mastercard foundation

In partnership with WOFAN ICON2

WOFAN-ICON2

WOMEN FARMERS ADVANCEMENT NETWORK

Newsletter

Y4 (VOL 10) Q2, FEBRUARY 2026 - APRIL 2026

SERIES 1



Welcome Note



As the WOFAN-ICON2 Project continues to deepen its impact across communities, this edition highlights the deliberate investments being made to strengthen the foundations for sustainable transformation. At the heart of every successful intervention lies a well-equipped community, empowered leaders, strengthened institutions, and the knowledge required to drive lasting change.

This series captures key milestones achieved through capacity-building initiatives, stakeholder engagements, community mobilization efforts, and the expansion of implementation structures across project states. Through continuous training, extension support, leadership development, food hygiene awareness, and financial literacy initiatives, women, youth, and community groups are being equipped with the skills and confidence needed to participate meaningfully in agricultural and economic development.

The stories and activities featured in this edition reflect more than program implementation; they demonstrate the power of collaboration and local ownership.

Traditional institutions, community leaders, youth groups, women associations, and project participants continue to play a critical role in ensuring that development efforts are rooted in community realities and positioned for sustainability.

As we document these achievements, we remain inspired by the resilience, commitment, and determination of the communities we serve. Together, we are building systems that empower individuals, strengthen livelihoods, and create opportunities that will extend far beyond the lifespan of the project.

We invite you to explore this edition and celebrate the progress being made as communities lay the groundwork for a future defined by inclusion, productivity, and shared prosperity.

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 9 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 3 Highlights, Achievements, Successes
- (Youth in Work)

  Total Outreach – 1,046,294
  Outreach Female – 881,749
  Youth in Work (YIW) – 1,046,294
  Youth in Work Female – 881,749

Newsletter Highlights

Welcome Note ***I***

WOFAN-ICON2 Project Overview ***iii***

Project Highlights ***1***

- Year 4 Begins Strong: WOFAN ICON2 Expands Community Partnerships Across 9 States 2
- Strengthening the Delivery System Through Cascade Training 3
- Step-Down Trainings Equip Community Partners for Sustainable Growth 5
- Learning by Doing: Participatory Trainings Strengthen Community Capacity 7
- Building Enterprises That Thrive: Promoting Profitability, Safety, and Sustainability 9
- From Capacity Building to Community Ownership: Cluster Elections Strengthen Grassroots Leadership Across Project States 11
- Democratic Structures Driving Collective Progress 12
- Toward Sustainability: Clusters Begin Official Registration Process 13
- WOFAN-ICON2 Flags Off Year 4 Input Growth Support Across Project States 14
- Simultaneous Multi-State Rollout Expands Reach and Inclusion 16
- Strong Partnerships Power Community Transformation 17
- WOFAN Flags Off Distribution of 5,600 Bags of Rice to Micro-Marketers 19
- Supporting Young Women Through Enterprise Opportunities 20
- Year 4 Officially Launches in Kaduna State - Hajia Salamatu Garba Joins Flag-Off Ceremony in Zaria 21
- Enterprise Support Strengthened Through Distribution of 5,000 Bags of Rice 23
- Traditional Institutions and Community Stakeholders Rally Behind the Project 24
- Bringing Support Closer to the Grassroots - Super Trainers and Extension Workers Lead Community-Level Distribution Efforts 25
- Delivering Impact, Strengthening Women-Led Enterprises - WOFAN-ICON2 Continues Distribution of Input Growth Support Across Project States 27
- State Teams and Traditional Institutions Drive Grassroots Distribution 29
- 2026 International Women's Day Celebration - "Give to Gain" Resonates Across Project States 31
- Over 13,000 Women's Group Receive Support 33
- Logistics Innovation Eases Economic Burden on Beneficiaries - WOFAN Logistics Riders Subsidize Transportation Amid Fuel Price Hike 34
- Expanding Logistics Support Across Five States - Tricycle Distribution Opens New Pathways for Economic Empowerment 35
- Moving Produce, Connecting Markets, Strengthening Livelihoods 36

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Year 4 Begins Strong: WOFAN ICON2 Expands Community Partnerships Across 9 States

WOFAN-ICON2 has officially commenced Year 4 implementation with the successful registration and onboarding of new community partners across all nine project states. This important milestone marks the beginning of another phase of inclusive agricultural interventions designed to strengthen livelihoods, deepen grassroots participation, and expand economic opportunities for women, youth, and vulnerable groups.



Communities unite as WOFAN-ICON2 begins another year of transformation.

The onboarding exercise, led by WOFAN-ICON2 Super Trainers and Extension Workers (Ews), focused on identifying and integrating committed community partners who will actively participate in the project's expanding network of agro-produce marketing, logistics, processing, and community-based enterprise activities. By establishing these partnerships early, the project is laying a strong operational foundation for effective implementation throughout the year.

Beyond registration, the process emphasized relationship building, orientation, and shared responsibility. New community partners were introduced to the vision, structure, and long-term goals of the project, helping them understand not only the opportunities available to them, but also their role in sustaining collective impact within their communities.

Strengthening the Delivery System Through Cascade Training



Equipping field teams to deliver sustainable community transformation.

To ensure effective coordination and quality delivery across all locations, WOFAN-ICON2 adopted its proven cascading training model. Experienced Super Trainers worked closely with Extension Workers, equipping them with the tools, guidance, and implementation protocols required to successfully onboard and support new partners at the community level.

This structured approach strengthens consistency across states while ensuring that interventions remain locally responsive. Extension Workers were trained on partner engagement, group coordination, reporting systems, community mobilization, and practical support strategies required to drive implementation at the grassroots.

The cascading system also reinforces accountability and sustainability. By building the capacity of field-level actors first, WOFAN-ICON2 ensures that knowledge flows efficiently from project leadership to the last mile, enabling communities to receive timely support, mentorship, and technical guidance throughout the implementation cycle.

Beyond technical knowledge transfer, the trainings also emphasized leadership, communication, and problem-solving skills necessary for working effectively within diverse communities. Extension Workers were encouraged to adopt participatory approaches that promote trust, inclusion, and active engagement among beneficiaries. This has helped strengthen relationships between project teams and community partners, creating a more collaborative environment for implementation.



Super Trainers and Extension Workers driving last-mile impact.

The cascade training model further allows WOFAN-ICON2 to respond quickly to emerging community needs while maintaining high standards across project states. With trained Super Trainers mentoring Extension Workers, and Extension Workers directly supporting community clusters, the project has built a strong operational chain capable of sustaining interventions efficiently and consistently. This layered support system continues to play a critical role in ensuring that project goals translate into measurable impact at the grassroots level.

Step-Down Trainings Equip Community Partners for Sustainable Growth



Step-down trainings strengthening leadership and enterprise development.

Following the onboarding exercise, intensive step-down trainings were conducted for agro-produce marketers and community partners across all project states. The sessions were designed to provide participants with practical knowledge, organizational skills, and leadership capacity needed to strengthen both individual enterprises and collective group structures.

The training curriculum covered several critical areas, including:

KEY TRAINING AREAS

1. Group formation and group dynamics
2. Leadership and coordination skills
3. Financial management and accountability
4. Nutrition awareness
5. Environmental and personal safety practices

The trainings adopted a participatory and practical approach, encouraging active engagement, peer learning, and real-life application. Participants were guided on how to build stronger cooperative structures, manage group resources responsibly, resolve conflicts effectively, and improve decision-making within their clusters.

More importantly, the sessions reinforced the idea that sustainable livelihoods require more than access to resources alone. By combining technical knowledge with leadership development and financial literacy, WOFAN-ICON2 is empowering community partners to become more resilient, organized, and economically independent.

The step-down trainings also created a platform for community partners to share experiences, identify common challenges, and learn practical solutions from one another. This collaborative learning environment strengthened trust and cooperation among participants while encouraging a stronger sense of ownership within their groups. As beneficiaries continue applying the lessons learned within their businesses and communities, the trainings are contributing to the development of more confident leaders, better-managed enterprises, and stronger grassroots structures capable of sustaining long-term impact.

Learning by Doing: Participatory Trainings Strengthen Community Capacity

WOFAN-ICON2's Year 4 training sessions were deliberately designed to go beyond conventional classroom learning, adopting participatory methods that encouraged active engagement, collaboration, and practical application. Across project states, community partners were not merely passive participants, they became active contributors in exercises designed to strengthen understanding, confidence, and real-world problem-solving abilities.

Through demonstrations, role plays, group discussions, peer-to-peer learning, and interactive exercises, participants explored practical solutions to challenges they encounter within their businesses and community groups. The sessions created an open learning environment where agro-produce marketers, logistics riders, and cluster members could exchange experiences, ask questions freely, and apply lessons immediately.



Hands-on learning helping communities build lasting skills.

This hands-on approach proved especially effective in simplifying complex concepts such as financial literacy, leadership coordination, record keeping, and group management.



Practical training sessions empowering community partners for growth.

Rather than relying solely on theory, facilitators used relatable examples and practical demonstrations to ensure that every participant could confidently apply the knowledge within their daily activities and enterprises.

By making learning practical and community-driven, WOFAN-ICON2 is strengthening the confidence, ownership, and long-term capacity of its community partners, ensuring that knowledge translates into measurable action at the grassroots level.

Building Enterprises That Thrive: Promoting Profitability, Safety, and Sustainability

While productivity and income generation remain important priorities, WOFAN-ICON2 continues to emphasize the importance of building sustainable and healthy business environments for community partners. The trainings therefore integrated critical modules focused not only on enterprise growth, but also on well-being, environmental responsibility, and safe operational practices.

Participants received guidance on nutrition, food hygiene, environmental sanitation, and personal safety measures necessary for maintaining healthier households, cleaner workspaces, and safer marketing environments. These lessons are particularly important for agro-produce marketers whose daily activities directly affect food quality, public health, and consumer trust.



Strengthening livelihoods through safety, structure, and enterprise support.

Financial management sessions also equipped participants with practical strategies for budgeting, savings, accountability, and responsible use of business resources. Combined with leadership and group coordination training, these skills are helping clusters build stronger internal systems capable of sustaining long-term growth.



Strong teams, stronger communities, lasting impact.

By strengthening organizational discipline, hygiene practices, and economic management, WOFAN-ICON2 is helping community partners improve profitability while building enterprises that are safer, more resilient, and better positioned for long-term sustainability.

Beyond improving business operations, these interventions are strengthening household and community well-being. Community partners are increasingly adopting safer food handling practices, cleaner processing environments, and better financial management within their enterprises. As a result, many groups are experiencing improved product quality, stronger customer confidence, and better cooperation among members, reinforcing WOFAN-ICON2's integrated approach to sustainable growth.



Knowledge sharing at the grassroots for lasting community impact.

From Capacity Building to Community Ownership: Cluster Elections Strengthen Grassroots Leadership Across Project States



Building stronger clusters through unity, leadership, and accountability.

Following the onboarding and intensive training exercises, WOFAN-ICON2 community partners swiftly transitioned from learning to structured action through the successful conduct of cluster leadership elections across all nine project states.

The elections marked a major milestone in formalizing community structures and demonstrated the readiness of partners to take ownership of their groups and collective activities. Across communities, members participated enthusiastically in transparent electoral processes aimed at selecting leaders who would coordinate cluster operations, represent group interests, and strengthen communication between community partners and project teams.

The smooth conduct of these elections reflects the growing organizational maturity of the clusters and reinforces WOFAN-ICON2's commitment to participatory leadership, inclusion, and accountability at the grassroots level.

Democratic Structures Driving Collective Progress



Community leadership strengthening accountability and collective action.

The newly elected leadership teams now serve as vital coordination points within their communities. Their responsibilities include guiding group activities, supporting conflict resolution, facilitating communication with Extension Workers, and ensuring equitable participation within cluster operations.

These democratic structures are designed to promote stronger collaboration, improve collective bargaining power, and create more efficient systems for implementing project activities. With clearly defined leadership structures in place, community partners are better positioned to coordinate enterprise activities, manage resources effectively, and sustain group cohesion over time.

More importantly, the cluster formations are helping communities build confidence in local leadership and shared responsibility, essential ingredients for sustaining impact long after project interventions are completed.

Toward Sustainability: Clusters Begin Official Registration Process

Building on the momentum of successful elections, many clusters have commenced the process of official registration with local government authorities. This important step moves the groups from informal associations to legally recognized community structures capable of accessing broader economic and institutional opportunities.
Official registration strengthens the ability of clusters to engage with financial institutions, markets, cooperatives, development agencies, and government support systems. It also enhances credibility, accountability, and long-term organizational sustainability.

Through this process, WOFAN-ICON2 is not only supporting community activities for the present, but helping establish durable institutions that can continue to grow, attract opportunities, and serve their members well beyond the lifecycle of the project.

The registration process also encourages stronger organizational discipline within the clusters. Groups are being guided on documentation, record keeping, leadership responsibilities, and compliance procedures required for operating as recognized entities. These structures help promote transparency, strengthen member confidence, and create a more stable foundation for collective enterprise growth.

As clusters gain formal recognition, they become better positioned to access future partnerships, investment opportunities, grants, and cooperative support systems that can further strengthen their businesses and livelihoods. This transition from informal groups to recognized community institutions represents a major step toward self-reliance, continuity, and long-term resilience for WOFAN-ICON2 community partners.

WOFAN-ICON2 Flags Off Year 4 Input Growth Support Across Project States



Hajia Maryama Lawal addressing stakeholders during the Year 4 flag-off.

WOFAN-ICON2 has officially commenced the distribution of Year 4 input growth support grants to micro-produce marketers across project states, marking another major milestone in the project's commitment to strengthening grassroots enterprise development and inclusive economic participation.

The official flag-off ceremony, led by the WOFAN Director of Strategy, Innovation and Sustainability, Hajia Maimuna Lawal, alongside the FCT Lead and Gender Specialist, brought together community leaders, extension workers, super trainers, and key stakeholders united by a shared vision of empowering rural entrepreneurs and expanding livelihood opportunities.

Designed to support small-scale agro-produce marketers, the intervention provides beneficiaries with critical resources needed to scale their businesses, improve market participation, and strengthen household income generation. For many participants, the support represents more than economic assistance, it is an opportunity to build stability, dignity, and long-term resilience within their communities.

The atmosphere at the flag-off events reflected both excitement and hope as beneficiaries gathered to receive support that will directly strengthen their business activities and position them for greater participation within local agricultural value chains.



WOFAN-ICON2 begins distribution of input growth support.

Simultaneous Multi-State Rollout Expands Reach and Inclusion

Following the successful launch in the FCT, similar distribution exercises were simultaneously rolled out across Jigawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Kano, Adamawa, Nasarawa, and Benue States, ensuring that Year 4 interventions reached community partners in a timely and coordinated manner.

Led by state teams, super trainers, and extension workers, the multi-state rollout demonstrates WOFAN-ICON2's operational strength and ability to efficiently coordinate large-scale grassroots interventions across diverse communities.

The synchronized implementation approach also reinforces equity and inclusion by ensuring that community partners across all project locations have equal access to support opportunities regardless of location. By reducing delays and strengthening field coordination, the project continues to build trust and confidence among beneficiaries and stakeholders alike.

More importantly, the rollout reflects WOFAN-ICON2's commitment to ensuring that support reaches the last mile, empowering small-scale marketers, women-led groups, and vulnerable households that form the backbone of rural economies.

The presence of extension workers and community facilitators throughout the distribution process also ensured transparency, accountability, and proper engagement with beneficiaries at the grassroots level. Community partners received guidance on the purpose and effective utilization of the support provided, helping to strengthen ownership and maximize the impact of the interventions within their enterprises and households.

Across the participating states, the coordinated rollout created renewed enthusiasm among beneficiaries and local stakeholders who witnessed the project's continued commitment to inclusive development. Traditional leaders, community representatives, and local institutions actively supported the exercises, reinforcing collaboration between the project and host communities. This growing partnership continues to strengthen community participation and lays a stronger foundation for sustainable livelihood improvement across project locations.

Strong Partnerships Power Community Transformation



Community partners receiving Year 4 support items.

One of the defining strengths of the WOFAN-ICON2 Project remains its strong collaboration with traditional institutions, field teams, and community-based structures. Across all flag-off events, the presence of traditional rulers, extension workers, super trainers, women leaders, and youth representatives highlighted the broad partnership ecosystem driving the project's success.

Traditional leaders continue to play a vital role in mobilizing communities, strengthening local ownership, and providing legitimacy for project activities. Their support creates an enabling environment where interventions are welcomed, trusted, and sustained within communities.

At the same time, Extension Workers and Super Trainers provide technical guidance, monitoring, and continuous follow-up support that ensure interventions move beyond distribution into measurable impact. Together, these partnerships are helping create a stronger foundation for sustainable enterprise growth, social inclusion, and community resilience.

The collaboration between community institutions and project teams has also strengthened communication, accountability, and participation at the grassroots level.



Stakeholders and field teams coordinating distribution activities.

Through regular engagement with local leaders and community groups, WOFAN-ICON2 is able to better understand local realities, respond to emerging needs, and ensure that interventions remain community-driven and culturally relevant.

This collective approach continues to foster a strong sense of shared responsibility among stakeholders. Rather than viewing development as an external intervention, communities are increasingly becoming active contributors to the success and sustainability of project activities. The result is a more inclusive and resilient implementation structure capable of driving long-term transformation across project locations.



Strengthening local partnerships across project communities.



Input support helping strengthen household livelihoods.

WOFAN Flags Off Distribution of 5,600 Bags of Rice to Micro-Marketers



Hajia Maimuna Lawal presenting rice support to community beneficiaries.

In Jigawa State, WOFAN-ICON2 recorded another major milestone with the official distribution of 5,600 bags of 50kg processed rice to more than 500 groups of micro-marketers across the state.

The event, led by Hajia Maimuna Lawal, Director of Strategy, Innovation and Sustainability, drew the participation and blessings of traditional rulers, community elders, and stakeholders who gathered to witness the large-scale intervention aimed at strengthening rural enterprise development.

The rice distribution forms part of WOFAN-ICON2's broader strategy to improve livelihoods, stimulate local trade, and create sustainable economic opportunities for women and young entrepreneurs operating within the agro-produce marketing space.

For many beneficiaries, the support provides immediate business capital that can be converted into steady income, expanded market activities, and improved household welfare.

Supporting Young Women Through Enterprise Opportunities

Beyond the scale of distribution, the intervention carries a deeper focus on empowering young women entrepreneurs at the grassroots level. By providing quality processed rice for micro-marketing activities, WOFAN-ICON2 is helping women build viable businesses, diversify income streams, and strengthen their position within local agricultural markets.

The initiative enables beneficiaries to participate more actively in the grain value chain while increasing financial independence and economic stability for their households.

Through interventions like this, WOFAN-ICON2 continues to demonstrate that women are not only participants in local economies, but key drivers of community prosperity, food security, and inclusive development.



Supporting young women to build stronger livelihoods.

Year 4 Officially Launches in Kaduna State Hajia Salamatu Garba Joins Flag-Off Ceremony in Zaria



Hajia Salamatu Garba joins stakeholders for the Kaduna Year 4 flag-off in Zaria.

Year 4 implementation activities also commenced in Kaduna State with a high-level flag-off ceremony held in Zaria and attended by WOFAN Founder and Global Advocate, Hajia Salamatu Garba.

The event marked the beginning of another implementation phase focused on expanding enterprise support, deepening community impact, and strengthening agricultural livelihoods across northern Kaduna communities.

The presence of Hajia Salamatu Garba at the event reinforced WOFAN's long-standing commitment to grassroots transformation, women's empowerment, and sustainable community development.

The ceremony brought together traditional rulers, women and youth groups, extension workers, community leaders, and other key stakeholders who gathered to witness the official commencement of Year 4 activities in the state. Their participation reflected the strong level of community ownership and stakeholder confidence that continues to support the success of the WOFAN-ICON2 Project across project locations.



Hajia Salamatu Garba reinforces WOFAN's commitment to grassroots development.

Discussions during the event emphasized the importance of inclusion, enterprise development, and collective responsibility in sustaining the gains already achieved through previous project phases. Community members expressed optimism about the opportunities Year 4 interventions will provide, particularly in strengthening livelihoods, improving market participation, and creating more economic opportunities for women and young people.

The Kaduna flag-off also served as a renewed call for collaboration among community institutions, project teams, and beneficiaries to ensure that interventions continue to translate into meaningful and lasting impact at the grassroots level.

Enterprise Support Strengthened Through Distribution of 5,000 Bags of Rice

As part of the launch activities, more than 5,000 bags of rice were distributed to over 500 groups of micro produce marketers across Zaria and surrounding communities.

The intervention is designed to strengthen small-scale enterprise development, improve household income, and support the local grain economy by equipping micro-marketers with resources needed to expand their businesses.

By targeting grassroots entrepreneurs, many of whom are women, the initiative reinforces the critical role of small-scale traders within local food systems and rural economies.

The support also contributes to reducing economic vulnerability while creating pathways for more stable and sustainable livelihoods.

For many beneficiaries, the rice distribution represents an opportunity to increase trading capacity, expand customer reach, and generate more consistent income for their households. The intervention also helps strengthen local market activity by ensuring that women-led enterprises remain active participants within the grain value chain. Through coordinated support like this, WOFAN-ICON2 continues to create practical pathways for economic inclusion, enterprise growth, and community resilience.

Distribution Highlights

- 5,000+ bags of rice distributed
- 500+ micro-marketer groups reached
- Women-led enterprises prioritized
- Expanded market participation opportunities
- Support extended across Zaria and surrounding communities

Traditional Institutions and Community Stakeholders Rally Behind the Project

The Kaduna flag-off ceremony attracted a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives from ETK, traditional rulers, youth leaders, women groups, extension workers, and community advocates.

Their collective participation demonstrated strong community ownership and broad-based support for the WOFAN-ICON2 Project and its inclusive development approach.

The active involvement of traditional institutions and community groups continues to strengthen trust, participation, and accountability within project communities — ensuring that interventions are not only implemented effectively, but embraced as part of a shared vision for long-term progress.

Traditional leaders used the occasion to encourage beneficiaries to remain committed, cooperative, and accountable in utilizing the opportunities provided through the project. Their words of support reinforced the importance of unity, discipline, and collective participation in sustaining the impact of community-driven interventions. The endorsement of respected local institutions also strengthened confidence among beneficiaries and encouraged wider participation within surrounding communities.

The event further created a platform for dialogue and collaboration between project teams and community stakeholders, allowing participants to discuss local priorities, implementation strategies, and areas requiring continued support. This inclusive engagement approach continues to strengthen relationships between WOFAN-ICON2 and host communities while ensuring that interventions remain responsive to local realities and development needs.

Beyond the ceremonial activities, the gathering reflected a growing sense of shared responsibility among stakeholders who increasingly see the success of the project as a collective mission. This strong partnership ecosystem remains one of the key drivers behind the sustainability, acceptance, and long-term impact of WOFAN-ICON2 interventions across project states.

Bringing Support Closer to the Grassroots Super Trainers and Extension Workers Lead Community-Level Distribution Efforts

Following the successful state-level flag-off ceremonies, WOFAN-ICON2 Super Trainers and Extension Workers (EWs) commenced the direct distribution of input growth support grants within their respective communities, ensuring that interventions reached beneficiaries efficiently, transparently, and without delay.

The community-level distributions reflect the strength of WOFAN-ICON2's grassroots implementation model, where trained field teams serve as the bridge between project coordination and community impact. By leading the process within their localities, Super Trainers and Extension Workers were able to ensure proper verification, organized coordination, and equitable distribution among registered community partners.

Across project communities, beneficiaries gathered with excitement and optimism as support items were distributed directly to agro-produce marketers and cluster groups. The exercise also provided an opportunity for field teams to engage closely with beneficiaries, answer questions, reinforce accountability measures, and provide additional guidance on how the support should be effectively utilized for enterprise growth.

The active presence of Extension Workers and Super Trainers during distribution exercises strengthened trust within communities and reinforced WOFAN-ICON2's commitment to transparency, inclusion, and community ownership. Their involvement ensured that support was not only delivered successfully, but also properly documented and monitored at the grassroots level.

Beyond distribution, the engagement created an avenue for stronger relationships between project teams and beneficiaries. Community partners were encouraged to remain active within their clusters, apply the knowledge gained during trainings, and work collectively toward building stronger and more sustainable enterprises.

As Year 4 implementation continues, these community-level activities demonstrate that impactful development is most effective when support systems are localized, participatory, and responsive to the realities of the people they are designed to serve.

PHOTOS SPEAK











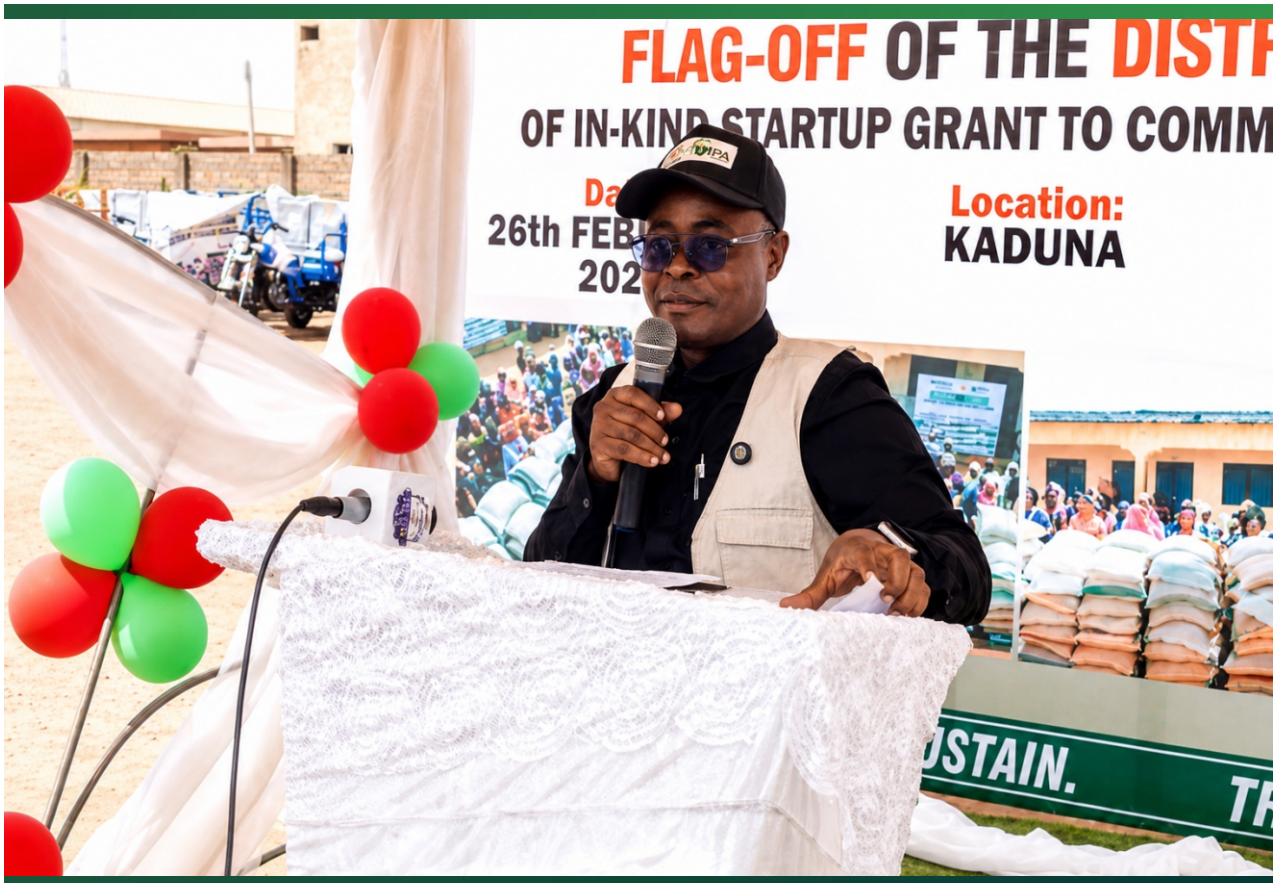


Delivering Impact, Strengthening Women-Led Enterprises

WOFAN-ICON2 Continues Distribution of Input Growth Support Across Project States

WOFAN-ICON2 continues the rollout of input growth support to women-led agro-producer marketers across project communities, reinforcing its commitment to inclusive economic empowerment and sustainable livelihood development.

The ongoing distribution exercise is designed to strengthen women's participation within local agricultural economies by providing practical support that enables beneficiaries to expand their businesses, improve market engagement, and increase household income. Across project states, women groups have continued to receive in-kind support aimed at helping them strengthen enterprise activities and build greater economic resilience.



Supporting women-led businesses through continuous enterprise support.

As women remain central to food production, processing, and market systems within rural communities, the intervention recognizes and supports their critical role in sustaining local economies and household welfare. By investing directly in women-led enterprises, WOFAN-ICON2 is helping to create stronger, more resilient agro-economies driven by grassroots participation and collective growth.

The distribution activities also reflect the project's broader vision of building long-term prosperity through inclusive systems that empower women not merely as beneficiaries, but as active economic drivers and community leaders.



Expanding opportunities for women-led enterprises across project states.

State Teams and Traditional Institutions Drive Grassroots Distribution

To ensure transparency, efficiency, and accountability, distribution exercises are being implemented directly at the community level through close collaboration between state teams, Extension Workers, Super Trainers, and respected traditional leaders.

This decentralized implementation approach ensures that support reaches registered and verified community partners promptly while maintaining strong community oversight throughout the process. Across project locations, traditional institutions have continued to play an important role in mobilizing communities, strengthening local ownership, and reinforcing trust in project activities.



State teams and traditional leaders working together for community impact.

The presence of traditional rulers and community elders at distribution sites also demonstrates growing community confidence in the WOFAN-ICON2 Project and its impact-driven approach to grassroots development.

By anchoring interventions within existing community structures, WOFAN-ICON2 is strengthening accountability systems while fostering greater participation, inclusiveness, and sustainability across beneficiary communities.



Grassroots distribution strengthened through local partnerships.

2026 International Women's Day Celebration "Give to Gain" Resonates Across Project States



Celebrating women, growth, and new opportunities across communities.

The 2026 International Women's Day celebration became an even more meaningful occasion across WOFAN-ICON2 project states as it coincided with the ongoing distribution of input growth support to women-led agro-producer marketers.

With the theme **"Give to Gain,"** the celebration reflected the project's philosophy of empowering women with resources, opportunities, and support systems that enable long-term growth and transformation. Across communities, women gathered not only to celebrate their achievements and resilience, but also to receive support designed to strengthen their economic futures.

Traditional rulers, stakeholders, women leaders, youth representatives, and community members participated actively in the celebrations, lending their voices to the ongoing call for women's inclusion, economic empowerment, and equitable access to opportunities.

The atmosphere across distribution sites reflected both celebration and purpose, a reminder that when women are empowered economically, entire families and communities benefit.



International Women's Day marked with support for women-led businesses.

The events also created a platform for women to share testimonies of personal growth, business expansion, and improved livelihoods resulting from their participation in WOFAN-ICON2 interventions. Many beneficiaries spoke about gaining greater financial confidence, improved decision-making ability within their households, and stronger participation in community economic activities. These stories of transformation reinforced the importance of continued investment in women-led enterprises and grassroots empowerment initiatives.

Beyond the celebrations, the International Women's Day activities strengthened solidarity among women groups across project communities. Women encouraged one another to remain committed to savings, enterprise development, and collective growth while embracing leadership roles within their clusters and communities. The gathering served as both a celebration of progress achieved and a renewed commitment to building a future where women continue to thrive as drivers of economic and social transformation.

Over 13,000 Women's Groups Receive Support

In one of the project's most far-reaching interventions to date, more than 13,000 women's groups benefitted from the distribution exercise across project states.

Each group received support aimed at improving income generation, strengthening small-scale enterprises, and expanding livelihood opportunities within local communities. For many women, the intervention provides critical business support that enables them to grow their trade activities, diversify income sources, and improve financial stability for their households.

The scale of the distribution underscores WOFAN-ICON2's commitment to addressing the realities faced by women operating within informal and small-scale economic sectors. By targeting women-led micro-businesses, the project is directly investing in the economic backbone of rural communities.

More importantly, the intervention is helping women move beyond survival-level trading toward more structured, sustainable, and growth-oriented enterprises capable of creating lasting impact for future generations.

For many beneficiaries, the support represents more than an economic intervention — it is a source of renewed confidence and opportunity. Women who previously struggled with limited capital, unstable market access, and inconsistent income are now better positioned to strengthen their businesses, support their families, and participate more actively within local economies. The intervention is also helping many women build stronger financial discipline through savings, reinvestment, and cooperative participation within their clusters.

Across project communities, the ripple effects of the support are already becoming visible. Increased trading activities, stronger group coordination, and improved household purchasing power are contributing to more vibrant local markets and stronger community resilience. By investing directly in women-led enterprises, WOFAN-ICON2 continues to demonstrate that empowering women economically creates long-term benefits that extend far beyond individual beneficiaries to entire households and communities.

Logistics Innovation Eases Economic Burden on Beneficiaries

WOFAN Logistics Riders Subsidize Transportation Amid Fuel Price Hike

Amid rising global fuel prices and increasing transportation costs, WOFAN-ICON2 demonstrated adaptability and responsiveness by introducing practical support measures to reduce the burden on community partners during distribution exercises.

WOFAN Logistics Riders, who were actively present at distribution locations, provided subsidized transportation services for beneficiaries moving their in-kind support items back to their communities and business locations.

This timely intervention significantly reduced transportation challenges for women groups and community partners who would otherwise struggle with the high cost of moving goods due to the petrol price increase.

Beyond easing immediate economic pressure, the initiative also highlights the strength of the WOFAN-ICON2 logistics ecosystem, where project-supported logistics riders are becoming active contributors to community development and last-mile service delivery.

By combining enterprise support with innovative logistical solutions, the project continues to ensure that economic shocks do not weaken grassroots participation or reduce the impact of community-centered development efforts.



WOFAN logistics riders helping reduce transportation costs for beneficiaries.

Expanding Logistics Support Across Five States Tricycle Distribution Opens New Pathways for Economic Empowerment

A new chapter of opportunity, mobility, and economic empowerment is unfolding across Kano, Jigawa, FCT, Kaduna, and Adamawa States as WOFAN-ICON2 officially commences the distribution of tricycles to Year 4 logistics service providers' clusters.

The initiative represents far more than the distribution of transportation assets. For beneficiaries, these tricycles symbolize dignity, self-reliance, and the beginning of sustainable livelihood opportunities within the agricultural value chain. Carefully selected as part of the Year 4 onboarded community partners, the logistics riders have undergone orientation processes, signed operational agreements, and are now positioned to provide critical transportation services connecting producers, processors, and markets.

The launch of the logistics intervention reflects WOFAN-ICON2's broader strategy of strengthening agricultural systems not only through production support, but also through efficient movement of goods, market access, and last-mile delivery solutions that improve economic participation at the grassroots level.

Across participating communities, excitement and optimism surrounded the handover ceremonies as beneficiaries stepped into a new role capable of transforming both their own livelihoods and the communities they serve.



Tricycle distribution creating new opportunities for logistics riders.

Moving Produce, Connecting Markets, Strengthening Livelihoods

The newly distributed tricycles will play an important role in addressing one of the most persistent challenges facing rural agricultural communities, transportation and market access.

Logistics riders will support the movement of produce from farms and processing centers to storage facilities, markets, and buyers, helping reduce post-harvest losses while improving efficiency across the agricultural value chain. For producers and processors, this means faster movement of goods, improved market access, and reduced spoilage. For local markets, it creates more reliable supply systems capable of strengthening food distribution within communities.

For the riders themselves, the intervention creates dignified and sustainable income-generating opportunities. What was once informal labor is now evolving into a structured enterprise supported through training, organization, and project-backed systems.



Connecting farmers to markets through stronger logistics support.

In this inaugural phase, 10 logistics rider clusters in each participating state received tricycles, marking the beginning of a larger vision aimed at building community-based logistics networks capable of driving long-term economic growth.

More importantly, the intervention demonstrates how WOFAN-ICON2 continues to integrate women, youth, and local entrepreneurs into every stage of the agricultural ecosystem, from production and processing to transportation and market delivery.



Supporting market access through reliable logistics services.

mastercard foundation

In partnership with WOFAN ICON2

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.

www.wofan.org | info@wofan.org
+2348186620598, +2348093861739