WOFAN ICON2

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WOFAN-ICON2

WOMEN FARMERS ADVANCEMENT NETWORK

NEWSLETTER

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Strengthening Systems, Sustaining Impact

As the WOFAN-ICON2 Project progresses through Year 3, this edition of the newsletter captures a critical phase in the project's journey: the shift from intervention to continuity. Across nine project states, communities are not only receiving support but steadily building the knowledge, leadership, and structures required to sustain agricultural growth, inclusion, and shared prosperity.

This period emphasizes deepening capacity and community ownership. Through continuous extension support, refresher trainings for newly elected cluster leaders, and Training of Trainers on on-farm and community security awareness, WOFAN-ICON2 is reinforcing systems that enable local resilience. Engagements on climate-smart agriculture, carbon credit opportunities, and improved harvesting and storage practices further reflect a future-ready approach to strengthening food systems.

Inclusion remains central to these efforts. The launch and handover of women's makeshift centers, mobility support for PWDs and logistics riders, hearing aid interventions, clean water initiatives, and dedicated livelihood spaces demonstrate a clear commitment to dignity and equity. Complemented by Year 3 review meetings, leadership succession planning, equipment handovers, and continuous monitoring, these actions point to a deliberate focus on sustainability and accountability.

At the heart of this edition are stories of transformation, women building prosperity through collective enterprise, Persons with Disabilities reclaiming agency and visibility, and communities turning shared effort into lasting progress. Together, they reflect not just activities completed, but systems taking root and futures being reimagined.



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:	START DATE:	END DATE:
5 YEARS	NOVEMBER 1, 2022	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 1,914,000 (up from 675,000) youth aged 18–35 to engage in and benefit from decent and sustainable livelihoods
- To enhance 63,800 farmers groups and other value chains actors' 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

AUGUST-OCTOBER 2025

Strengthening Community-Led Agriculture through Continuous Extension Support and GAP Adoption



Extension workers engaging farmers through regular farm visits

Across the nine WOFAN-ICON2 project states, continuous extension support remains central to strengthening productivity and promoting sustainable, community-led agriculture. Extension workers are actively engaged with farmers through regular field visits, on-site guidance, and practical demonstrations that translate knowledge into action.

Group demonstration farms continue to serve as vital learning hubs, enabling farmers to observe and adopt Good Agronomic Practices (GAP) firsthand. These platforms support timely interventions, including the ongoing application of Aflasafe on maize and groundnut farms at the critical 6–7 weeks growth stage, an important measure to safeguard yields and reduce the risks of aflatoxin contamination, while promoting safer food systems.

Beyond production, renewed attention is being given to post-harvest handling and quality assurance. Community partners involved in dry-season production are increasingly adopting improved post-harvest technologies under extension guidance. The use of moisture meters to confirm grain moisture levels before storage and bagging has become standard practice, particularly among cooperative rice farmers, resulting in better quality produce, reduced post-harvest losses, and enhanced food safety.



Use of moisture meters to confirm grain moisture levels before storage and bagging

Extension support also remains intentionally inclusive. Under the Mini Project, tailored extension services continue to reach farms managed by Persons with Disabilities across project states. PWDs, together with their families, are actively participating in communal farming activities, ensuring steady adoption of GAP while reinforcing shared responsibility, dignity, and inclusion within community agricultural systems.

Through these sustained efforts, WOFAN-ICON2 is not only improving yields, but embedding practices that strengthen resilience, ownership, and long-term agricultural sustainability at the grassroots level.



Extension workers engaging PWDs on their cluster farm



Use of moisture meters to confirm grain moisture levels before storage and bagging

Refresher Training for Newly Elected Y1 Cluster Leaders



Refresher Training for Newly Elected Y1 Cluster Leaders

Following the successful completion of Year 1 cluster leadership elections, marking the end of the outgoing leaders' two-year tenure, WOFAN extension workers and trainers have intensified efforts to strengthen grassroots governance through targeted refresher trainings for newly elected leadership teams.

These capacity-building sessions are designed to reinforce internal organization and accountability within clusters, ensuring smooth and effective leadership transitions. The trainings focus on equipping leaders and cluster members with practical knowledge in the following areas:

- Group formation and dynamics
- Leadership and organizational skills
- Financial management and accountability
- Record keeping and documentation
- Effective communication strategies
- Produce marketing and market linkage development

By strengthening these core competencies, WOFAN-ICON2 is supporting the development of well-organized, transparent, and self-managed clusters capable of responsibly managing shared resources and driving sustainable, community-led growth.

These refresher trainings reaffirm WOFAN's commitment to building strong local leadership structures that anchor accountability, inclusion, and long-term impact.



Refresher Training for Newly Elected Y1 cluster Leaders

Training of Trainers on On-Farm and Community Security Awareness



Training of Trainers on On-Farm and community security Awareness

In response to the growing challenges of insecurity and health risks in rural farming communities, WOFAN ICON2 recently organized a comprehensive 3-day hands-on Training of Trainers (ToT) on on-farm and community security. The training was carefully designed to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and practical tools needed to safeguard themselves, their farms, and their communities from a wide range of hazards.

The program addressed both health and physical risks. Participants learned to identify and manage threats such as strokes, diabetes, fainting, burns, and other on-farm accidents. In addition, the training covered strategies to prevent and respond to physical risks, including theft, violent attacks, head injuries, and fire incidents. By integrating safety into daily agricultural practices, the initiative promotes not only the well-being of farmers but also the resilience and sustainability of farming operations.

A total of 30 participants from all 9 project states attended the ToT, representing diverse clusters and community groups. These participants were not only trained in theoretical knowledge but also engaged in practical simulations and field-based demonstrations, which allowed them to apply risk mitigation techniques in realistic scenarios.

The sessions also included discussions on community-led security approaches, emergency response planning, and communication strategies during crises.

Following the training, participants are now fully prepared to step down the knowledge to farmers in their respective communities. They will lead peer-to-peer workshops, practical demonstrations, and awareness campaigns, ensuring that safety and preparedness become an integral part of everyday farming practices.

By fostering a culture of proactive risk management, the ToT initiative contributes to the overall goal of safeguarding livelihoods, promoting health and safety, and building resilient farming communities. The ripple effect of this training is expected to reach thousands of smallholder farmers, empowering them to farm confidently and securely, despite the challenges posed by insecurity, climate hazards, and other risks.



Training of Trainers on On-Farm and community security Awareness

Stakeholder Engagement on Climate-Smart Agriculture & Carbon Credit Opportunities



Stakeholders Engagement on Climate-Smart Agriculture & Carbon Credit Opportunities

WOFAN ICON2 hosted a one-day stakeholder advocacy meeting to explore Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) and carbon credit opportunities for smallholder farmers' leaders

The gathering brought together government officials, research institutions, farmer leaders, private sector actors, and other key stakeholders, all united by the goal of driving sustainable change in farming practices. Discussions focused on enhancing farmers' productivity, strengthening resilience, and advancing climate change mitigation efforts.

Experts presented three lead concept papers, offering in-depth insights on CSA innovations, carbon markets, and emerging opportunities for farmers to benefit from environmentally sustainable practices while generating additional income.

The meeting concluded with actionable recommendations for farmers and community leaders, including pilot programs for CSA adoption, training on carbon credit registration, and establishing local partnerships to ensure farmers can maximize both environmental and economic benefits. Stakeholders left equipped with practical strategies to turn climate-smart initiatives into tangible improvements in productivity and livelihoods.



Stakeholders Engagement on Climate-Smart Agriculture & Carbon Credit Opportunities





Stakeholders Engagement on Climate-Smart Agriculture & Carbon Credit Opportunities

Community Development Initiative – Expanding Access to Clean Water

As part of its ongoing commitment to holistic community development, the WOFAN-ICON2 Project has delivered sustainable access to clean water in multiple communities across Kano State. In Imawa (Kura LGA) and Kwanar Dan Gora Kafin Mai Yaki (Bebeji LGA), WOFAN commissioned solar-powered, eco-friendly, and climate-smart boreholes. The grand launch attracted traditional leaders, youth groups, women's associations, and other key stakeholders, who praised WOFAN for its continued investment in the well-being and resilience of rural communities.



Launch of WOFAN-ICON2 community water project

Each site features 20 strategically placed water points, ensuring that households can access safe drinking water without long treks. This intervention is expected to significantly reduce waterborne diseases, support children's consistent school attendance, and improve overall public health.

In Dogon Bauchi Zaria, two additional solar-powered boreholes at Layin Zage-Zagi and Gangaren Annur were inaugurated, each fitted with 10 water points, collectively serving an estimated 2,000 households daily.

Beyond water access, WOFAN's efforts have addressed social inclusion and gender equity. A women's mosque was constructed and launched to provide a dignified and comfortable space for women to perform congregational prayers, reflecting the project's focus on community-centered solutions that respect local customs and enhance participation.



Launch of WOFAN-ICON2 community water project

The initiative also incorporates community ownership and sustainability. Local leaders and water committees have been trained in borehole maintenance, ensuring long-term functionality. Through these combined efforts, WOFAN ICON2 is not only improving access to clean water but also fostering social cohesion, empowering women, and promoting resilience across participating communities. These interventions demonstrate how targeted infrastructure and capacity-building programs can transform daily life, strengthen communal bonds, and set the stage for broader socio-economic development.



Launch of WOFAN-ICON2 community water project



Launch of WOFAN-ICON2 community water project

Breaking the Silence: Hearing Aid Support for PWDs



WOFAN championing inclusivity by providing hearing aid

The WOFAN ICON2 Mini Project continues to champion inclusivity by providing vital assistive devices to People Living with Disabilities (PWDs). Through continuous screening and distribution, hearing aids have been delivered across project states, ensuring that individuals with hearing impairments gain not only the necessary equipment but also renewed hope for improved communication and social engagement.

In this latest intervention, an additional 150 PWDs were screened and fitted with free hearing aids, opening new pathways for participation in family life, community activities, and economic ventures. For many, these devices are transforming daily experiences—enabling clearer conversations, stronger connections, and greater independence.



WOFAN championing inclusivity by providing hearing aid

This initiative stands as a testament to WOFAN ICON2's unwavering commitment to creating inclusive opportunities and restoring dignity for all. By empowering PWDs to fully engage in society, the project reinforces the principle that no one should be left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development.



WOFAN championing inclusivity by providing hearing aid

From Group Demos to Independent Farming



WOFAN Extension workers conduct farm monitoring to ensure GAP is being adopted

Throughout September, WOFAN teams across all project states continued to monitor group demonstration farms while facilitating step-down trainings on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for both main and mini project clusters. These sessions reinforced practical skills, strengthened knowledge transfer, and ensured consistent adoption of improved farming techniques.

Building on the profits recorded during last year's harvest, many PWD farmers have now taken a bold step toward independence by cultivating crops on their individual farms. This transition marks a significant milestone in their empowerment journey, reflecting not only the success of WOFAN ICON2's trainings but also the growth of financial capacity among PWDs.

By moving from group-led activities to independent farming, PWDs are gaining confidence, autonomy, and the ability to make strategic decisions for their agricultural enterprises. This shift demonstrates the transformative power of practical training, continuous support, and inclusive development in fostering self-reliance and sustainable livelihoods.



WOFAN Extension workers conduct farm monitoring to ensure GAP is being adopted



WOFAN Extension workers conduct farm monitoring to ensure GAP is being adopted

Green Field Days: Community Partners Celebrating Growth and Unity



WOFAN team monitoring group demonstration and step down training

Across the nine WOFAN-ICON2 project states, WOFAN teams organized Green Field Days as platforms to showcase the progress and successes of community partners' demonstration farms, while highlighting the strength of collective action in driving agricultural transformation.

What began as field gatherings evolved into open classrooms of learning and inspiration. Farmers shared their growth journeys, reflecting on how access to inputs, continuous training, mentorship, networking, and collaboration under WOFAN-ICON2 have strengthened productivity and confidence at the community level.

During the events, WOFAN ICON2 teams, Super Trainers, and extension workers walked the fields alongside community partners, offering tailored guidance, technical support, and encouragement. These interactions reinforced best practices and deepened understanding through hands-on engagement.

For many participants, the Green Field Days were more than celebrations. They served as powerful reminders that farmers are part of a broader, resilient network, one committed to advancing productivity, sustainability, and inclusive livelihoods across all project states.



WOFAN Community partners celebrate Greenfield day, 2025



WOFAN Community partners celebrate Greenfield day, 2025

Commencement of the Launch and Handover of Year 3 Women Makeshift Centers

The WOFAN ICON2 project teams, in collaboration with traditional leaders, women leaders, and youth representatives, officially commenced the launch and handover of Year 3 Women Makeshift Centers across project states. These centers are intentionally designed to serve as inclusive hubs for empowerment, innovation, skills development, and collective economic growth, providing women clusters with safe, functional spaces to scale their enterprises and strengthen cooperation.

The launch ceremonies brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders, reinforcing community ownership of the initiative. Leaders from Year 1 and Year 2 Women Centers played a key role in the events, sharing compelling testimonies on how the centers have transformed local businesses, increased productivity, improved income stability, and enhanced women's entrepreneurial confidence. Their shared experiences offered practical lessons on effective center management, resource-sharing, leadership coordination, and long-term sustainability.



Launch and handover of women makeshift centers

Traditional rulers and influential community leaders present at the launches commended WOFAN's vision of inclusion and women-led development.



Launch and handover of women makeshift centers

They pledged their continued support in monitoring activities, promoting accountability, and creating an enabling environment for the women clusters to thrive. This commitment further strengthens collaboration between communities and project structures.

Beyond the physical commissioning of new facilities, the launch of the Year 3 Women Makeshift Centers represents a strategic investment in sustainable livelihoods. It reaffirms a shared commitment by WOFAN and participating communities to deepen women's economic participation, strengthen local value chains, and ensure that women remain central drivers of growth, resilience, and development across project states.



Launch and handover of women makeshift centers

Flag-Off: Mobility Support for PWDs and Logistics Riders Clusters



Flag-off of mobility support for PWDs and Logistics Riders Clustters

WOFAN ICON2 Implementing Partners (IPs) officially flagged off the distribution of wheelchairs and tricycles under the ICON2 Mini Project across Nasarawa, Kaduna, and Benue States. This intervention is designed to provide People Living with Disabilities (PWDs) and logistics rider clusters with essential mobility assets that directly support their economic activities and enhance independence.

The distribution goes beyond the provision of equipment. It reflects a deliberate commitment to restoring dignity, strengthening inclusion, and enabling economic empowerment. By addressing mobility barriers, the initiative expands access to markets, workplaces, and community spaces, allowing beneficiaries to participate more actively in productive and social life.

With the introduction of these mobility assets, community partners are now better positioned to scale their enterprises, improve service delivery, and increase income-generating opportunities. For many beneficiaries, the intervention represents a turning point—opening new pathways toward self-reliance, resilience, and sustainable livelihoods, while reinforcing WOFAN ICON2's inclusive development approach that ensures no one is left behind.



Flag-off of mobility support for PWDs and Logistics Riders Clustters

Sustaining Impact Through Continuous Monitoring & Supervision



WOFAN Team visiting farmers to sustain impact through monitoring and supervision

The WOFAN ICON2 project sustained a strong emphasis on continuous monitoring, supervision, and technical support across all project states. Through coordinated efforts, the Regional Agronomist, along with Facilitators, Super Trainers, and Extension Workers worked closely together to provide hands-on guidance and oversight across multiple intervention areas.



WOFAN Team visiting farmers to sustain impact through monitoring and supervision

This support extended to women processors operating from makeshift centers, Persons with Disabilities working within designated spaces, logistics riders, and agro-produce marketers. Regular supervisory visits, on-the-spot mentoring, and technical backstopping ensured that best practices were consistently applied, challenges were identified early, and corrective actions were taken promptly.

By maintaining close engagement with community partners, WOFAN ICON2 reinforces accountability, strengthens confidence, and nurtures resilience within clusters. These continuous supervision mechanisms are essential to sustaining gains already achieved, embedding independence, and laying solid foundations for long-term economic stability and inclusive growth beyond the project lifecycle.



WOFAN Team visiting farmers to sustain impact through monitoring and supervision

Updates on the ICON2 Leadership Succession Plan Implementation



Hajia Maimuna, Director, Strategy, Innovation and Sustainability (SIS) leading Project implementation activities

The implementation of the ICON2 leadership succession plan formally commenced in April 2025, reinforcing WOFAN's commitment to continuity, accountability, and long-term institutional sustainability. The plan identifies Maimuna Lawal, Strategy, Innovation and Sustainability Director, and Taiwo Olawale, Business Coordination Manager, as successors to the Executive Director, with a structured transition scheduled for completion by December 2025.

Since the commencement of the transition, both leaders have stepped seamlessly into project leadership roles. They now serve as joint signatories to the WOFAN Enterprise accounts and are actively leading implementation activities, coordinating operations, and engaging stakeholders across project states. Their involvement ensures continuity in strategic direction while strengthening operational efficiency.

To support a smooth and effective transition, the duo continues to receive mentorship from the Executive Director, alongside technical and institutional support from the ETK team. In addition, a Regional Agronomist has been onboarded to reinforce agronomic supervision and extension services, ensuring uninterrupted technical guidance and field-level excellence.

This deliberate and phased approach to leadership transition reflects WOFAN ICON2's strong governance framework and commitment to sustaining impact through capable leadership, robust systems, and institutional resilience beyond the current project cycle.



Taiwo, Business Coordination Manager leading implementation

Strengthening Food Systems Through Smart Harvesting and Storage Practices



Extension workers stepping down training on harvest and post-harvest management

As the 2025 wet season harvest progresses, WOFAN ICON2 Extension Workers across all project states continued to step down targeted Harvest and Post-Harvest Management trainings to community partners. These hands-on sessions were designed to equip farmers with practical skills needed to safeguard their yields and improve overall profitability.

The trainings placed strong emphasis on reducing post-harvest losses, improving produce quality, and increasing market competitiveness.

Community partners were guided on the appropriate use of harvesting equipment, correct timing of harvest, effective drying techniques, and safe storage methods that help preserve grains and other agricultural produce. Practical demonstrations ensured that participants could easily apply the techniques within their own farming systems.

Through these interventions, farmers have strengthened their capacity to adopt improved harvesting and storage practices, significantly minimizing wastage and reducing quality deterioration.

By maintaining higher standards for produce handling, community partners are better positioned to access improved market opportunities, secure higher returns, and contribute to more resilient and sustainable food systems at the community level.

Overall, the continued focus on smart harvesting and post-harvest management under the ICON2 project reinforces WOFAN's commitment to food security, income stability, and long-term sustainability across project states.



Mechanized harvest by WOFAN farmers using the Multi-crop Harvester

2025 International Rural Women Day Celebration



Commemoration of 2025 International Rural Women Day Celebration

Across all WOFAN ICON2 project states, community partners joined the global community to commemorate the 2025 International Day for Rural Women, a day dedicated to recognizing, celebrating, and honoring the invaluable contributions of women to agriculture, food systems, and rural development.

The celebrations highlighted the vital role of ICON2 rural women in building resilient households and communities through innovation, dedication, and strong leadership. Women across project locations showcased how their participation in the ICON2 project has strengthened agricultural production systems while improving incomes and livelihoods.

Key activities emphasized the adoption of climate-smart practices in crop production, livestock management, value addition, processing, and agricultural marketing. These practices continue to enhance productivity, promote environmental sustainability, and ensure food security at the community level.

Participants shared personal experiences, success stories, and lessons learned, while also openly discussing challenges and opportunities for growth. Interactive sessions, cultural displays, and networking activities created spaces for learning, encouragement, and peer-to-peer exchange, fostering unity, confidence, and collective aspiration among women farmers and processors.

Overall, the event reinforced the critical message that empowering rural women remains central to achieving sustainable food systems, economic resilience, and improved livelihoods for families and communities, an outcome the WOFAN ICON2 project continues to advance across all project states.



Commemoration of 2025 International Rural Women Day Celebration in Jurara

World Food Day 2025: Empowered Women Nourishing Communities and Building Unity



2025 World Food Day celebration in Lajangara, Gombe State

In celebration of World Food Day 2025, community partners across all WOFAN ICON2 project states organized vibrant cluster-level events to advance the global call for food security and sustainable livelihoods.

Women used the platform to share heartfelt testimonies about how the WOFAN ICON2 Project has transformed their lives, empowering them to work collectively, take charge of their livelihoods, and actively participate in both household and community decision-making. Their stories reflected resilience, innovation, and the tangible impact of inclusive development.

The celebrations featured exhibitions of value-added agricultural products such as parboiled rice, maize and sorghum flour, briquettes, groundnut oil, and assorted nutritious snacks. These displays highlighted the women's commitment to sustainable food production, entrepreneurship, and economic independence, demonstrating that climate-smart practices and effective value addition can generate both profit and social impact.



2025 World Food Day celebration in Sayasaya



2025 World Food Day celebration in Sayasaya

Traditional and community leaders expressed deep appreciation to WOFAN and the Mastercard Foundation, commending them for initiating an inclusive intervention that has successfully brought together diverse ethnic and religious groups, fostering unity and harmony in communities where division had persisted for decades.

Beyond the exhibitions and speeches, participants engaged in interactive sessions, cultural performances, and networking opportunities, reinforcing solidarity among women farmers and their communities. The celebration not only amplified the voices of rural women but also illustrated how empowerment, innovation, and collective action can drive sustainable food security, economic growth, and social cohesion across Nigerian communities.



2025 World Food Day celebration in Jurara

Handover of Last Batch of Year-3 Processing Centres' Equipment

In line with its continuous commitment to promoting dignified employment, poverty reduction, and improved livelihoods, WOFAN successfully handed over modern processing equipment to 16 newly established Women Makeshift Centers across four project states, marking the completion of Year 3 centers under the program.

Each center received a full suite of processing machines, including rice polishers, destoners, hammer mills, two 1115 engines, improved parboiling pots, energy-efficient stoves with chimneys, and briquette presses for producing smokeless charcoal from rice waste. This equipment is designed to enhance productivity, reduce post-harvest losses, and promote climate-smart processing methods, contributing to cleaner environments and sustainable livelihoods.



Handover of last batch of year-3 processing centres' equipement

The handover ceremonies were celebrated with traditional and religious leaders, community representatives, and WOFAN project teams. Leaders offered prayers for the long-term sustainability of the project and expressed heartfelt appreciation to WOFAN and the Mastercard Foundation for their unwavering commitment to empowering women, youth, and Persons With Disabilities across communities.



Handover of last batch of year-3 processing centres' equipement



Handover of last batch of year-3 processing centres' equipement

Field Reflections on Production Progress: Brown Field Day Celebrations Across Project States



Brown Field Day in Lajangara

WOFAN ICON2 project states recently hosted Brown Field Day celebrations, creating an engaging platform for community partners to reflect on how their lives—particularly those of rural women, have been transformed through the Project's interventions compared to the challenges faced before its implementation.

Participants shared experiences from the 2025 wet season, highlighting production gaps, weather-related challenges, and operational difficulties across various locations. Regional Agronomists and Extension Officers provided practical guidance, emphasizing the importance of aligning farming calendars with NiMET's weather forecasts to improve yields, minimize climate-related risks, and strengthen adaptive capacity.

Field tours of farms approaching harvest allowed teams to assess the level of GAP adoption among community partners. Discussions on pre- and post-harvest management strategies focused on reducing harvest and storage losses, maximizing profitability, and maintaining high-quality produce. Hands-on demonstrations showcased the safe operation of rice harvesters, cutters, and maize threshers, illustrating how mechanization reduces labor and time while improving efficiency and safety on the field.



Brown Field Day in Saulawa, Kaduna State



Brown Field Day in Saulawa, Kaduna State

In addition, project teams conducted courtesy visits to Permanent Secretaries and State Commissioners for Agriculture, expressing appreciation for their continuous commitment, collaboration, and policy support aimed at enhancing smallholder farmers' productivity and resilience.

The Brown Field Days served not only as a learning and experience-sharing platform but also as a reinforcement of WOFAN ICON2's objectives: to build a new generation of informed, skilled, and empowered smallholder farmers who drive inclusive agricultural transformation, strengthen community resilience, and contribute to sustainable rural livelihoods.



WOFAN Team with the Gombe State Commissioner of Agriculture (standing 4th from right)

Turning Waste into Wealth: Empowering Communities for Sustainable Livelihoods



Training on the use of rice husk to make smokeless charcoal briquettes

As the Year 3 farming cycle concluded and harvest activities commenced, Super Trainers across all project states facilitated a series of capacity-building sessions for community partners under the theme **"Waste to Wealth."**

The trainings focused on critical areas such as processing, packaging, marketing, and value addition, equipping farmers and processors, particularly women and youth, with practical skills to transform agricultural by-products into profitable commodities. Participants engaged in hands-on demonstrations on briquette production from rice husks, turning what was once considered waste into smokeless, eco-friendly charcoal that promotes clean energy use.

Additionally, participants practiced processing and packaging rice and maize products, learning how to meet market standards, enhance product appeal, and increase competitiveness in local and regional markets.

By linking environmental sustainability with economic opportunity, the sessions fostered a mindset of innovation and entrepreneurship among community partners.

These capacity-building activities have strengthened technical competencies, nurtured creativity, and empowered participants to view agriculture not just as a source of food but as a viable business. Through initiatives like these, WOFAN ICON2 is enabling communities to generate income, reduce waste, and contribute to sustainable livelihoods while reinforcing the principles of environmental stewardship and economic self-reliance.



Training on the use of rice husk to make smokeless charcoal briquettes



Training on the use of rice husk to make smokeless charcoal briquettes

SUCCESS STORIES

AUGUST – OCTOBER 2025

From Shared Struggles to Shared Prosperity: 150 Women Proving That Unity Creates Wealth



Shared prosperity – Traditional Leaders withness sharing of profits by WOFAN women groups in Aujara, Jigawa State

In the quiet farming community of Aujara in Jigawa State, the WOFAN Women Cluster stands as a living example of what becomes possible when women are equipped, organized, and united by a shared vision. Against a backdrop of economic uncertainty, limited access to capital, and longstanding gender barriers, 150 women chose cooperation over isolation, and in doing so, rewrote their collective story.

The cluster is made up of five tightly coordinated groups of 30 women each, bound together not just by geography, but by discipline, trust, and a commitment to growth. What began as a modest initiative has evolved into a thriving, self-sustaining economic unit that demonstrates the true power of collective action.

Within only two years of engaging in processing and value-addition activities, the women achieved a milestone few could have imagined, recording a total profit of ₦6,612,000. This achievement was not accidental. It was the result of careful planning, shared responsibility, and consistent adherence to Good Agronomic and processing practices, ensuring quality, efficiency, and sustainability across every stage of production.

However, the true success of the WOFAN Women Cluster goes far beyond the numbers. Through structured collaboration, the women have built a strong internal system of mentorship and peer learning, where knowledge is freely shared and progress is celebrated collectively. Experienced members guide newer ones, ensuring that skills, discipline, and confidence are continuously passed on.

Profits are not consumed individually but reinvested collectively, strengthening the group's resilience and positioning them for long-term expansion. This culture of reinvestment has enabled the cluster to grow its operations, absorb shocks, and plan strategically for the future, turning short-term gains into sustainable livelihoods.

Equally important is the shift in mindset and social standing experienced by the women themselves. Through active participation in economic decision-making, many members have gained renewed confidence, greater respect within their households, and stronger voices within their community. The cluster has become a platform not only for income generation, but for leadership development, empowerment, and social cohesion.



Stronger together – Happy members of WOFAN-ICON2 groups in Aujara



Stronger together – Happy members of WOFAN-ICON2 groups in Aujara

The journey of the WOFAN Women Cluster in Aujara delivers a clear and powerful message:

When women organize around a common goal, apply discipline, and support one another, the impact multiplies. Shared struggles no longer divide, they bind. And shared effort, guided by vision and determination, creates shared prosperity.

Their story is a reminder that wealth creation is not merely about capital, it is about **community, collaboration, and belief in what is possible when people rise together.**

No one is Left Behind: WOFAN-ICON2 Empowers the Unheard



WOFAN provides hearing aids

Young Nigerians living with hearing impairments often carry an invisible burden, silenced by stigma, excluded from opportunities, and left behind on the path to dignity and self-reliance. Through the WOFAN-ICON2 Project, supported by the Mastercard Foundation, that silence is being broken.

In a ground-breaking partnership with ENT specialists, WOFAN launched the distribution of hearing aids to promote hearing and restore hope for 1,200 young PWDs participating in the ICON2 Project. This initiative goes far beyond simply providing equipment: it begins with expert medical screenings, life-changing procedures, and counselling that restore not only the ability to hear, but also the confidence to live, work, and thrive.

For the first 60 individuals screened during the pilot phase, the program has already proven transformative. What was once a hidden disability has become an opportunity for growth, enabling young farmers to follow instructions, access trainings, and reintegrate into a community that had long forgotten them.

As the initiative expands to more project states, including Adamawa, Kano, and the FCT, it is building more than medical solutions; it is building bridges of inclusion. This program demonstrates that when communities come together, silence can be turned into song, despair into hope, and isolation into dignity.



New possibilities as young PWD gets hearing aid

Impact Story: Rebuilding Hope Through Education in Bagauda



Dilapidated blocks of classrooms

For years, children in Bagauda community attended classes in crumbling, unhygienic classrooms with leaking roofs and broken walls. The school, long neglected, had only one teacher, a WOFAN-ICON2 registered Person with Disability (PWD). Despite physical challenges, he volunteered to teach, traveling nearly 20 kilometers daily from Chiromawa without formal employment or support. His dedication kept the flame of education alive in Bagauda when hope was almost lost.

Desperate for change, the parents, many of whom are ICON2 participants—raised their voices, calling for support. Their appeal reached WOFAN, sparking the ICON2 Community Development Initiative, which brought a transformative wave to the community. Through targeted interventions, the initiative repaired classrooms, provided learning materials, and empowered local leadership to sustain educational improvements.

What was once a neglected and struggling school is now a symbol of resilience, inclusion, and hope. The Bagauda story highlights how community advocacy, combined with structured support from WOFAN-ICON2, can rebuild educational opportunities, restore dignity, and empower future generations.

From Dilapidation to Transformation: Community Members Supporting School Construction



New blocks of classrooms being constructed under the community growth initiative of the WOFAN-ICON2 Project

In response to the urgent need for quality learning spaces, WOFAN collaborated with the Bagauda community to construct two new blocks of six classrooms, four modern toilets, and two offices through the ICON2 Community Development Initiative, on land proudly donated by the community itself.

This initiative goes beyond infrastructure; it restores dignity to learning and fosters an inclusive environment where no child is left behind. True to WOFAN's community-driven model, residents of Bagauda volunteered as laborers, carrying sand, water, and cement. Their hands-on contributions reflected not only a sense of ownership but also a deep commitment to securing a brighter future for their children.

The transformation is remarkable: what was once a dilapidated, neglected school has now become a thriving center of education, hope, and opportunity. Through collective action, the Bagauda community has proven that sustainable change is built when communities and partners unite to address local challenges and champion the next generation.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS SUPPORTING SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION











New blocks of classrooms being constructed under the community growth initiative of the WOFAN-ICON2 Project

Uniting Leaders and Communities: A Future Reimagined

During a recent monitoring visit, WOFAN not only supervised the construction of new school facilities in Bagauda but also engaged key stakeholders to ensure sustainability and long-term impact.

The Traditional Leaders of Bebeji lauded WOFAN's consistent contributions, emphasizing the positive transformations seen across the LGA. The Executive Chairman of Bebeji LGA commended the project, pledged to secure formal employment for the PWD volunteer teacher, and promised full government support for WOFAN's ongoing interventions. Additionally, he generously offered land for potential future expansions.



WOFAN Team with Bagauda community leaders

The Local Government Education Secretary assured that qualified teachers would be deployed to the school, complementing ongoing Islamiyya classes with formal education, ensuring that all children benefit from a holistic learning experience.

Through these engagements, WOFAN has strengthened the bonds between communities and leaders, creating a collaborative framework that ensures sustained educational development, empowers local actors, and reimagines a future where children and communities thrive together.

A Future Reimagined



.WOFAN Team with happy and grateful Bagauda community members

The construction of Bagauda Primary School promises a brighter future, with improved school attendance and retention ensuring that no child is left behind. What began with a lone PWD teacher holding the fort has now transformed into a government-backed, community-owned school, marking a rebirth of education in Bagauda.

With the combined support of WOFAN, local government collaboration, and strong community ownership, the children of Bagauda will soon learn in safe, modern classrooms, equipped to nurture their growth and potential. This transformation is proof that when communities, leaders, and development partners unite, they create lasting impact that empowers generations to come.

PWD Communal Farming: From Possibility to Prosperity

Where others saw limitations, the WOFAN-ICON2 Project saw potential, and the land responded with abundance. Just a year ago, these PWD clusters received a 5-hectare start-up grant of free farming inputs, a gesture that marked the beginning of a life-changing journey.

With ongoing technical guidance and support from extension workers, members cultivated the land together, learning, collaborating, and breaking barriers that had long kept them on the margins of development. Their first harvest was more than grains; it was proof of ability, courage, and faith, rekindling the belief that disability does not define destiny.

This year, their journey reached an even greater milestone. Empowered by last year's success, each member returned to their individual farms, farming independently while continuing to nurture the cluster farm as a symbol of unity and shared strength. They have transitioned from beneficiaries to independent producers, entrepreneurs, and role models.



PWDs empowered through WOFAN-ICON2 intervention

The adaptive equipment provided by WOFAN ICON2 became a bridge between limitation and liberation. Wheelchairs gave them access to their fields; maize threshers and planters increased productivity and reduced drudgery; and continuous training and mentorship restored confidence and purpose. What once seemed impossible has now become their daily reality: PWD leading in food production, feeding families, and inspiring entire communities.

Today, their harvest is not only of crops but of dignity, self-reliance, and hope. Their story resounds like a clarion call, reminding us that when provided the right tools, support, and guidance, every individual has the power to rise, produce, and prosper.



PWDs empowered through WOFAN-ICON2 intervention

From Crawling to Conquering: The PWD Who Refused to Give Up

In Tudun Wada, Kano State, a young PWD named Abdullahi Ali Wada has become a shining symbol of hope, courage, and possibility. Born with a physical disability, Abdullahi faced enormous daily challenges, he used to crawl to school, enduring pain and exhaustion, determined to pursue an education despite the odds.

For years, education seemed almost impossible. The obstacles were not just physical; stigma, limited mobility, and a lack of supportive infrastructure made learning a daily struggle. Yet, Abdullahi's dream remained alive, fueled by an unwavering determination to succeed.

Everything changed when WOFAN ICON2 intervened in his community. Through the project, Abdullahi received a tricycle (keke) that transformed his mobility, independence, and self-esteem. Alongside this, continuous mentorship and guidance from WOFAN facilitators helped him regain confidence, focus, and purpose.



Tunde Wada and other PWDs empowered through WOFAN-ICON2 intervention



Tunde Wada and other PWDs empowered through WOFAN-ICON2 intervention

With renewed determination, Abdullahi not only attended school regularly but also excelled academically. In a remarkable achievement, he passed his NECO exams with 9 credits, becoming a top-performing student at Government College Tudun Wada. His success is not just a reflection of his intelligence but a triumph of resilience, faith, and opportunity.

Abdullahi reflects emotionally on his journey:

> "If not for the tricycle WOFAN ICON2 gave me, schooling would have been impossible. I would have ended up begging on the streets. But now, I believe I can live and succeed like anyone else."

Today, Abdullahi is more than a student, he is a beacon of hope for other PWDs in his community and across Nigeria. He dedicates his success to the WOFAN ICON2 project, whose inclusive programs continue to uplift thousands of young Nigerians through education, empowerment, and mobility support.

His message to peers living with disabilities is clear:

> "Never give up. Believe in yourself. One day, you will stand tall and be celebrated, just like everyone else, as long as initiatives like WOFAN ICON2 continue to reach people like us."

Abdullahi's journey, from crawling to conquering, is a living testament that disability does not define ability, and that with the right support, every life has potential, every dream is valid, and every challenge can be overcome.

From Street Corners to Dignified Markets: The Rise of Agro Produce Marketers under WOFAN ICON2



Trading under very difficult conditions – the daily struggles of micro-produce marketers

Once struggling under the scorching sun with little to show for their daily hustle, groups of small-scale Agro-produce marketers, mostly rural women, have now become shining symbols of transformation and dignity, thanks to the WOFAN-ICON2 Mini Project.

Support came not as charity but as a gateway to empowerment. These determined marketers received modern business tools, including parboiled rice packages, umbrellas, thermocoolers, food carts, and other essential materials. What once looked like an ordinary street business has now evolved into a structured enterprise that commands respect, attracts customers, and restores pride.

Today, these women stand tall in the markets, sheltered under umbrellas, confidently serving fresh and hygienic food products from neatly branded food carts. Rice that was once sold in basins on dusty grounds is now presented in attractive, market-ready packaging, fetching higher prices and admiration from buyers.

Beyond income, WOFAN ICON2 has delivered dignity, structure, and hope, a sense that their small business truly matters. Many women have reinvested profits into expanding stock, paying school fees, supporting family healthcare, and mentoring other women to follow their path of empowerment.

The transformation is not just in what they sell, but in how they see themselves. From informal traders, they have become entrepreneurs, providers, and role models within their communities. Their success is a living testament to the power of structured support, inclusive interventions, and the resilience of women determined to redefine their destinies.



Empowering women with conducive and dignifying business environments to grow their micro businesses

WOFAN ICON 2

In partnership with

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