WOFAN ICON2

In partnership with mastercard foundation

WOFAN-ICON2

WOMEN FARMERS ADVANCEMENT NETWORK

Newsletter

Y3 (VOL 7) Q3, MAY 2025 - JULY 2025



Empowering Farmers, Strengthening Communities

As the WOFAN-ICON2 Project advances into the second half of Year 3 implementation, this edition of our newsletter shines a spotlight on the remarkable resilience and progress emerging across our project states. From vibrant cluster elections that strengthened grassroots leadership to mid-season trainings that deepened farmers' knowledge of Good Agronomic Practices (GAP), we continue to see how inclusive development transforms communities.

This quarter has been defined by both innovation and impact. Women and Persons with Disabilities are now working in dignified, inclusive spaces through the establishment of makeshift centers and mobile workstations. Farmers are embracing mechanization—whether through new tractors in Abuja clusters or combine harvesters that cut costs while boosting yields—ushering in a new era of efficiency and shared prosperity. We also celebrate milestones such as the inauguration of additional marketing hubs, providing rural women processors and micro-produce marketers with greater access to markets and opportunities.

At the heart of this edition are stories of change—of Aliyu Abubakar Dumaji, who transitioned from farm laborer to thriving agripreneur; of women in Kofa, Kano State, turning garlic farming into a beacon of resilience; of Bauchi youth uniting communities through football; and of Hamisu Yusuf Tofa, whose mobility support opened new pathways for dignity and livelihood.



HAJIA MAIMUNA LAWAL

WOFAN Strategy, Innovation and Sustainability Director

WOFAN-ICON2 Project Overview

WOFAN-ICON2 is a flagship project funded by the **Mastercard Foundation**, designed to empower smallholder farmers, especially women and youth, by enhancing agricultural productivity, financial inclusion, and market access. The initiative aligns with WOFAN's mission to strengthen rural economies and improve livelihoods through capacity building, technology adoption, and sustainable farming practices.

The Integrated Community-led Network of Hope Scale-up (ICON2) Project is a five-year initiative designed to create sustainable and decent employment opportunities for young Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 35. As part of the Mastercard Foundation's *Young Africa Works (YAW)* strategy, the project aims to empower youth through skill development, agribusiness support, and economic inclusion, ultimately improving their quality of life.



PROJECT DURATION:
5 YEARS



START DATE:
NOVEMBER 1, 2022



END DATE:
OCTOBER 31, 2027

ICON2 is being implemented across 10 Nigerian states, focusing on equipping young people with the necessary resources, training, and market access to build profitable careers in agriculture and related sectors. The project integrates digital financial tools, climate-smart farming practices, and mechanization support to enhance productivity and economic resilience.

Through strategic partnerships with cooperatives, private sector stakeholders, research institutions, and government agencies, ICON2 fosters an inclusive, community-driven approach to development. By strengthening entrepreneurial capacities and facilitating access to funding, the project ensures that youth beneficiaries can transition from subsistence livelihoods to sustainable enterprises.

ICON2 is committed to driving long-term transformation by empowering young Nigerians with the skills and opportunities needed to thrive in a competitive economy, ultimately contributing to national and regional development.

Objectives:

- To economically empower 675,000 youth aged 18–35 to engage in and benefit from decent and sustainable livelihoods
- To enhance 22,500 farmer groups and producer associations to influence change processes supportive of economic advancement of youth
- To improve the performance and inclusiveness of selected market systems that are important for youth

Priority/Main Activities:

- Capacity Building – training, demonstration of technologies, coaching and mentoring
- Input Grant to support group production:
  - Improved Seeds
  - NPK Fertilizer
  - Urea
  - Pesticides
- Labor-saving equipment grant to support group production:
  - Hand-held tillers
  - Hand-held multi-crop harvesters
  - Hand-held transplanters/fertilizer broadcasters
  - Multi-crop shelling machines
  - Water/irrigation pumps
  - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Makeshift women processing and convergence centers for group processing, training and other group activities:
  - Wet/Dry Milling Machines
  - Rice Parboiling Equipment
  - Fabricated Stoves with Chimneys
  - Rice Milling Machines
  - Destoners
  - Hand-operated Briquette-making Machines with Carbonizers
  - 3-seater wooden benches
- Year 2 Highlights, Achievements, Successes
- (Youth in Work)

  Total Outreach – 686,893
  Outreach Female – 546,208
  Youth in Work (YIW) – 598,736
  Youth in Work Female – 484,135

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PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

MAY–JULY 2025

World Earth Day: Clusters Lead with Climate-Smart Innovation



Young farmers learn to turn waste into smokeless briquettes for a cleaner future.

In a powerful demonstration of climate action, the WOFAN team journeyed to Gwako in Gwagwalada Area Council to mark World Earth Day with a life-changing initiative—training community partners on how to produce smokeless briquettes. The exercise was more than technical training; it sparked meaningful dialogue about sustainable energy, environmental stewardship, and the future of rural livelihoods.

Surrounded by piles of firewood, participants confronted the stark reality of deforestation. The training opened their eyes to the environmental cost of excessive tree felling and the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions. By learning how to convert agricultural waste into smokeless briquettes, farmers and households were introduced to an eco-friendly alternative that protects forests, improves health, and lowers energy costs.

The day was also a vivid reminder of the role rural communities play in addressing climate change. Participants shared experiences, asked questions, and explored how small, consistent actions can build resilience at the grassroots.



Communities embrace climate-smart skills—proof that small actions spark big change.

For women and youth in particular, briquette production emerged as not just a climate-smart innovation but also a pathway to economic opportunity.

To crown the day, everyone joined in a symbolic tree-planting exercise—a heartfelt gesture of renewal and commitment to reforestation. What began as a training ended as a movement of hope, proving that even small communities can lead the charge in healing our planet for generations to come.



Every seedling planted is a promise of hope for tomorrow's Earth.

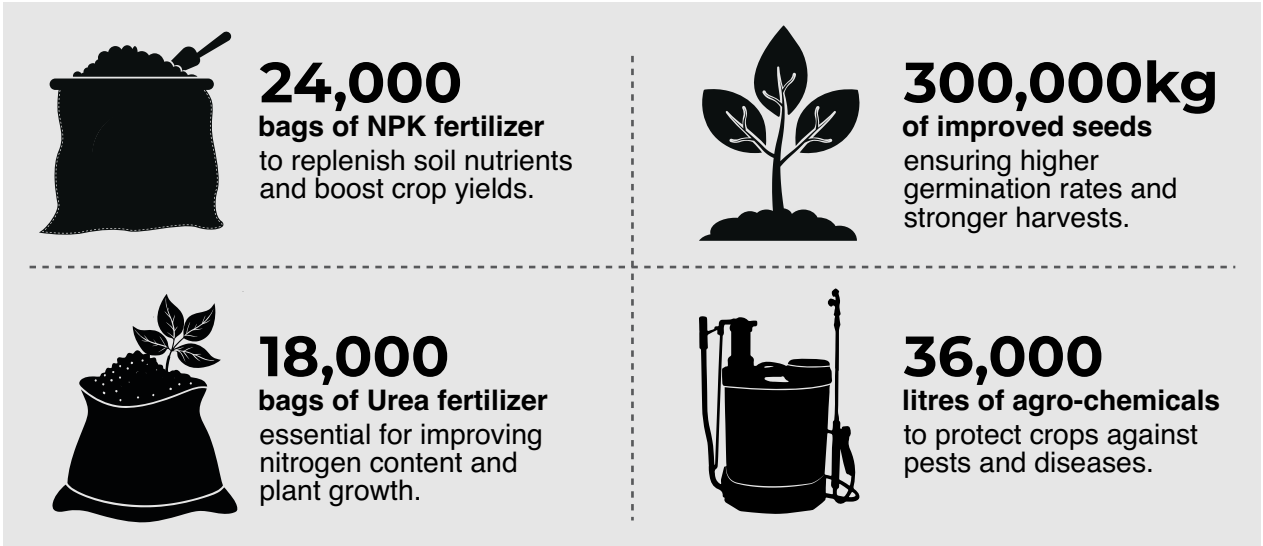
WOFAN-ICON2 Launches Distribution of Wet Season Farming Input Grants Across All Project States



Farmers across nine states receive life-changing inputs to power the 2025 farming season.

With a renewed commitment to transforming smallholder agriculture, WOFAN officially commenced the distribution of wet and dry season farming inputs to community partners across nine project states. The launch ceremony, held at the WOFAN Head Office in Kano, was attended by state team leads, community representatives, and respected traditional leaders who witnessed the symbolic handover of inputs that will power the 2025 farming season.

At the heart of the intervention was a massive input package designed to give farmers the tools they need to thrive. Each item was carefully selected to address the most pressing productivity needs of smallholder farmers and ensure that no one is left behind:



These packages were distributed through state leads to thousands of farmers, ensuring a wide reach and impactful coverage across all project states.

Importantly, Persons with Disabilities (PWD) cooperatives were also prioritized in this distribution under the ICON2 mini project. For many of these cooperatives, access to high-quality inputs represents not just a farming boost, but a life-changing opportunity to engage in dignified work, reduce dependence on street begging, and secure a path toward economic independence.



PWD cooperatives step into the farming season with dignity, support, and hope.

Objectives of the Intervention

- Boost agricultural production among PWD cooperatives.
- Create dignified, sustainable livelihoods that reduce poverty and dependency.
- Upscale existing agribusinesses and promote self-reliance.
- Increase household income and strengthen food security.

Through this intervention, WOFAN is not only distributing resources—it is planting seeds of inclusion, empowerment, and resilience. By equipping farmers and PWDs alike, the project reaffirms its mission to transform agriculture into a pathway for dignity and sustainable growth across Nigeria's rural communities.

Input Distribution at Community Level

















Transporting Inputs at Community Level











Ongoing Distribution of Inputs & Equipment to PWDs, Micro Produce Marketers and Logistics Service providers



Trucks delivering agricultural equipment to project communities.

In addition to farming inputs, WOFAN-ICON2 rolled out a range of equipment and tools to strengthen the agricultural value chain and support rural entrepreneurs. This phase of the distribution focused on improving efficiency, hygiene, and market access for small-scale operators.

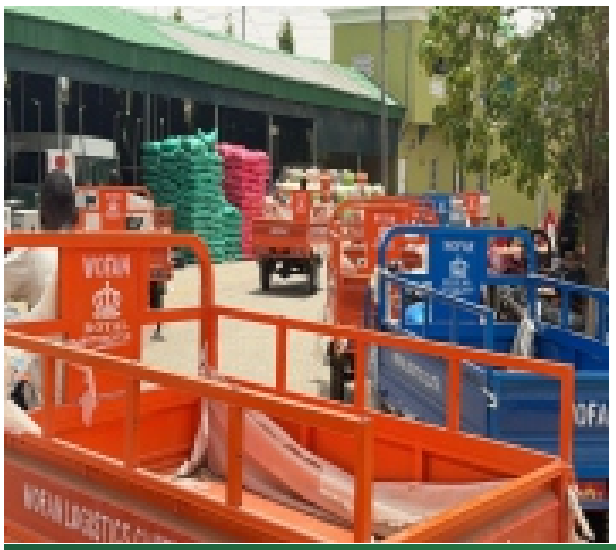
The distributed items included:

1. **Farm inputs** for wet season farming (targeted mainly at PWD farmers).
2. **Mobile workstations** to support micro-produce marketers.
3. **Food warmers** to improve hygiene and boost the marketability of food vendors' products.
4. **Logistics tricycles** to enhance transportation and delivery services for farmers and service providers.



From warehouses to communities—hope on wheels bringing tools for dignity and growth.

This intervention not only expands opportunities for marginalized groups but also strengthens value chain efficiency across project states. By supporting farmers, vendors, and service providers with practical tools, WOFAN is driving inclusive growth, creating dignified livelihoods, and building a stronger, more resilient agricultural ecosystem.





New equipment ready for distribution to PWDs, Marketers and Logistics Service Providers

Inclusive Economic Spaces: WOFAN-ICON2 Makeshift Centers Empower Women and PWDs

In line with its commitment to building inclusive and resilient communities, WOFAN-ICON2 has commenced the construction of makeshift Women Centers and PWD Marketing Hubs across its project states. These facilities are more than physical structures—they are hubs of opportunity, safety, and dignity where women and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) can actively participate in the agricultural value chain.

The Women Centers are strategically equipped to serve as agro-processing and enterprise hubs. Within these spaces, women are provided with essential tools and machinery that make their work more efficient and profitable. Rice mills and polishers enhance the quality and presentation of rice, making it more competitive in the market. Destoners remove impurities, while grinding machines for maize, sorghum, and other cereals enable diversification of activities and expansion of income streams. Parboiling pots and energy-efficient stoves offer safer, cleaner, and faster processing methods, reducing labor while promoting environmental sustainability.

Alongside these centers, PWD Marketing Hubs are being developed to create dedicated commercial spaces where persons with disabilities can run small businesses, access markets, and engage in local trade without the barriers they often face.



Laying the foundation for inclusive economic spaces across project states.

By enabling PWDs to participate in agricultural value chains, these hubs foster self-reliance, economic security, and social inclusion—affirming their dignity as active contributors to community development.

Beyond processing and trade, WOFAN-ICON2 has extended its support directly to farmlands by building makeshift shelters for PWD farmers. These simple yet vital structures provide shade from the sun and protection during rain, creating a safer, more dignified farming environment.



From bricks to purpose—Women Centers and PWD Hubs taking shape for community use.



Building safe and functional spaces where women and PWDs can thrive.

The impact of these inclusive spaces extends well beyond economics. They symbolize a cultural shift—reshaping perceptions, uplifting women and vulnerable groups, and fostering empowerment through visible participation in agribusiness. By creating safe and functional spaces for productivity, the initiative strengthens households, builds resilient communities, and lays the foundation for a more inclusive agricultural system.

Ultimately, these makeshift centers represent a turning point: transforming agriculture into a pathway for empowerment, independence, and sustainable development where no one is left behind.



From bricks to purpose—Women Centers and PWD Hubs taking shape for community use.



Safe, inclusive spaces where women and PWDs thrive together.



WOFAN-ICON2 builds spaces that turn effort into enterprise.

WOFAN Strengthens Rural Farming Through Inputs Revolving Scheme Covering 463 Hectares

As part of its ongoing commitment to sustainable agriculture and rural empowerment, WOFAN continues to expand the reach and impact of its Inputs Revolving Scheme—an innovative model designed to make quality agricultural inputs accessible and affordable for smallholder farmers.

On May 11, 2025, WOFAN officially commenced input distribution to its Year One and Year Two community partner groups across the project states and the FCT. Through this initiative, inputs were secured for the cultivation of 463 hectares of farmland, with participants purchasing them at highly competitive rates. To further ease the burden on hardworking rural farmers, each package was supported with free improved seeds.

This intervention not only rewarded the dedication and resilience of WOFAN's community partners but also reinforced the sustainability of the revolving model. By ensuring that resources circulate within clusters year after year, the scheme builds self-reliance, strengthens accountability, and secures long-term benefits for participating communities.



Quality seeds and fertilizers fueling 463 hectares of rural farming.

Beyond numbers, the revolving scheme is about dignity and opportunity. By easing access to essential inputs, farmers are able to increase productivity, improve their standard of living, and contribute more meaningfully to national food security. With every cycle, the program proves that empowerment is strongest when communities themselves become custodians of their progress.



Inputs on the move—delivering support directly to farming communities.



Proud farmers stand ready to plant hope and harvest prosperity.

Advancing Mechanization and Group Prosperity Through Shared Agricultural Assets

In continuation of its efforts to scale up mechanized farming, WOFAN-ICON2 has empowered **FCT Mega Clusters with two modern tractors**—a milestone that is reshaping how rural communities approach large-scale agriculture. For many smallholder farmers, access to mechanization has long been out of reach, but this intervention is breaking barriers and unlocking new levels of productivity.

What makes this initiative truly remarkable is its **shared ownership model.** The mega clusters mobilized **50% of the total cost through internal group savings (crowd savings)**, demonstrating the strength of collective action and financial discipline at the grassroots. WOFAN supported with the remaining 50% through a soft loan repayment plan under its input revolving scheme, to be spread over three farming seasons. This innovative model not only provides access to tractors but also promotes **financial inclusion, accountability, and long-term sustainability.**



Farmers proudly showcase their new tractors—symbols of progress and unity.





Shared tractors put the power of mechanization in farmers' hands.

The handover ceremony brought together traditional rulers, religious leaders, youth groups, and key community stakeholders, who gathered to witness and celebrate this achievement. Their presence underscored the importance of community buy-in and the shared belief that mechanization can transform not just farms, but entire livelihoods.

With these tractors now in use, farmers in FCT have greater capacity to cultivate more land, reduce labor costs, and improve yields—laying the foundation for shared prosperity across clusters. By combining mechanization with accountability and local ownership, WOFAN is proving that when communities work together, they can drive real and lasting change.



New tractors mark a turning point for group prosperity in agriculture.

Strengthening Grassroots Leadership Through Transparent Y1 Cluster Elections



Community voices shape the future through open cluster elections.

In alignment with its vision of inclusive, accountable, and community-led development, the WOFAN-ICON2 Project successfully supported the Year 1 Cluster Leadership Elections across all participating states. These elections marked the conclusion of two-year terms for outgoing leaders and opened the door for fresh leadership within the clusters.

The process was jointly monitored by WOFAN teams and respected traditional leaders, ensuring that it was transparent, participatory, and credible. Every cluster member had the opportunity to vote and be voted for, creating a powerful demonstration of grassroots democracy in action—one that reinforces both community ownership and trust in local leadership structures.

Purpose of the Elections

- Strengthen leadership within each cluster.
- Enable smoother coordination of community activities.
- Ensure clearer delegation of responsibilities.
- Align grassroots leadership with the broader objectives of the WOFAN-ICON2 initiative.



Transparent elections strengthen trust and grassroots governance.

Importantly, high-performing leaders in some clusters were re-elected, a recognition of their honest, inclusive, and effective leadership during their first term. This continuity provides stability while inspiring new leaders to embrace the same standards of service and integrity. Together, these elections highlight how inclusive leadership is shaping stronger, more resilient communities across WOFAN-ICON2 project states.



Democracy in action—farmers choosing their own leaders.

Dry Season Harvest: 70 to 80 Bags per Hectare – The New Normal for WOFAN-ICON2 Rice Farmers

Across Kano and Jigawa states, WOFAN-ICON2 community partners are celebrating a remarkable bumper harvest of 70 to 80 bags of rice per hectare during the dry-season harvest. For farmers who once struggled with low yields and limited resources, this achievement signals a powerful transformation in local food production and livelihoods.

The success can be traced to a combination of quality agricultural inputs, targeted technical trainings, and mechanization support provided under the WOFAN-ICON2 project. Farmers applied improved seeds, fertilizers, and agro-chemicals while reinforcing their skills in Good Agronomic Practices (GAP).



Mechanization powering record harvests across rice fields.

The consistent guidance from Extension Workers ensured that these inputs were used effectively, leading to exceptional results in both yield and grain quality.

Beyond improving efficiency, the initiative created a win–win model: while farmers gained access to affordable mechanization services, the Mega Cluster itself generated income from hiring out the equipment. This model not only strengthens sustainability but also builds financial resilience within the clusters, ensuring that communities continue to thrive long after each farming season ends.



70–80 bags per hectare—the new normal for WOFAN-ICON2 farmers.

Mobile Workspaces for Micro Produce Marketers: WOFAN-ICON2 Sparks a New Era of Dignified Work



From informal trade to structured business—marketers find their voice.

Across WOFAN-ICON2 project states, **micro-produce marketers are rewriting the story of rural enterprise.** From local rice processors in Kano to maize flour distributors in Kaduna, from food item sellers in Adamawa to input dealers in Benue, these agropreneurs are no longer perceived as informal traders. Instead, they are emerging as **dignified professionals**—each playing a vital role in strengthening local food chains and sustaining community livelihoods.

For many years, micro-produce marketers operated in informal, often challenging conditions, with little recognition for the essential services they provided. The absence of proper facilities, equipment, and business structures limited both their income and their ability to grow. WOFAN-ICON2 has worked deliberately to change this narrative by providing targeted support and positioning these actors as **indispensable players in the agricultural value chain.**

Through access **to mobile workspaces, dignifying equipment, business training, and market linkages,** these marketers are now able to upscale their operations. They are improving product quality, enhancing food safety, and expanding their customer base beyond their immediate communities.

This shift has not only elevated their businesses but has also restored pride and visibility to their work.

The impact is spreading across communities. Micro-produce marketers are **creating jobs for local youth, engaging loaders, and hiring service providers** such as transporters and logistics operators. Their activities are strengthening local economies and building ripple effects that reach households, farmers, and consumers alike. This inclusive growth underscores how empowering small-scale entrepreneurs can stimulate broader community prosperity.

More than just an economic story, this transformation is about dignity and recognition. By breaking stereotypes and redefining what it means to be a trader, micro-produce marketers are showing that **meaningful work in agriculture is possible at every level of the value chain.** WOFAN-ICON2's intervention has sparked a new era—where rural entrepreneurship thrives, communities benefit, and livelihoods are sustained with dignity.



Micro-produce marketers step into dignity with mobile workspaces.

Dedicated PWD Workspaces for Inclusive Livelihoods



Inclusive hubs create dignity and opportunity across project states.

To promote inclusive and dignified economic participation, WOFAN-ICON2 is establishing makeshift processing centers across its project states. These centers are designed to provide safe, accessible, and functional spaces where women and vulnerable groups can take active roles in the agricultural value chain.

Within these centers, women are able to process farm produce, add value to agricultural outputs, and engage in diverse agribusiness activities. By creating a supportive environment for productivity, the initiative not only uplifts individual livelihoods but also strengthens the resilience of entire households and communities.The impact of these inclusive spaces extends beyond economics. By giving women and vulnerable groups a visible and respected role in agribusiness, the centers are helping to reshape cultural perceptions, enhance dignity, and foster empowerment.

Ultimately, these makeshift centers represent more than just physical infrastructure—they are hubs of opportunity where rural entrepreneurs can thrive, communities can grow stronger, and local economies can benefit from the full participation of all their members.

WOFAN-ICON2 Flags Off Intervention for PWDs with Hearing Impairments

In another bold stride toward inclusion, WOFAN-ICON2 has launched a specialized intervention for 1,200 community partners with hearing impairments—a group often overlooked in development programs. The initiative is designed to provide qualified participants with hearing aids, enabling them to improve their quality of life and actively participate in agricultural and income-generating activities.

The activity combined medical screening, counseling, and provision of hearing aids, creating a holistic approach that addressed both immediate needs and long-term participation. ENT specialists were deployed across the three zones of project states to carry out targeted screenings, assess levels of hearing loss, prescribe appropriate aids, and treat minor medical conditions where possible.

Why It Matters

Hearing loss often results in stigma, isolation, and exclusion—preventing individuals from fully engaging in training sessions, safety briefings, or even market interactions. Without intervention, many are left behind in critical areas of agricultural development and community life.



ENT specialists conduct screenings to restore hope and confidence.

Impact

Through this program, beneficiaries are experiencing improved communication, greater confidence, and dignified participation in agriculture and other livelihood activities. Beyond restoring hearing, the intervention is breaking barriers of exclusion and ensuring that no community member is left out of WOFAN's mission of inclusive growth.

By addressing the unique needs of PWDs with hearing impairments, WOFAN-ICON2 is once again proving that true development is inclusive, intentional, and people-centered.



PWDs with hearing impairments receive life-changing support from WOFAN-ICON2.

WOFAN-ICON2 Empowers Rural Women Processors at the Heart of Nigeria's Grain Belt

In the heart of Chiromawa, a bustling market town known for moving over 100 truckloads of grains daily, hope has taken on a new form. The WOFAN-ICON2 Project has established a new marketing hub, ushering in a wave of transformation for rural women agro-processors.

What was once an overlooked corner of economic potential is now a thriving space of dignity, skills, and opportunity. This newly launched hub is not just a building—it is a gateway: a gateway for women to acquire negotiation skills, add value through agro-processing, and access markets that once felt out of reach.

As the fourth marketing hub in Kano State—and the third within Garun Mallam LGA—the Chiromawa hub joins the success stories of Kura, Karfi, and Tudun Wada. But what makes Chiromawa unique is its strategic location inside one of Northern Nigeria's largest grain markets, positioning women entrepreneurs at the center of national trade flows. Here, they can aggregate produce, process efficiently, and negotiate directly with traders across states.



WOFAN-ICON2 links women agro-processors to national markets and prosperity.



At Chiromawa, women processors claim their place in Nigeria's grain belt.

The impact is already tangible. Women who once operated informally are now leading structured enterprises. Youth, previously engaged only in minor support roles, are now integrated into formal supply chains. Community partners are reporting better prices, reduced post-harvest losses, and access to essential services that make their businesses stronger and more profitable.

By placing women processors at the heart of Nigeria's grain belt, WOFAN-ICON2 is not just building infrastructure—it is rewriting the narrative of women in agriculture, creating inclusive economic spaces where rural entrepreneurs can thrive, compete, and lead.

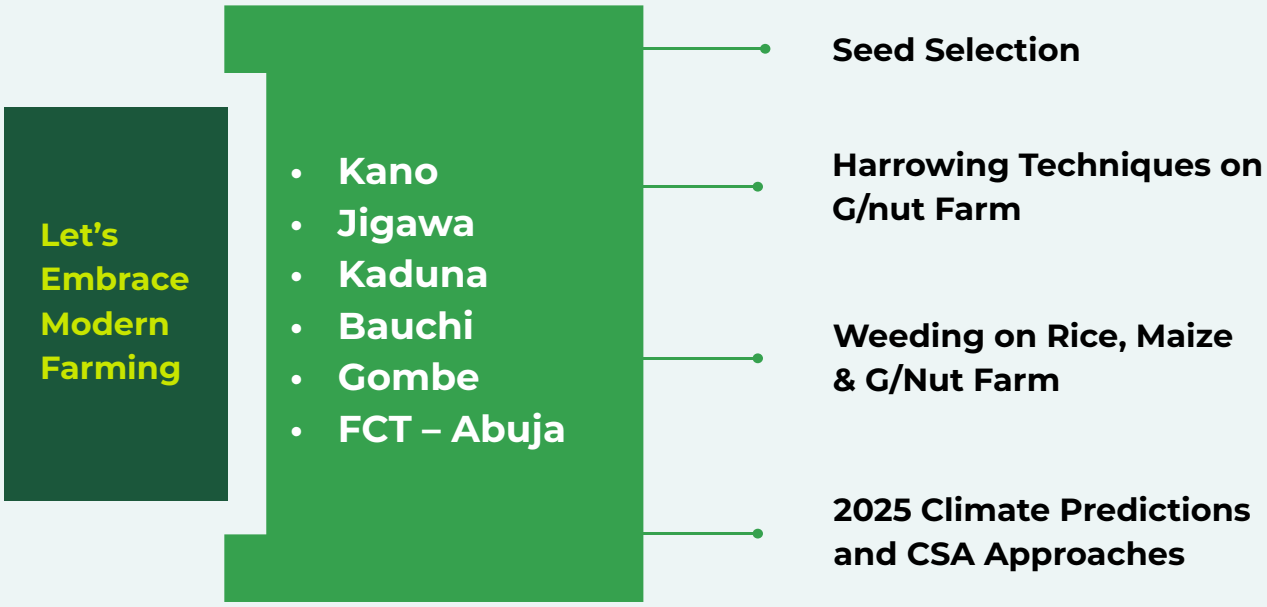
Weekly Radio Program: Let's Embrace Modern Farming

To reach farmers beyond formal training sessions and community gatherings, WOFAN-ICON2 has launched a weekly radio program titled Let's Embrace Modern Farming. Broadcast across project states, the program brings timely, practical, and relatable agricultural knowledge directly into rural homes and communities.

Each episode features discussions on climate-smart practices, Good Agronomic Practices (GAP), market access, and inclusive livelihoods. Extension Workers, farmers, and experts share real-life stories and technical advice, making the program an interactive platform where listeners can learn, call in, and adapt new techniques.

The radio program is particularly impactful in reaching women, youth, and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) who may not always be able to attend cluster meetings or centralized trainings. By providing information in local languages and through an accessible channel, the program ensures that no farmer is left behind.

Through this initiative, WOFAN-ICON2 is not only spreading knowledge but also changing mindsets—encouraging rural communities to see agriculture as dignified, modern, and profitable. With radio waves carrying the message far and wide, more farmers are embracing innovations that improve productivity and transform livelihoods.



Addressing Security Challenges, Climate Change, and Inflation

Agriculture does not exist in isolation—it is shaped daily by the realities of security concerns, climate change, and inflationary pressures. WOFAN-ICON2 recognizes these challenges and continues to engage strategically to build resilience for its community partners.

In regions affected by insecurity, the project works closely with local leaders, security agencies, and clusters to ensure that farmers can access their fields and markets safely. Dialogue and early-warning systems are being strengthened at the community level to reduce risks and sustain livelihoods.

On climate change, WOFAN-ICON2 is leveraging its collaboration with the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet) to deliver timely weather forecasts, climate-smart training, and adaptation strategies that help farmers plan effectively and mitigate losses. These interventions are enabling communities to adapt to unpredictable weather patterns with greater confidence.

Meanwhile, rising inflation continues to challenge farmers' access to inputs and profitability. Through initiatives like the Input Revolving Scheme, mechanization support, and market hubs, WOFAN-ICON2 is ensuring that farmers can still access affordable resources, reduce costs, and improve income despite broader economic shocks.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

Strengthening Community-led Agriculture through Continuous Provision of Extension Support and GAP Adoption

Across all WOFAN-ICON2 project states, community partners remain actively engaged in managing their group farms—a critical component of the project's vision to promote dignified work and sustainable livelihoods, especially for women and youth. With the 2025 farming season in full swing, Extension Workers (EWs) are on the ground, conducting regular field visits to ensure that Good Agronomic Practices (GAP) are not only understood but consistently applied.



Group photo of partners driving GAP adoption across project states.

These hands-on visits have become vital touchpoints for reinforcing modern techniques in land preparation, planting, weeding, pest control, and post-harvest handling. By offering practical guidance in real time, EWs are equipping farmers with the skills they need to maximize yields while reducing risks and inefficiencies in production.

To consolidate progress and deepen adoption, WOFAN-ICON2 organized Mid-Season Trainings across the nine project states. These intensive sessions provided farmers with practical demonstrations and knowledge-sharing opportunities tailored to the project's major crops—rice, maize, groundnut, and sorghum.

The trainings served as dynamic platforms for:

- Exchanging field experiences and challenges.
- Reinforcing climate-smart practices.
- Addressing localized pest and disease issues with tailored solutions.

By combining continuous field support with structured training, WOFAN-ICON2 is not only strengthening agricultural productivity but also building a culture of resilience, innovation, and sustainability at the grassroots level.



Hands-on training in the fields strengthens knowledge and yields.



Farmers embrace climate-smart practices through regular extension visits.



Farmers and extension workers unite to strengthen community-led agriculture.

Demonstrating the Power of Labor-Saving Equipment

To ease the burden of manual farming and prepare communities for a productive season, WOFAN and its partners organized practical demonstrations on the use of hand-operated labor-saving equipment, including power tillers and seed planters. These sessions were designed to show farmers how to operate, maintain, and maximize efficiency with simple but effective tools.

The demonstrations were led by Year Three Extension Workers and Super Trainers, who guided farmers step by step through safe handling, maintenance routines, and effective field application. By placing the training directly in the hands of local experts, WOFAN ensured that knowledge is rooted in the community and accessible to every participant.



Farmers learn to boost efficiency with labor-saving tools.

More than just a one-off event, the program emphasizes sustainability. Farmers are encouraged to share their learning through peer-to-peer teaching and follow-up support, creating a ripple effect that spreads skills across clusters. This approach ensures that the impact of each demonstration lasts well beyond the training day.



Hands-on demonstrations bring modern equipment closer to smallholder producers.

By equipping farmers with labor-saving technologies, WOFAN is reducing drudgery, increasing efficiency, and strengthening resilience. These simple tools are proving that mechanization is not only about tractors and heavy machinery—it also starts with the practical innovations that make everyday farming more dignified and productive.



Simple tools, big impact—farmers embrace labor-saving innovations.

Cooperative Farm Visits Strengthen Adoption of Best Practices

As the 2025 wet season production begins, WOFAN-ICON2 farmers across project states have commenced agricultural activities with the dedicated support of Year Three (Y3) Extension Workers trained in Good Agronomic Practices (GAP).

Extension Workers are actively guiding farmers in nine project states, offering practical, hands-on coaching on improved techniques to enhance productivity as field activities unfold. These visits are tailored to the realities of each community, ensuring that farmers get the advice and solutions they need in real time.



Hands-on learning in the fields strengthens GAP adoption.

Farmers who previously received quality inputs and equipment are now being properly supported to adopt best practices. From land preparation and planting to crop management and post-harvest handling, every stage of production is reinforced through close supervision and coaching.

By pairing inputs with continuous field visits, WOFAN-ICON2 is ensuring that resources are used effectively, yields are maximized, and outcomes remain sustainable. The visits also strengthen trust, accountability, and the sense of partnership between farmers and Extension Workers, laying the foundation for long-term agricultural success.



Extension workers guide farmers during cooperative farm visits.



Farmers share experiences and solutions through cooperative visits.

SUCCESS STORIES

From Laborer to Agripreneur: The Journey of Aliyu Abubakar Dumaji



Agriculture gave Aliyu not just income, but dignity and hope.

In Dumaji community, the story of **Aliyu Abubakar Dumaji** stands as a living testimony of how agriculture, when supported with the right resources, can transform lives. Once a farm laborer struggling to survive on meager earnings, Aliyu had little access to modern tools, quality inputs, or viable markets. His prospects were limited—until he encountered the WOFAN-ICON2 project.

Through training in Good Agronomic Practices, provision of improved seeds and fertilizers, and linkages to markets, Aliyu was able to reimagine what was possible for his farming journey.

He embraced a **three-season cropping system,** and during his most recent dry season, he harvested **an impressive 70 bags of maize, generating ₦4,400,000 in income.**

Access to **fertile seeds, reliable fertilizers, mechanization support, and affordable transportation** drastically improved his efficiency, reduced his production costs, and increased his profit margins. What once seemed unattainable became his new reality: farming not just as survival, but as a thriving business.

Today, Aliyu is no longer a laborer—he is a self-reliant agripreneur and a source of inspiration for many in his community. Youth, including his own son, now look up to him as proof that agriculture is a viable and dignified career. His journey highlights the ripple effect of WOFAN-ICON2's inclusive agricultural support—empowering individuals, reshaping communities, and inspiring the next generation of farmers.

Women Farmers Leading Change in Agriculture



Women farmers stand united as changemakers in modern agriculture.

In rural communities once defined by rigid gender roles, a quiet revolution is unfolding—**led by young women farmers.** With support from WOFAN and the Mastercard Foundation, women are breaking barriers and stepping into spaces once considered off-limits. They are now operating agricultural equipment, managing cluster farms, and participating actively in financial services. These shifts are not only empowering women individually but are also **reshaping community dynamics at large.**

Tasks like fertilizer application—once carried out manually by women using outdated tools—are no longer their sole responsibility. Men are stepping in, creating space for women to engage in higher-value agricultural activities. This redistribution of labor is bridging gender gaps, strengthening cooperation within households, and enhancing productivity at the farm level. Families that once experienced tension over workloads are now finding unity **in shared responsibilities,** with mutual respect and understanding replacing friction.

Even more encouraging is the **cultural acceptance** of these changes. In communities where resistance to women's empowerment once prevailed, collaboration has become the new norm.

The sight of women driving farm machinery, handling agro-processing equipment, or speaking with authority at cooperative meetings is no longer seen as unusual—it is seen as inspiring.

These transformations go beyond economics; they are about dignity, visibility, and inclusion. As women farmers rise as decision-makers, innovators, and leaders, they are redefining what is possible for the next generation of rural women and girls. The ripple effect is clear: stronger households, more resilient communities, and a brighter future where agriculture becomes a shared pathway to prosperity.



Breaking barriers—women farmers proudly embrace mechanization.

A New Dawn in Kofa: WOFAN-ICON2 Women Brighten Their Path with Garlic Farming Success



Women of Kofa celebrate a golden harvest of garlic and hope.

Amid the golden fields of Kofa community in Kano State, a remarkable story of resilience, innovation, and empowerment is unfolding. In the first week of May, the air was filled with jubilation as women and youth under the WOFAN-ICON2 umbrella gathered to celebrate a successful garlic harvest—a milestone that marks their bold diversification into high-value cash crop production.

This triumph did not happen by chance. With training, access to quality inputs, and continuous mentorship provided by WOFAN, the women of Kofa embraced garlic farming with courage and determination. What began as an experiment soon grew into a flourishing venture, proving that with the right support, even the most ambitious agricultural dreams can be realized.

The harvest was not just bountiful—it was symbolic. For the women of Kofa, garlic represented hope, economic freedom, and the promise of a future redefined. It demonstrated that smallholder farmers can move beyond subsistence farming and tap into profitable value chains that uplift entire households.

Today, the Kofa garlic farmers stand as trailblazers in their community, inspiring others to diversify, innovate, and embrace modern agricultural opportunities. Their success story is a shining example of how women, when empowered with knowledge and resources, can lead transformative change in rural economies.



Each garlic bulb tells a story of courage, empowerment, and change.

Kicking for Unity: Bauchi Youth Score Goals On and Off the Field



More than a team—these young farmers kick for community and change.

In Bauchi State, male youth groups under the WOFAN-ICON2 mega cluster showcased the power of sports as a unifying force by organizing a football competition. What looked like a simple game on the surface carried a much deeper purpose: promoting unity, collaboration, and youth-led development within the clusters.

The competition was designed as a strategic social engagement, aimed at:

1. Uniting youth across different clusters.
2. Encouraging mutual understanding and peer-to-peer connection.
3. Strengthening teamwork and group cohesion—vital ingredients for success in both agriculture and entrepreneurship.

With passion, energy, and remarkable sportsmanship, the tournament brought young people together in a vibrant atmosphere that celebrated solidarity and positive identity within the WOFAN-ICON2 framework. For many participants, the field became more than a space for sport—it was a platform to build relationships, resolve differences, and foster collaboration that extends beyond football.

The highlight of the event was the victory of the Young Rice Farmers Multi-Purpose Group, who were crowned champions. Their win was symbolic, representing not only triumph on the pitch but also their ongoing commitment off the field—to agriculture, leadership, and driving change in their community.

By channeling the energy of youth into constructive and unifying activities, WOFAN-ICON2 is reinforcing the message that young people are not just the leaders of tomorrow, but the changemakers of today.



WOFAN-ICON2 youth celebrate victory on and off the pitch.

Wheels of Hope: How Mobility Changed the Story of Hamisu Yusuf Tofa

Meet **Hamisu Yusuf Tofa,** a resilient young man from the Tofa ICON2 PWD Cluster whose life was transformed through the WOFAN-ICON2 Project. For years, graduating from secondary school seemed like an impossible dream—not because Hamisu lacked intelligence or ambition, but because mobility was his greatest barrier. The daily journey to school was physically exhausting and often impossible without assistance, causing him to constantly arrive late or miss classes altogether.

Yet, despite the setbacks, Hamisu held on to hope. That hope became reality when he joined the WOFAN-ICON2 PWD Cluster as a young farmer and received a tricycle tailored to support his mobility needs. This simple yet powerful intervention restored his independence, enabling him to travel with dignity, attend school regularly, and participate actively in community life.



Hamisu's tricycle turned barriers into pathways of dignity and hope.

With renewed confidence and access to education, Hamisu achieved what once felt out of reach—he successfully graduated from Government Technical College (GTC), Tofa. Today, he stands tall, defined not by disability but by determination, resilience, and success.

Beyond education, the tricycle has opened new pathways for Hamisu. It is not only a tool for mobility but also an asset for job creation and livelihood opportunities. With it, he is able to support agricultural activities within his cluster, contribute to his household, and inspire others facing similar challenges.

Through Hamisu's story, WOFAN-ICON2 demonstrates that empowerment begins with dignity. By addressing barriers that limit participation, the project is ensuring that young people with disabilities are not left behind but are given the tools to thrive, lead, and inspire their communities.



Mobility restored, dreams revived—Hamisu's story inspires many.

Mechanized Progress – WOFAN Mega Clusters Redefine Farming Success

In Jigawa State, WOFAN-ICON2–supported farmers are redefining what productivity and resilience look like in agriculture. During the recent dry season, rice farmers recorded average yields of 70 bags per hectare—a remarkable improvement that reflects the power of:

- Timely access to quality inputs
- Continuous capacity building and training
- Targeted equipment support from the WOFAN-ICON2 project

As farmers transition into the wet season, their preparations already demonstrate better planning, improved practices, and stronger community coordination—proof that the foundation for sustainable growth has been laid.



Shared mechanization brings efficiency, dignity, and higher incomes.

One of the biggest game changers has been the introduction of combine harvesters by WOFAN mega clusters. These machines have transformed harvesting by:

- Reducing labour demands and harvest time
- Lowering production costs for farmers
- Increasing efficiency and minimizing post-harvest losses
- Boosting cluster income through shared asset management



Mega clusters in Jigawa harvest 70 bags per hectare through mechanization."

The ripple effects are profound. Farmers now enjoy faster access to markets, reduced waste, and higher profits, while food supply within the community is more secure. At the same time, WOFAN mega clusters are generating up to ₦750,000 daily from hiring out the harvesters to members and other community farmers—showcasing a powerful model of shared prosperity.

Mechanization, once a distant dream for many smallholders, is now redefining farming as a dignified, profitable, and scalable enterprise across Jigawa and beyond.



Mechanization turns harvests into prosperity for farmers and communities.

Mechanization Fosters Peaceful Coexistence in Harbo Community, Jigawa State

In Harbo community, Jigawa State, the introduction of combine harvesters has delivered benefits that extend far beyond agricultural productivity. What began as an effort to ease harvesting has become a surprising catalyst for peaceful coexistence between farmers and herdsmen.

After rice is harvested and the paddy collected, the efficiency of mechanized harvesting leaves behind a softer residue. This by-product, highly palatable to livestock, has attracted herdsmen who now see post-harvest fields as a valuable source of feed. Instead of disputes, farmers and herdsmen are now engaging in quick, amicable negotiations over the price of the residue, creating opportunities for dialogue and cooperation.



In Harbo, mechanized harvests turn rice residue into feed—and conflict into peace.

The presence of cattle on farms before land preparation has produced another unexpected benefit: soil enrichment. As livestock graze, they leave behind manure that boosts soil fertility and increases productivity for the next planting season. This natural cycle has improved crop yields while optimizing resource use.

More importantly, this synergy has fostered trust, dialogue, and social harmony in a region previously marked by tension. By creating shared value for farmers and herdsmen alike, mechanization has proven to be not just a tool for boosting yields but also a bridge for peacebuilding and inclusive development.



Animals grazxing in dedicated fields in Harbo



Harvest fields become meeting grounds for cooperation and coexistence.



Animal dug used as fertilizers



Animals grazxing in dedicated fields in Harbo

Closing Note & Call to Action

As WOFAN-ICON2 continues to champion inclusive agricultural development across Nigeria, one truth remains clear: the transformation of smallholder farming is not the work of one organization alone. It is a collective journey that requires the dedication of farmers, the commitment of communities, the support of partners, and the enabling environment created by policymakers.

The stories and highlights in this edition show what is possible when dignity, innovation, and inclusion drive agricultural growth. From women leading change, to PWDs thriving in dignified workspaces, to youth building unity through agribusiness and sports, we see a future of agriculture that is resilient, equitable, and prosperous.

But much remains to be done. Security, climate change, and economic pressures continue to challenge farmers daily. The call is therefore to strengthen partnerships, scale innovations, and amplify the voices of smallholder farmers until no one is left behind.

We invite development partners, government agencies, the private sector, and community stakeholders to walk this path with us—expanding support, deepening collaboration, and ensuring that rural farmers across Nigeria can thrive.

Together, we can make modern, inclusive, and dignified agriculture the new normal.

WOFAN ICON2

In partnership with

mastercard foundation

Women Farmers Advancement Network (WOFAN) was established in June 1993 and was incorporated with the Kano State Government as a Community Development Association in 1995 with 28 community members.

The organization was later registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission in 2004 as WOFAN Associates and WOFAN Enterprise to engage in capacity development, consultancy and provision of corporate services and to develop the entrepreneurial skills and economic inclusion of the rural farming and processing communities, respectively.

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