

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT-NIGER

MCA-NIGER



MINUTES OF THE 10th ORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NIAMEY January 22, 2020

The Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Account-Niger (“MCA-Niger”) held an ordinary meeting on January 22, 2020 from 9:45mn at Hôtel Soluxe, in accordance with: (i) the Bylaws of MCA-Niger, dated July 4, 2017; (ii) Decree N°2016-706/PRN, dated December 23, 2016, on the creation, attributes, composition and functions of MCA-Niger; (iii) the Millennium Challenge Compact between the United States of America, acting through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (“MCC”) and the Government of Niger (the “Government ”), dated on July 29, 2016 (the “Compact”); and (iv) the Program Implementation Agreement between the United States of America, acting through the Millennium Challenge Corporation (“MC ”) and the Government of Niger (the “Government”), dated on July 29, 2016 ("Program Implementation Agreement"). Capitalized terms used but not defined herein shall have the meanings given such terms in the Bylaws, the Compact or the Program Implementation Agreement. Capitalized terms used but not defined herein shall have the meanings given such terms in the Bylaws, the Compact or the Program Implementation Agreement.

I. ATTENDEES

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1. Board Members in attendance and constituting a quorum were :

Names	Positions	Voting members Vs No Voting members	Board member / Alternate
1. OUHOUMODOU Mahamadou	Minister, Chief of Staff of the President of the Republic, Chairman of the Board	Voting members	Board member
2. M. KALLA Moutari	Minister of Hydraulics and sanitation	Voting member	Board member

3. M. BOUCHA Mohamed	Delegate Minister for Livestock	Voting member	alternate
4. Kadi Abdoulaye	Minister of 'Equipment,	Voting member	Board member
5. Dr Jidoud Ahmat	Delegate Minister to the Budget	Voting member	alternate
6. El Back Zeinabou Tari Bako	Minister of the Woman Promotion and Child Protection ,	Voting member	Board member
7. Mrs Hadari Zeinabou	Deputy chief of the Prime Minister	Voting member	Alternate
8. Bakoye Saadou	Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning	Voting member	Alternate
9. Mr Djariri Mahamane Salissou	Chief of Staff of the minister of environment , urban sanitation and sustainable development	Voting member	alternate
10. Mr Betty Ali	Minister ; High-Commissioner of the à 3N Initiative	Voting member	Board member
11. Mr Mounkeila Ousseini	Deputy Chairperson of the National Chamber of Commerce , Industry and Craftsmanship	Voting member	Alternate
12. Mrs Fodi Halima	CONGAFEN training Officer , Representative of Women organizations of the Civil Society	Voting member	Board member
13. Mr Bangna Djibo	Chairman of the Farmers' Platform, representative of the civil society	Voting member	Board member
14. Mrs PENN Kristin	Resident Country Director of the MCC in Niger	non-voting	Board member

15. Mr. ANNOU Mamane	General Director of MCA-Niger	non-voting	Board member
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Board Members present by teleconference : None

2. Board Members absent : None

Guests :

No	Names	Positions
1	Mme Aminata SAMAKE	Acting Programme Director, MCA Niger Management Services and Market Access Facilitation Manager
2	M. Soulemane KOUOTOU NGAPOUT	Director of Legal Affairs, MCA-Niger
3	Mme Hassana GOURO	Legal Specialist MCA Niger
4	M. Julien TOUGOURI	Monitoring-Evaluation Director, MCA-Niger
5	M. Joseph Désiré TIGNEGRE	Procurement Director , MCA Niger
6	M. Nasser GOURGOUDOU HADI	Audit and Compliance Manager, MCA-Niger
7	M. Diafarou MOUMOUNI	Irrigation Infrastructure Manager, MCA-Niger
8	M. Daouda SEINI DIAKITE	Road Manager MCA Niger
9	M. Jonathan ABDOU	PRAPS manager , MCA Niger
10	M. Saidou LAMINOU	Manager CRA, MCA-Niger;
11	M. Sorab IBRAHIM,	Resettlement Officer MCA-Niger ;
12	M. Rodrigue BATIONO	MCA-Niger Land Manager, MCA-Niger
13	M. Moussa IBRAHIM	GDSI-AUEI Officer , MCA-Niger ;
14	Mme Haoua LABO	Spécialiste des Consultations Publiques
15	Mme Halima GAMBO ILLO DAOURA,	Manager Mobilisation et Engagement du Secteur Privé, MCA-Niger
16	M. Hans MASRO	Strategic Communication Manager, MCA-Niger
17	M. Garba ILLO MOTA	Security Manager ; MCA-Niger ;
18	M. Abdel Kader SALISSOU IDI	Security Manager, MCA-Niger
19	M. Kamil AGALI	Executive Assistant, MCA-Niger
20	M. Naji IDE SIDDO	Computer Graphics Specialist and Webmaster, MCA-Niger
21	M. Ayoub TINI	Translator , MCA-Niger
22	Mme Fernande KONIAN	Communication team , UNOPS
23	Mme Linda DIATTA	Communication team , UNOPS
24	M. Moussa AMADOU	Coordinator of the Support Unit in charge of Monitoring Eligibility Indicators
25	M. Steven GRUDDA	Deputy Resident country Director in Niger, MCC
26	M. Jonathan RICHART	Vice-Président Adjoint Infrastructure, Environnement et Secteur Privé, MCC
27	M. Robert FISHBEIN	Infrastructure Director, MCC ;
28	M. Hassane ADAMOU	Hydrological Consultant

29	M. Alain GACHET,	Founder and CEO of RTI ;
30	Mme Stéphanie CAHN,	RTI team
31	M. David KREAMER,	RTI team /University of Nevada

Chairperson: M. OUHOUMODOU Mahamadou, Chairman of the Board of Directors

Secretary : M. ANNOU Mamane, Director General of MCA-Niger.

I. PROCÉDURE

II. DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS ON THE ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

1.1- OPENING SESSION : For Approval

The Chairperson opened the tenth Ordinary Meeting at 9:45mn by checking and confirming that :

- the notices for the convening of this Meeting were delivered to the members of the Board within the time limit required by the provisions of Section 3.12 (b) (i) the Bylaws of MCA-Niger , namely no later than January 15, 2020;
- a quorum was reached by the presence of a majority of the voting members of the Council, including at least one member who is not a representative of the Government as stipulated in Section 3.12 (b) (ii) of the Bylaws of MCA-Niger

He therefore declared the meeting open.

He then wished the entire audience a Happy New Year, wishing MCA-Niger every success in the implementation of the Program. He also welcomed the Deputy Vice President of Infrastructure, Environment and Private Sector (IESP) of MCC, the Deputy Resident Director of MCC in Niamey, and the new members of the Board, before giving the floor to the General Director of MCA-Niger to present the agenda of the meeting.

The General Director also presented his best wishes of good health, success, and peace on behalf of the entire MCA-Niger team to the Board members and participants at the meeting. He then presented the three sessions on the agenda and the items on the agenda.

III. DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS ON THE ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

1- OPENING SESSION

1.1.OPENING SESSION: For approval

A – Review of the notice of meeting and adoption of the Agenda

The Chairperson opened the tenth Ordinary Meeting by reviewing the agenda noted in the notice of meeting sent to members. Noting that no Board Member made any amendment to this agenda, the Board adopted the following agenda:

1- Opening Session

1.1- Opening Session: for approval

- A- Reading of the Notice of Meeting and adoption of the Agenda
- B- Adoption of the Minutes of the Ninth Regular Session of the Board held on September 19, 2019
- C- Addendum N°01 to the Agreement concluded between MCA-Niger and the National Office for Hydro Agricultural Development (ONAHA) (Irrigation and Market Access activity): modification of the budget structure and addition of tasks
- D- Addendum N°01 to the Agreement concluded between MCA-Niger and MAG/EL (Irrigation and Market Access activity): modification of the budget structure and addition of tasks
- E- Approval of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) on the Konni Irrigated Perimeter and the Global Implementation Plan for the RAP.
- F- Approval of the Amendment n°2 to the Contract between MCA-Niger and the Groupement Louis Berger/AGEIM Consulting Engineers
- G- Approval of the Amendment No. 3 to the Agreement between MCA-Niger and AIC Progetti
- H- Approval of the modification of MCA-Niger's organizational chart for the creation of the position of Director of Compliance

1.2- Opening Session: for discussion

- I- Project for the creation of a Stakeholder Committee
- J- Progress of the PRAPS project: discussions on the project to set up a Sustainable Immunization Fund

1.3- Opening Session: for information

- K- Status of implementation of the recommendations of the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Board held on September 19, 2019
- L- Update on the resolutions adopted by home consultation since the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Council
- M- 2019 report on the implementation of the Compact
- N- State of progress of the irrigation project
- N-1. Kick off of the rehabilitation works of the Konni irrigated perimeter.
- N-2. Communication from MCC on the Sia-Kouanza hydro-agricultural development project
- N-3. Information on the results of the study for the development of tools for groundwater resources management planning (Remote Sensing, Hydrogeology) and capacity building in Niger

- O- State of progress of the Roads project
- P- State of progress of the CRA project
- Q- State of progress of the Sectorial Reforms Project
- Q-1. Road Maintenance Reform
- Q- 2. Fertilizer Sector Reform

2- Miscellaneous

3- Closing

B – Adoption of the Minutes of the ninth Ordinary Meeting of the Board of Directors held on September 19, 2019

Summary of discussions: The Board made minor editorial corrections on the minutes of the meeting.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution N°01.

BOARD RESOLUTION N°01: The Board of Directors approves and adopts the minutes of the ninth Ordinary Meeting held on September 19, 2019

C - Approval of Addendum N°01 to the Implementing Entity Agreement concluded between MCA-Niger and ONAHA (Irrigation and Market Access Project)

Summary of discussions : The Irrigation Manager of MCA-Niger reminded that an Implementing Entity Agreement was signed on April 3, 2018 between MCA-Niger and ONAHA, establishing a collaboration platform within the framework of the Irrigation and Market Access project. However, the implementation of this agreement in practice has proved to be problematic due, among other things, to budgetary aspects. Thus, an Addendum N°01 was drawn up to modify the format of the budget, delete certain budget headings that had become irrelevant, and above all align the rates of participation fees for planned activities (workshops, training, etc.) with national rates; hence an increase in the initial budget. In addition, with regard to the activities to be carried out, it appeared necessary, in order to achieve the objectives of the agreement, to capitalize on certain experiences of land security and governance within the framework of the "Land Tenure Laboratory", by providing for new tasks to be carried out. Finally, Rider N°01 provides for support to strengthen the capacities of the data collection system relating to the development of the Konni irrigated perimeter.

Following this presentation, **the Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning** drew attention to the need to analyze all the outlines of the Agreement that require revision before finalizing Addendum No. 01 and in order to avoid the need for multiple amendments later.

For his part, **the Minister Delegate for the Budget** requested clarification on the increase in the Agreement's budget, which has practically quadrupled.

The Irrigation Manager of MCA-Niger answered that a complete review of the agreement was made in concert with the ONAHA team; thus, all the points to be modified were foreseen. Concerning the increase of the budget, he specified that the rate of perdiems went from 25 000Fcfa (decree n°2007-068/PRN/MF of March 21, 2007) to 40 000Fcfa (decree n°2019-115/PRN/MFP/RA/MF of February 15, 2019). Likewise, the budget now includes support for technical agents based in the field, in Konni.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution N°02.

BOARD RESOLUTION No. 02: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, Addendum No. 01 to the Implementing Entity Agreement between MCA-Niger and ONAHA.

D - Addendum N°01 to the Implementing Entity Agreement between MCA-Niger and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (Irrigation and Market Access Project)

Summary of discussions : The Irrigation Manager of MCA-Niger indicated that the same issues above emerged during the implementation of the Agreement of April 3, 2018 between MCA-Niger and MAG/EL. Thus, the modifications brought by the Amendment N°01 are of the same order, concerning the budgetary aspects. In addition to these amendments, it also appeared necessary, in order to achieve the objectives of the agreement, to provide in Addendum No. 01 certain tasks related to agricultural support for the reform of the fertilizer sector (supervision and capacity building of producers).

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman put to the vote the adoption of Resolution No. 03

BOARD RESOLUTION N°03: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the Addendum N°01 to the Implementing Entity Agreement concluded between MCA-Niger and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock.

E - Approval of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) on the Konni Irrigated Perimeter and of the Global Implementation Plan of the aforesaid RAP

Summary of discussions : The MCA-Niger Resettlement Officer introduced this item by indicating that MCA-Niger has developed a Resettlement Action Plan on the Konni irrigated perimeter to estimate the damages caused by the displacement of producers from the site and propose a schedule for payment of compensation. The number of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) identified under the RAP is 5798, including 4843 PAPs producers on the irrigated perimeter and 955 PAPs on the easement area. The total compensation budget is estimated at :

Two billion one hundred and three million seven hundred and forty-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-four (2,103,749,994) CFA francs.

It should be noted that there is community compensation due, amounting to 11,232,500 F CFA. However, since MCC does not finance places of worship, payment of this compensation will be made by the State of Niger through the Support Unit.

It should also be noted that 465 PAPs on the perimeter will receive compensation less than or equal to 40,000 FCFA (approximately the minimum wage), and 638 PAPs will receive compensation less than or equal to 50,000 FCFA. The smallest compensation is 11,155 FCFA. These modest compensations are due to a combination of two elements, namely the low cultivated area and declared dominant speculation. With regard to the easement area, 353 PAPs have a compensation amount less than or equal to 50,000 FCFA, of which 172 will receive an amount less than 20,000 FCFA. The smallest compensation is 951 FCFA. These amounts are explained by the fact that the impacts on farmland areas are generally minimal.

Concerning the implementation of the RAP, a Global Implementation Plan has been developed by MCA-Niger, the steps of which are :

- Disclosure of the RAP through public consultations with PAPs to inform them of the content of the RAP and to gather their concerns.
- The organization of training sessions on fund management for PAPs ;
- The formation of mediation and conciliation committees at the local level to accompany the consultant in charge of the implementation of the RAP
- The signing of Memoranda of Understanding with each PAP, after presentation to the PAP of the compensation form showing all losses incurred with the amount of compensation to be paid to the PAP. The PAP, thus well informed and in agreement with the submitted statement, signs a Memorandum of Understanding to this effect. The Memorandum of Understanding is countersigned by the Prefect of Konni, then signed by the director General of MCA-Niger through his mandated representative for the circumstance.
- The effective payment of compensations, following a subdivision of the perimeter into priority zones in order to meet the deadlines for the release of the right-of-way for the works. Payments will be made according to the following schedule: (i) February 11 to 26 for Sub-area 3.1; (ii) February 16 to 27 for Sub-areas 3.2 and 3.3; (iii) February 17 to March 6 for Sub-area 2.1; (iv) February 27 to March 25 for Sub-area 2.2; (v) February 27 to March 18 for the easement area; (vi) February 24 to 27 for the access roads; (vii) and March 17 to April 6 for the headrace; (viii) and March 17 to April 6 for the intake canal; (ix) and (x) February 18 to March 18 for the right-of-way.

At the end of this presentation, **the Deputy Vice President IESP of MCC** intervened to bring some clarification about the question of the compensation of the 2 mosques. He

indicated that discussions were underway at the MCC level in favor of the financing of these compensations.

The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister asked for details on compensation for small and less significant amounts (11,000 Fcfa and 900 Fcfa), particularly the nature of the corresponding assets

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning made the same observation, adding that MCA-Niger must take into account the impact of the announcement of such amounts in the communication to the PAPs when disclosing the RAP. Consequently, he recommends that the beneficiaries of training on fund management be well targeted, and that they be those who have received significant amounts of money.

The Delegate Minister for the Budget, in turn, pointed out the reasonableness of the amount of compensation, compared to certain projects where the weight of compensation exceeds that of investments. The emphasis should be placed, according to him, on improving the living standards of producers after the project is completed. Finally, he suggested that the payment schedule be completed by specifying the amount of payments for each zone.

The Minister Delegate for Livestock indicated that the small compensations corresponded to the property and shoulders of the infrastructures located in the zone of servitude (petty traders, etc.).

The MCA-Niger Resettlement Officer confirmed this by recalling that the amounts of compensation are obtained by applying defined formulas. Concerning the communication strategy to the PAPs of the compensation amounts, he indicated that the MS&A consultant in charge of developing the RAP has already conducted information sessions and posters during public consultations. Thus, there will be no risk of challenges to the disclosure of the RAP. Finally, training on fund management will concern all the PAPs, since it is planned to open a bank account for all, in order to increase the banking capacity of producers.

The Chairman of the Board added that the level of compensation is not low overall, especially since the MCC Resettlement Guidelines take into account strict criteria to protect the interests of the PAPs. He also noted that the compensation budget is not comparable to that of some known projects in Niger since, in the case of Konni, the land belongs to the State; producers do not own the land, it is the production losses that are compensated and not the land value. Although some may have been able to set up facilities on the land without legal authorization and with the tolerance of public services, they only receive compensation for their facilities, without taking into account the value of the land. He concluded that there is an urgent need to pay compensation and release the right of way, recommending more flexibility in the process defined according to the timetable presented. In particular, he suggested that producers be asked to clear the perimeter as soon as the Memorandum of Understanding is signed, while the payment procedures are underway

The High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative and the Minister Delegate for Livestock added that it is indeed possible to reduce the delays that are only hampered by the

cumbersome administrative process, calling on the Administrative and Financial Department of MCA-Niger to take measures to this effect.

The Chairman of the Board concluded by indicating that the Konni RAP and the Global Implementation Plan of the Konni PAR are thus approved by the Board

. **The General Director of MCA-Niger** has also recalled the particular case of Tiérassa, which groups together lands that were not developed during the perimeter development work in 1984, for technical reasons. However, some producers have developed activities there. Following a survey conducted by ONAHA within the framework of the Entity Agreement concluded with MCA-Niger, there are about a hundred farmers. Although Tiérassa is not subject to development during the rehabilitation work, MCA-Niger had considered the possibility of integrating it into the RAP and allow, during land redistribution, the resettlement of vulnerable groups (women, youth) on this portion. Since the results of the survey were not favorable to the achievement of these objectives, the farmers of Tiérassa are not affected by the RAP

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman put to the vote the adoption of Resolution No. 04

BOARD RESOLUTION No. 04: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the Konni Irrigated Perimeter Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) and the Global Implementation Plan for the PAR

F. Approval of Addendum No. 2 to the Contract between MCA-Niger and Groupement Louis Berger/AGEIM Consulting Engineers

Summary of discussions : **The Procurement Director of MCA-Niger** indicated that the above-mentioned Contract, relating to the preliminary studies for the rehabilitation of RN7, and signed on September 15, 2018, took effect as of October 8, 2018 for the firm tranche, and for a duration of sixteen and a half months (16.5 months), expiring on February 23, 2020. An amendment No. 01 to the Agreement was signed on December 3, 2018 to modify the payment terms and conditions, with no impact on either the cost or the term of the Agreement. Substantially all of the deliverables of the Contract have been delivered by the Consultant. In order to allow the finalization of the bidding documents, based on the expected MCC's CAD model, and the Consultant's support in the selection of the Contractor to carry out the work (one (1) month's delivery), the parties wish to enter into an amendment No. 02 to extend the duration of the firm portion of the Contract by five (5) months and five (5) additional days, expiring on July 28, 2020. Given the level of variation in the duration of the Contract, in the order of 31.27%, the General Management needs the approval of the Board for the signature of the Addendum No. 02.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman put to the vote the adoption of Resolution No. 05

BOARD RESOLUTION N°05: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by the majority of the voting members present, the Addendum n°02 to the Contract n°DP/RMD/MCA-Niger/QCBS/2017/16a concluded on September 15, 2018 between MCA-Niger and the Groupement Louis Berger/AGEIM **Consulting Engineers**

G - Approval of the Addendum No. 3 to the Agreement between MCA-Niger and AIC Progetti

Summary of discussions : The Director of Procurement of MCA-Niger indicated that the above-mentioned Contract relating to the preliminary studies for the rehabilitation of the RN35 and the RRS, signed on June 7, 2018, took effect as of June 25, 2018 for the firm portion, and for a period of 13 months expiring on July 25, 2019.

Two first addenda have already been concluded between the two parties. Addendum No. 01, signed on May 10, 2019, which extended the Agreement by 2 months and 22.5 days expiring on October 18, 2019, without financial impact; and Addendum No. 02, signed on October 16, 2019, which extended the Agreement by 4 months and 10.5 days expiring on February 28, 2020. This addendum no. 02 was approved by the Board on October 16, 2019, by Special Resolution no. 009/10-2019 adopted by home consultation.

Substantially all of the deliverables of the Contract have been submitted by the Consultant. In order to enable the finalization of the bidding documents, based on the expected MCC's model bidding documents, and the Consultant's support to the procurement process in the selection of the Contractor that will be in charge of the execution of the works (one (1) month delivery), the parties wish to enter into an Addendum No. 02 to extend the duration of the six (6) month firm tranche expiring on August 25, 2020.

Given the variation in the duration of the Contract, taking into account the addenda No. 01, No. 02 and No. 03, is 108%, the General Management needs the approval of the Board for the signature of the addendum No. 03.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman put to the vote the adoption of Resolution No. 06

BOARD RESOLUTION N°06: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the Addendum N°03 to the Contract N°DP/RMD/MCA Niger/QCBS/2017/16b concluded on June 7, 2018 between MCA-Niger and the Research Firm AIC PROGETTI SpA.

H - Approval of the modification of MCA-Niger's organizational chart for the creation of the position of Director of Compliance

Summary of discussions : The Director of Legal Affairs of MCA-Niger indicated that in view of the difficulties faced in the development of the Konni Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), there is an urgent need to increase the capacity of the Resettlement team for future

activities (RAP Roads in particular). To this end, MCA-Niger recommends the recruitment of a Director of Compliance (DC), with a strong experience in Relocation, who will supervise the work of cross-cutting managers in the following sectors: Relocation, Land, Gender and Social Inclusion, Private Sector. The Director of Compliance (DC) will work under the supervision of the General Director. He/she will oversee the above-mentioned cross-cutting managers to ensure that the implementation of MCA-Niger's Irrigated Area Development and Roads and Market Access projects complies with MCA-Niger's fiscal, social, environmental, and gender and social inclusion guidelines. Her role complements that of the Director of Programs (DP) and relieves her of the supervision of cross-cutting functions now dedicated to a specialized Direction with precise objectives..

The Direction of Programs will thus pilot both projects with a lighter team that is easy to manage and that respects the best practices in the field.

The discussions on this item of information having been completed, the Chairman put to the vote the adoption of Resolution No. 07.

RESOLUTION N°07: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the modification of the organizational chart of MCA-Niger by the addition of the position of Director of Compliance.

1.2- OPEN SESSION: For Discussion

I - Project for the creation of a Stakeholder Committee

Summary of discussions : The Director of Legal Affairs of MCA-Niger recalled that the Compact Agreement, in its Annex 1, and the Rules of Procedure of MCA-Niger provide for the creation of 3 bodies for the implementation of the Program: a deliberative body (the Board of Directors); an executive body (the Executive Board) and an advisory body (the Stakeholder Committee(s) or CPP). The role of the **Stakeholder Committee** is to assist the other two bodies in the process of involving the beneficiaries in the implementation of the Compact's activities. According to Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure, the **Stakeholder Committee** is composed of government members (local and regional authorities that have been consulted during the development of the Compact proposal) and non-governmental members from civil society and the private sector that will not be selected by the Government but rather through a process approved by MCC.

As for the form of the CPP, it can be set up at the national level (centralized) or at the local level (decentralized). In the opinion of the Legal Department and the Stakeholder Consultation Specialist of MCA-Niger, the decentralized form is more favorable, given the complexity of the Compact's activities, which are carried out at the local level. The General Management would like to request the recommendations and opinions of the Board on the advisability of a national committee, one committee for each region in which the Compact is active, or two committees, each comprising two regions, in order to finalize the process of setting up the **Stakeholder Committee**

The Delegate Minister for the Budget pointed out that each region in which the Compact operates has its own realities; therefore, decentralization would be more effective in avoiding the risk of debating non-common issues. He added that it would be necessary to ensure that the institution would, in practice, have a purely consultative and not a decision-making role.

The Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning was also of the same opinion as regards the form. Secondly, with regard to the selection of members, he wondered whether the criteria for the selection of non-governmental members implied a lack of transparency in the event of selection by the Government.

The Director of Legal Affairs of MCA-Niger replied that the composition of the **Stakeholder Committee** is given in the Rules of Procedure, but their selection remains free. Rather, the spirit is that the government does not interfere in the selection of non-governmental members. In short, there is no fixed way of composing the **Stakeholder Committee** : the only condition is that MCC approves the methodology to ensure that the different categories are represented.

The High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative also suggests a decentralized form that allows for consultation at the community level with the involvement of regional actors.

The Training Officer of CONGAFEN, Representative of Women's Civil Society Organizations, shared this opinion. She added, with regard to the representativeness of the members of the civil society, that a democratic designation, by vote of the various structures and organizations concerned, settles the question; it was moreover the mode of designation of the representatives of the civil society sitting on the Council.

As for the Minister of Equipment, he was in favor of a national consultative body to avoid broadening the debate at the regional level on specific issues.

The chief of staff of the minister of environment, urban sanitation and sustainable development also suggested, reducing or even optimizing the operating costs of the body, the setting up of a single national structure. On the question of the representativeness of the non-governmental members, he recommended that they should be appointed within the groupings representing several NGOs and associations

The Chairman of the Board noted that the presence of civil society and private sector actors on the Board of Directors, the participation of local authorities and actors in the framework of the Implementing Entity Agreements, and the public consultations conducted in the Compact's localities of intervention, guarantee the involvement of regional actors and the gathering of information at this level. However, and to comply with the texts, the CPP must be put in place while taking into account certain realities. For example, it is difficult, if not imperative, to find civil society or NGO actors at the local level because, even when they exist, they are not very representative. This is why the establishment of a central body, with government members from the regions and nationally representative civil society actors, is more appropriate. Since it is a consultative body, there is no obligation for systematic meetings. It will be consulted on an ad hoc basis, on issues of fundamental importance to the stakeholders

The Delegate Minister for the Budget added that the most representative structure of the civil society, present up to the village level, is the producers' organization constituted by the Chamber of Agriculture. Its representatives are democratically elected, from the bottom to the top. Therefore, for the selection of non-governmental members, the most representative organizations, which are all federated and structured national platforms, should be selected. For reasons of budgetary constraints, the option of setting up a single CPP is indeed to be favored, since it has only an advisory role.

The President of the Peasant Platform reassured the members of the board that the selection of non-governmental members of the **Stakeholder Committee** will be conducted in a democratic manner, as was done for the selection of Civil Society representatives at the board of directors, in the presence of all platforms and representative organizations including the Chamber of Agriculture

The Chairman of the Board therefore concluded that a single **Stakeholder Committee** should be set up, composed of members from the different regions where the Compact operates.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

J - State of progress of the PRAPS project: discussions on the project to set up a Sustainable Immunization Fund

Summary of discussions : **The PRAPS manager of MCA-Niger** reminded that one of the components of the MCA-Niger PRAPS Project is the improvement of animal health. In this sense, in order to ensure the sustainability of the investments and actions to be carried out within the framework of the Compact, the Government committed to conduct a study to determine the mechanisms that could lead to the establishment of a **Sustainable Financing Fund for the Vaccination Campaign (FFD/CV)**. **This Fund would thus make it possible** to guarantee the financing of the annual immunization campaign beyond the duration of the Compact. MCA-Niger recruited a consultant to conduct this study, whose long-term objective is to obtain stakeholder commitment on the expected results and to provide arguments for their structures.

However, the consultant's efforts to get key ministries to support this reform were unsuccessful, which led to a considerable delay in carrying out the study.

However, the consultant is facing difficulties in accessing key officials of the Ministry of Finance, despite the steps taken by the General Management of MCA-Niger to make such a meeting possible.

In view of this situation, the General Management is asking the Board to adopt a resolution expressing its support for this reform.

Following this presentation, the Chairman of the Board and the Delegate Minister for the Budget, after consultation, proposed a meeting the following day with the General Director of MCA-Niger and representatives of MAG/EL to resolve this issue.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

1.3- OPEN SESSION: For information

K - The state of implementation of the recommendations issued by the Council at its meeting of September 19, 2019

Summary of discussions : The General Director of MCA-Niger gave an update on the recommendations made by the Board during its session of September 19, 2019 :

- Present to the Board, at each meeting, a status of Resolutions adopted by written consent between Board sessions: An item on Resolutions adopted by written consent between September 20, 2019 and January 21, 2020 is included on the agenda of this meeting.

Discussions on this item being completed, the Chairman moved to the next item.

L. Update on Resolutions adopted by written consent since the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Board

Summary of Discussion: This item consisted of a reminder of the Resolutions adopted by the Board by written consent, between the previous and current meeting, as follows:

- Resolution No. 007/10-2019 approving the Procurement Plan No. 07 (PP07) of MCA-Niger for the period 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020, adopted on 16 October 2019
- Resolution n°008/10-2019 approving the Addendum N°01 to the Inter-Institutional Agreement between MCA-Niger and the Ministry of the Environment, Urban Sanitation and Sustainable Development, adopted on October 16, 2019
- Resolution n°009/10-2019 approving the Addendum N°2 to the Contract N°DP/RMD/MCA Niger/QCBS/2017/16b concluded on June 7, 2018 between MCA-Niger and AIC PROGETTI SpA (APD/EIES studies on RN35 road), adopted on October 16, 2019
- Resolution n°010/10-2019 approving the Addendum N°3 to the Contract N°IR/MSM/2/IC.0050 /19 concluded on March 18, 2019 between MCA-Niger and the Hydraulic Consultant, adopted on October 16, 2019
- Resolution n°011/12-2019 approving the Procurement Plan N°08 (PP08) of MCA-Niger for the period from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020, adopted on December 28, 2019.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

M - 2019 report on the implementation of the Compact

Summary of discussions :

The Director General of MCA-Niger presented a financial report on the implementation of the Compact projects as of December 31, 2019. Thus, the implementation rate of the Compact is 22% at this date. To appreciate these figures, it should be noted that the implementation of a Compact, like any investment project, is not linear. That is to say that the passage of time does not necessarily follow financial execution. The first two years of the program's implementation were devoted to studies, which were less costly than the work that followed. Some work has begun: this is the case of the Konni project, which has an execution rate of 48%. The reform project also has an implementation rate of 44%.

Some projects are in their early stages because their design in the Compact provides for an important development phase before implementation. This is the case, for example, of the ICRIPs component of the CRA activity which consists in supporting the communes in the updating of their local development plans and the implementation of their major projects. For this, MCA-Niger needed capacity building through the establishment of 4 regional offices, recruitment and training of staff dedicated to this activity.

The Roads project also presents a minimal execution rate, but a great progression is expected during the year 2020 with the selection of the company in charge of the works and the launching of the said works.

Overall, projections for the year 2020 show that it is a pivotal year: the financial execution rate is expected to increase from 22% to 73% by the end of 2020.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

N - Progress of the Irrigation project**N-1. Launching of the rehabilitation works of the Konni irrigated perimeter**

Summary of discussions : The Irrigation Manager of MCA-Niger indicated that the CAMACHO/RC SENEGAL Group, Contractor of the rehabilitation works of the irrigated perimeter of Konni, is at work since October 14, 2019, the contractual date of the beginning of the works. The STUDI International firm, in charge of the control and supervision of the works, has been mobilized since September 23, 2019, which has enabled the preparation of the various tools for the follow-up and management of the works.

In mid-December 2019, the Contractor mobilized a first batch of earthmoving equipment and submitted the framework deliverables for the execution of the works which are being finalized after their review by MCA-Niger and MCC. The Contractor has also executed the topographical tie-in and geotechnical work for the determination of the suitability of the construction materials.

A larger batch of the Contractor's material is expected at the end of January 2020. Fieldwork began on December 19, 2019, but will ramp up in January 2020 subject to progress in the implementation of the RAP.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

N-2. Communication from MCC on the Sia-Kouanza hydro-agricultural development project

. The General Director of MCA-Niger recalled the different development variants resulting from the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment/Preliminary Draft Summary ESIA/PDS studies related to the Sia-Kouanza project were presented at the previous meeting of the Board.

Sia-Kouanza is among the most humid areas in Niger, with floodable lands and terraces. It is also an area of agro-economic activities, mainly around large ponds, but also an area of rich ecological diversity. It is therefore an area intensely exploited .

The studies conducted by STUDI International have been reviewed by MCA-Niger and MCC, and the conclusions are problematic. The studies conducted by STUDI International have been reviewed by MCA-Niger and MCC, and the findings are problematic. They demonstrate that the remaining time frame of the Compact will probably not be sufficient for the realization of such an ambitious project. The studies conducted by STUDI International have been reviewed by MCA-Niger and MCC, and the conclusions are problematic

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The implementation of the project would require the construction of 12km of dykes to protect the villages from flooding, and, consequently, a major pumping station. It would also require the construction of a major power line

It would also require the resettlement and compensation of the populations within the framework of a RAP. Given that the average land area in Sia-Kouanza is between 3.75ha and 4ha per household, and given the criteria for redistribution according to the standards followed by MCC (between 0.25ha and 0.75ha maximum), it is questionable whether such a transaction is socially acceptable.

Given the maximum area that can be developed (about 1171ha), the cost of investment, the cost of maintenance, and the cost of operation, the amount of the royalty to be paid by producers would be three or even four times that paid by producers in the Konni perimeter, by way of comparison. The rate of return on investment is therefore low. The question therefore arises as to whether one wants to implement a remarkable engineering structure or improve the life of the producers.

The MCC Investment Committee has decided that the project is not feasible. The Compact budget allocated to this project risks of being withdrawn, unless the MCA-Niger Board of

Directors authorizes the study of an alternative option for an irrigation and/or agricultural development project in the same region and for the same beneficiaries.

MCA-Niger has therefore undertaken a study conducted by the engineers of its teams, the conclusion of which is to carry out a project of optimal irrigation (small irrigation), in the absence of large irrigation. MCC is still in favor of supporting an irrigation project in Sia-Kouanza. In this sense, the Deputy Vice-President IESP of MCC participates in this meeting to inform the members of the Board of their position

The MCC Deputy Vice President IESP took the floor and expressed his pleasure to participate in the Board meeting. He then congratulated MCA-Niger for the progress made in 2019, including the excellent execution of the livestock vaccination campaign, significant progress on fertilizer and road maintenance reform, the start of rehabilitation work on the Konni irrigated perimeter and the first round of literacy training for more than 3,000 men, women and youth in Konni and the surrounding area. He then underlined the reason for his presence at the meeting, which is to express MCC's support to MCA-Niger on the very difficult decision to end the process of designing a large irrigation system in Sia-Kouanza, in which he was personally very involved. He reassured the Board on the rigor of the analysis carried out for the validation of the studies, which meets the highest international standards. At the end of this analysis, the MCC team presented to the MCC Investment Committee its recommendation for the suspension of work on a large irrigation project in Sia-Kouanza. The Investment Committee, which met with MCC's CEO in December, approved the decision.

MCC's Deputy Vice President IESP informed the Board that MCC does not consider this situation to be a fault or failure of MCA-Niger. Indeed, the MCC team has devoted a great deal of time and resources to finding the best solution for the realization of the large-scale irrigation project, and had to show courage and transparency in determining that this was not an effective and sustainable solution for the people of Sia-Kouanza. It must be said, frankly, that the decision taken avoids a misuse of funds that would have led to an impasse, and would have precipitated the target population into increased indebtedness, including the inability to pay for water and to carry out a project. From MCC's point of view, therefore, it is an informed, calculated, and responsible decision, given the calculated risks of unacceptable completion and sustainability.

With this in mind, it is now necessary to move forward, quickly, and seek more efficient options for access to and productive use of water in the Sia-Kouanza area. MCC's Investment Management Committee, together with MCC's CEO, approved the reallocation of the budget for Sia-Kouanza from a large-scale irrigation approach to an optimal scale irrigation approach. This change will aim at investing in irrigation systems and technologies with lower fixed and operational costs, lower water costs for users, minimal land acquisition and redistribution, lower impact on the environment and communities in terms of disruption, and reduced risk of completion and sustainability. The MCC Investment Committee approved the reorientation of the project with clear instructions to the teams to :

- Build this new approach by following existing national strategies, institutional policies and structures supporting smaller scale irrigation;
- Define the geographic scope of the footprint early on and focus on it;
- Define the capacity of groundwater resources, so as to be informed of withdrawals by system;
- Incorporate an aspect of improving land tenure security, where appropriate;
- Ensure that there are real opportunities for high-level participation and economic impact on women and youth. A period of 6 months is given to redefine the new irrigation approach for the Sia-Kouanza area. To this end, MCC requests that the Board of Directors of MCA-Niger fully support this effort and the teams embarking on this important quest.

Developing infrastructure to increase irrigated arable land (small, medium, large) is a national priority, and the Compact program is the "face" of this strategy. Thus, MCA-Niger will need to assume another leadership position to guide the country in a campaign to promote agricultural intensification and diversification through investments in irrigation at optimal scale. MCC is growing in MCA-Niger's capacity to do so, given the significant progress already demonstrate in fertilizer sector reform, road maintenance reform, and studies for the development of tools for groundwater resources management planning, thanks to the extraordinary efforts of the Executive Management and Board of Directors. MCA-Niger will need the support of the Board for this project. MCC suggests that Senior Management keep the Board informed, for example on a monthly basis, as the process moves forward, giving the Board the opportunity to advise and assist.

The MCC Deputy Vice President IESP said that MCC is ready and committed, with the support of its international staff, experts, the resident team in Niger, and the U.S. Embassy, to facilitate the process.

At the end of this intervention, the **High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative** reacted by recalling that the program to reduce rice imports by 2023, whose development was coordinated by HC3N, depends heavily on the initial Sia-Kouanza project, which was expected to help increase rice production in Niger with an estimated 3,000 ha of cultivated land. However, one cannot support a project at the end of which rice would be more expensive and less competitive. It is necessary to recognize the objectivity of the reasons that lead to an alternative project, still in irrigation. In the new defined development project, the developed hectare would certainly be less expensive than in the case of the initial project; this aspect must be taken into account in order to develop the maximum surface area to support production. The newly defined scheme will have to take into account the need to maximize the developed area for increased production.

The Chairman of the Board concluded by thanking the Assistant Vice-President IESP of MCC for the information provided, and added that the new Sia-Kouanza project will be defined within 6 months, with a maximum of developed hectares and a lower cost per hectare

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

N-3. Information on the results of the study for the development of tools for groundwater resources management planning (Remote Sensing, Hydrogeology) and capacity building in Niger

Summary of discussions : The Founder and CEO of Radar Technologies International (RTI), the firm in charge of the above-mentioned study, presented to the Council the results of Component A of the said study, which consists in using remote sensing technique and existing data to map water resources in Niger, following a study area of 260,000 km², in the South of Niger. The use of state-of-the-art satellite technologies inherited from the space industry, including the WATEX© System invented and patented by RTI in 2002, and remote sensing treatments not previously used in Niger, played a major role in the exploratory approach of the aquifers of Southern Niger within the framework of this study. It was also a team work, supported by geoscientists from Niger, member of an ad hoc working group, and by hydro geologists from the University of Nevada in the United

. All of these factors together have led to exceptional results. Indeed, the study made it possible to visually integrate, throughout the study area, the relative and quantified importance of alluvial, basement and deeper artesian aquifers, whose maps were presented and commented on by RTI's CEO.

. The work of Component B of the study, called hydrogeological assessment by the University of Nevada, is in progress. It will quantify and evaluate the value of these deep aquifers and specify their renewal. On the practical and industrial level, the delivery of data and maps will allow the most relevant selection of sustainable development zones. The navigation system delivered with this study will also enable the drillers to choose with a precision of 6 meters, the best drilling sites with a lower risk of drilling, over the entire study area and to define the characteristics of the well: depth and lithological facies.

The Chairman of the Board said he was very impressed by this presentation, and convinced that this research will provide tools that will change the way rural development projects are designed in Niger.

The Delegate Minister for Livestock noted that it would be interesting to carry out the same research for other areas of Niger

The CEO of RTI replied that this was quite possible, if the Government so wishes. Niger has enormous potential, there is certainly more wealth than that already discovered at the end of this study. However, for a further research project, a rational master plan needs to be established in the country, to focus on the most inhabited and rain fed part of the country, given the large desert area of the country.

The general Director of MCA-Niger thanked the CEO of RTI for his very edifying presentation. He noted that the results of the study open the prospect of economic

development from a resource that is beginning to be measured. The study provides the Government, in particular the HC3N, the Ministry of Hydraulics and the Ministry of Planning, with important tools for the formulation of development programs. In particular, it makes it possible to realize that the river is not the only resource; there is the possibility of shifting the center of gravity of the water resource towards the interior of the country. There is the possibility of developing, in particular, a drilling park in the zones concerned to irrigate thousands of hectares and produce during several campaigns per year (3 or 4). This can enable the country, with an ambitious policy, to invest the equivalent of one or two years of oil revenues in agriculture. These are reflections that economists around this table and elsewhere can begin. The study whose results have been presented is currently being validated by the ad hoc working group. It will be completed in a few months by the other planned components, and the overall results will be made available to Niger. It will be a derivative of the Compact Program, which brings the possibility of a positive influence on the way of conceiving the development of our country.

The Chairman of the Board took note of this, in conclusion, and expressed his encouragement to RTI for the continuation of the work.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item

O – Progress of the Roads project

Summary of discussions : The Road Manager of MCA-Niger indicated that the APD/EIES studies are finalized for the two road rehabilitation sub-projects: that of the RN7 on the Dosso-Bella 2 section (84km) with GENiS maintenance on the entire Dosso-Gaya section (157km); and that of the RN35 Margou-Gaya (180km) with GENiS maintenance as well as the Rural Road Guitodo-Sambéra/RRS on 37km with community maintenance. The current stage is the preparation of the tender documents, the model of which is being finalized by MCC. The delay taken for the design of the model is explained by the fact that it is, for MCC, the first CAD model for road works that takes into account the "GENiS" concept and all the IFC environmental performance standards, without forgetting the very particular character of the RN7 and RN35 roads which have very high traffic levels.

It should be noted, however, that the deadlines for the study phase have no impact on the schedule for the execution phase of the work.

For RN7, the call for proposals (request for tenders) is scheduled to be launched on March 4, 2020. Work is scheduled to begin on July 31, 2020 and end on May 24, 2022 (i.e., 20 months of execution); this leaves a period of 8 months to experiment with GENiS maintenance during the life of the Compact (which is scheduled to close on January 23, 2023)

For the RN35/RRS, the launch of the call for proposals is scheduled for March 9, 2020. With contract signature scheduled for July 27, 2020, work is scheduled to begin on August 6, 2020 and to be completed by the end of June 2022 (i.e. 22 months of execution); this leaves a period of 6 to 7 months to experiment with GENiS maintenance during the Compact.

These dates take into account an indicative deadline for the reception of the proposals model in the worst case. Thus, a saving of time is possible, in the gathering the bids, the evaluations of the offers, and the execution of the work which will be done on 2 fronts.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the following item

State of Progress of the CRA project

Summary of discussions : The CRA Manager of MCA-Niger reminded that the CRA project has 2 components namely the ICRIPs and the Grant Facilities. Concerning the ICRIPs, the process of recruitment of the operators for the implementation of the activities targeted in the pilot ICRIPs (4 communes) is in progress. For the 12 remaining ICRIPs and sub-ICRIPs, the process of elaboration by the regional teams of MCA-Niger is in progress. The data collection phase has been completed; 8 ICRIPs and sub-ICRIPs will be delivered on February 17, 2020, and the rest by the end of April. The procurement process for the activities that will be targeted will be launched in June.

The analysis of the communes' CDPs shows that priority is given to the following activities: sustainable land management, small-scale irrigation, agriculture-livestock integration, agroforestry, and structural infrastructure to support production and marketing. However, certain planned activities such as roads, although relevant, cannot be given priority because their implementation period goes beyond the duration of the Compact.

It should be noted that the accountability of local authorities in the sustainable management of the investments that will be made remains a challenge because many municipal officials are in a transitional or interim situation.

Concerning the Grant Facilities component, a distinction is made between the Facility managed by USADF, whose first call for proposals launched on January 28, 2019 and closed on March 10 for an amount of nearly US\$4 million resulted in the pre-selection of 48 projects. Among these projects, two grant contracts have been signed for an amount of 91,300,000 FCFA and the project start-up process is underway. By the end of March 2020 at the latest, all 48 projects will be financed. The launch of the second call for proposals is also scheduled for March 2020.

On the other hand, with regard to the Private Sector Partnership Fund (PSPSF), a first call for concept note proposals, for an amount of US\$2 million, was launched on August 30, 2019 and closed on October 4, 2019, specifically for promoters in the agro-pastoral products processing sector and those in the fertilizer supply and distribution sector. At the end of the process, 18 offers were received, including 8 from the processing sector and 10 from the fertilizer sector. 17 offers were evaluated and one was deemed non-responsive. Among those evaluated, 9 offers were shortlisted to proceed to the full RFP stage, including 4 for agro-pastoral processing and 5 for the fertilizer sector. The launch of the full RFP for pre-qualified proponents is scheduled for January 24, 2020.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the following item

Q. Status of Progress of the Sectoral Reforms Project

Q-1. Road Maintenance Reform

Summary of discussions: The General Director of MCA-Niger indicated that the stages of the road maintenance reform are following their course, with a satisfactory state of progress, in particular with the validation of the Pluri-Annual Road Maintenance Plan 2020-2022 dated November 28, 2019, and the recruitment of the Managing Director of AMODER whose process is in progress.

The discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

Q-2. Fertilizer Sector Reform

Summary of discussions : The Program Director of MCA-Niger noted that the objectives of fertilizer sector reform can only be achieved through market liberalization to give a role to the private sector, and the renovation of the state subsidy system. On these points, the implementation of the reform has made significant progress since the previous Board meeting. In fact, the pilot phase of the reformed subsidy system, provided for in the Reform Plan to improve the approach, has been tested in 10 communes in the regions of Tahoua, Tillabéry and Dosso. The criteria for identifying and targeting beneficiaries were validated by OMEN and COTEN, following a survey conducted by IFDC. The pilot program was expected to benefit 15,000 producers. In the end, 12,000 beneficiaries were identified according to the defined criteria, and 7,000 of them were able to pay the requested counterpart on time and thus benefit from the subsidy, receiving 4 bags of fertilizer for the price of 2 bags (27,000 Fcfa).

The pilot phase made it possible to successfully test the traceability, for the Government, of the subsidized fertilizer.

Concerning the follow-up of the road map, significant progress was noted on the 9 points listed in the road map. However, some concerns should be noted with respect to the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the studies conducted. This is particularly the case for the process of opening an account that will enable OMEN to collect the funds from the counterpart of the subsidized fertilizer (study on the Common Fertilizer Fund).

Another major point of attention is the effective liberalization of the fertilizer market, through the reorientation of CAIMA's tasks.

The Delegate Minister for the Budget indicated that the favorable notification for the opening of the management account for the funds from the subsidized fertilizer counterpart was transmitted to MAG/EL by the Ministry of Finance

The Minister Delegate for Livestock indicated that actions are underway regarding the implementation of the reform; this is the case, for example, of the preparation of a draft normative text on the control and repression of fraud in the fertilizer sector. For a good progress of the reform, he requested that the MCA-Niger solicit the MAG/EL by correspondence on any specific point where action is expected. Concerning the liberalization of the fertilizer market, he said that this is a slow process, given the low capacity of Niger's

private fertilizer sector, but MAG/EL remains willing to implement measures to accelerate this process.

For his part, the High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative recalled all the efforts made during 2019 to eliminate bottlenecks in the implementation of the reform. He also recommended, as a step forward in this direction, that the MCA-Niger take steps towards the MAG/EL, which oversees OMEN and COTEN, the operational bodies responsible for implementing the reform. Concerning the reorientation of CAIMA's tasks, MAG/EL should take the initiative of a bill to this effect, if recommended by studies on the subject. Finally, he noted that the pilot phase of the renewed subsidy system, planned in favor of vulnerable producers, benefited only a share representing a little more than half of the targets. He thus recommended that the vulnerability criteria be reviewed by distinguishing by levels.

The President of the Farmers' Platform added that, in addition to the vulnerability criteria, priority areas should also be defined because, during the pilot phase, some areas were not covered in time to allow efficient use of fertilizers. He then noted that the low coverage rate in relation to the objectives is also explained by the reluctance of some producers to pay a counterpart before the actual delivery of the fertilizers. With regard to the functioning of the reform bodies, he indicated that the necessary funds have not yet been made available. The permanent secretariat of these bodies is, for the time being, provided on a voluntary basis. He therefore requested that the full operationalization of OMEN and COTEN be reviewed.

The Chairman of the Board concluded by asking MAG/EL to take ownership of the reform, in particular by taking the necessary steps regarding the role and intervention of CAIMA, to enable the effective liberalization of the fertilizer market and the full success of the renewed subsidy system, and by providing the necessary resources for the operation of OMEN and COTEN.

The discussion on this item being concluded, the Chairman moved on to the next item.

The chairperson terminate the meeting at 2:14 mn PM

SIGNED BY :

For MCA-Niger	
M. Mamane M. ANNOU Secretary	M. Ouhoumoudou MAHAMADOU Chairperson