	Rencontre avec ONG Internationales	HC 3N
	16h30_18h30	Maire Hamdallaye	HC 3 N
Mardi 29 Janvier	8h30_10h	Assistant Techniques 3 N	Bureaux Annexes
	10h_11h	ONGs et Associations locales de Développement	HC 3 N
	11h30-13h	Banque Mondiale	BM
	15h_16h	Haut Commissariat Modernisation Etat	HC Modernisation
	17_18h	Producteurs Privés	HC 3 N
Mercredi 30 Janvier	7h	Départ Dosso	
	10h_13h	Gouverneur et SGA	Gouvernorat
	12h_14h	Directions Services techniques Régionaux	Gouvernorat
	Retour Niamey	17h	
Jeudi 31 Janvier		Préparation Rapport et Débriefing	HC 3 N
Vendredi 1 ^{er} février	10h_12h	Restitution Ambassade USA	Ambassade USA
	12_13h	Debriefing avec l'équipe HC 3 N	
Samedi 2 février		Départ Jennifer et David	

ANNEX 2: I3N STAKEHOLDERS MET

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS AUX RENCONTRES ET INTERVIEWES

HC 3 N

1. Adamou Ounteyni Issaka SG
2. Adamou Dan Guiwa Directeur Etudes Programmes et Prospectives
3. Dr Amadou Seydou Directeur Suivi Evaluation et Statistiques
4. Dr Barkire Bourahima Gabdakoye Conseiller Technique
5. Frank Parjot Assistant Technique (EU)

Dr Hamadou Saley Assistant Chef de Mission Niger

6. Eliane Najros Specialiste Genre
7. Mohammed Ag Bendeche Charge Nutrition
8. Mbaye Abdoulaye Chef de Mission

USAID

9. Abdourhamane Hassane Programm manager

Ministère de Elevage

10. Boukary Diamatou Secrétaire General
11. Dr Abouba Saidou Secrétaire General Adjoint
12. Hassoumi Nomao Direction Etudes et Programmes (DEP)
13. Dr Maikano Issouffou Direction Sante Animale

Ministère de l'Agriculture

14. Illa Djimraou Secrétaire General (SG)
15. Mahamane Sani Abdou Directeur General Agriculture
Amadou Moussa Directeur General Génie Rural
16. Seydatou Sidi Mohammed Direction Protection des Vegetaux
17. Alio Koure DG ONAHA

Ministère Commerce

18. Garba Abdoulaye Secrétaire General

Ministère Hydraulique et Environnement

19. Mamadou Mamane Secrétaire General

Partenaires techniques et Financiers

20. Ibrahim Ba Coopération Suisse
21. Beatrice Bussi Union Européenne

- 22. Vincenzo Galastro IFAD
- 23. Leila Bourhala Concern
- 24. Juan Jose Lavin Suarez coopération Espagne
- 25. PNUD

Haut commissariat Modernisation de l'Etat

- 26. Amadou Saley Oumarou HCME

Banque Mondiale

- 27. Amadou Alassane

Présidents des conseils régionaux et Association des Régions du Niger

- 28. Niandou Bassirou Président Conseil Régional Tillabéri
- 29. Harouna Assakaley Président Conseil Régional (PCR) Zinder
- 30. Fati Kelessi Secrétaire Permanente Association des Régions du Niger (ARENI)
- 31. Mairou Mallam Ligary Président Conseil Régional Diffa
- 32. Pate Balla Président Conseil Régional Maradi

Cabinet Premier Ministre et Dispositif National de Prévention Gestion Catastrophes et Crises alimentaires (DNPGCCA)

- 33. Mme Hadizatou Ousseini Secrétaire Permanente DNPGCCA
- 34. Mme Hassane Salmou Suivi Evaluation DNPGCCA
- 35. Adamou Djibo Conseiller Principal Premier Ministre Chef de Département développement Rural Hydraulique et Environnement
- 36. Amadou Souley Massaoudou Conseiller Principal Département Développement Rural
- 37. Issouffou Zakari Conseiller Technique Département Développement Rural Hydraulique et Environnement

Organisations paysanes

- 38. El Moctkar Youssouf SG RECA
- 39. Ismaghil Anar RECA
- 40. Amadou Ousmane GASPANI
- 41. Salia Mahamane FCN
- 42. Mahamadou Yahaya CAPAN
- 43. Abankawel Ihitime SG CAPAN
- 44. Inoussa Gando MORIBEN

Opérateurs Privés

- 45. Ismael Hama CEO Bis Dallol
- 46. Ali Beidei CEO Bis Dallol
- 47. Elh Ibrahim Abdoulaye Ferme Ibrahim Abdoulaye
- 48. Dan Adi Salif Irriguant Privé

ONGs Nationales et Associations Developpement de Societe Civile

49. Moustapha Kadi Pdt CODDAE
50. Laouel Seyabou Coordonateur RODDHHH
51. Lokoko Abdou President Chambre des ONGs
52. Diori Ibrahim Alternative Espace Citoyen
53. Amadou Dangui SG I COP DD
54. Nouhou Marizka President MPCR
55. Bozari Boubabcar SG MPCR
56. Rabo Boubabcar MPCR

ONG Internationales

57. Keller Sabina HELP
58. Angulo Deiros Pascale HELP
59. Abdou Garba Welthungerhilfe
60. Rubi STERZ Welthungerhilfe
61. Rabiou Money Sani MSF
62. Bamba Ibrahim HKI
63. Idrissa Leko Mercy Corps
64. Nicolas CAZALE ACTED
65. Moustapha Gaye Mercy Corps
66. Patrick Bourgeois CICR
67. Makaso KABONGO Save the Children
68. Anne KIBLI VADAE FICR
69. Yaye Mounkeila Croix Rouge Nigerienne
70. Djimraou Aboubacar CARE

Dosso

71. Amadou Babale Gouverneur
72. Nafiou Mamadou SGA
73. Bako Yahaya VNU /PNUD
74. Ayouba Gara Direction Regionale Elevage
75. Issaka karimou DR C ommerce
76. Allassane Issa DR Agriculture
77. Ousseini Abdoulaye DRSP chef SAF
78. Aichatou Abdou OCHA
79. Moussa Oumarou DR Plan
80. Mamane Abdou DR Hydraulique
81. Boubacar Alou DR INS
82. Boubacar Amadou DR Environnement
83. Arahi Dille DR Génie Rural
84. Amadou Abdou DR CAIMA
85. Habibou Abdou Labaye PADSAR Comptable Gestionnaire

ANNEX 3: LEGAL DOCUMENTS PERTAINING TO ESTABLISHMENT AND STRUCTURING OF THE HC3N

ANNEX 4: SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE NIGER HC3N ASSESSMENT