

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE ACCOUNT-NIGER

MCA-NIGER



MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NIAMEY, JUNE 28, 2022

The Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Account-Niger (“MCA-Niger”) held its sixteenth ordinary meeting on June 28, 2022, from 10:00 AM in Niamey in accordance with:

- (i) the Bylaws of MCA-Niger, dated July 4, 2017;
- (ii) (ii) Decree N°2016-706/PRN, dated December 23, 2016, on the creation, attributes, composition and functions of MCA-Niger;
- (iii) (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 (“MCC”) 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.

I. ATTENDEES

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

Names	Positions	Voting members Vs. No Voting members	Board member/ Alternate
1. M. SANI ABANI	Minister, Chief of Staff of the President of the Republic, Chairman of the Board	Voting member	Board member
2. M. HACHIMOU Abdoukarim	Secretary General of the Ministry of Women Promotion and Child Protection	Voting member	Alternate member
3. Mrs. HADARI Zeinabou	Deputy Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister	Voting member	Alternate member

4. M. MAHAMAN Ousmane,	Secretary General Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Handicrafts, Representative of the Private Sector	Voting member	Alternate Member
5. Mrs. FODI Halima,	Training Officer Representative of Women's Civil Society Organizations	Voting member	Board Member
6. M. BAGNA Djibo,	President of the Peasant Platform, Representative of Civil Society	Voting member	Board member
7. M. MOUSSA Maman,	Secretary General, Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation	Voting member	Alternate member
8. M. DIAMOITOU Boukari,	Secretary General Ministry of Livestock	Voting member	Alternate member
9. Mrs. ISSA Mariama ALI OMAR,	Technical Advisor Ministry of Environment and Drought Control	Voting member	Alternate member
10. M. ISSOUFOU Adamou,	Deputy Secretary General Ministry of Equipement	Voting member	Alternate member
11. Mrs PENN Kristin	Resident Country Director of MCC in Niger	Non-voting member	Board member
12. M. Mamane M. ANNOU	Director General of MCA-Niger; Secretary of the Board of Directors	Non-voting member	Board member

2. **Board members absent :**

Names	Positions	Voting members Vs No Voting members	Board member/ Alternate
1. M. JIDOUD Ahmat	Minister of Finance	Voting member	Board member
2. M. ALAMBEDJI Abba Issa	Minister of Agriculture	Voting member	Board member
3. M. BETY Ali	High Commissioner for the 3N Initiative	Voting member	Board member

3. Guests :

No	NAMES	POSITIONS
1	M. Soulemame KOUOTOU NGAPOUT,	Director of Legal Affairs, MCA-Niger
2	M. Bachirou IDRISSE MOUSSA,;	Legal Specialist, MCA-Niger;
3	Mrs. YACOUBA BOULAMA Safietou,	Legal Specialist, MCA-Niger;
4	M. Kamil AGALI,	Manager Projects Coordination, MCA-Niger
5	Mrs. Aminata SAMAKE,	Manager Irrigation and Market Access Facilities, MCA-Niger
6	M. Abdalah MAIGUIZO,	Director CRC , MCA-Niger
7	M. Justinien BACIRONGO,	Croos Cutting Affairs Director , MCA-Niger
8	Mrs. Hélène OSSE,	Administrative and Finance Director MCA- Niger
9	M. Abdourazakou SANOUSSE ISSOUFOU,	Procurement Director MCA Niger
10	M. Nahé ALHASSAN,	Manager CRA, MCA-Niger
11	M. Bationo Rodrigue Marie Galbert,	Manager Land, MCA-Niger
12	M. Abdoulaye DIADIE,	Audit and Compliance Manager, MCA-Niger
13	M. Diafarou MOUMOUNI,	Manager Irrigation, MCA-Niger ;
14	M. Daouda SEINI DIAKITE,	Road Infrastructure Manager, MCA-Niger
15	M. Naji IDE SIDDO,	Computer Graphics Specialist and Webmaster, MCA-Niger
16	M. Hanson MASRO,	Manager Strategic Communication MCA Niger
17	M. Abdel Kader SALISSOU IDI,	Manager Security, MCA-Niger
18	M. Hassoumiou MOUNKAILA.	Manager ESP, MCA-Niger
19	M. Mamadou Saliou DIALLO,	Manager Resettlement, MCA-Niger ;
20	Mrs. Hadiza ADA BOUREIMA,	Manager GIS MCA-Niger ;
21	M. MAHAMANE KARIMOU Said,	Manager Management Services and Market Access Facilities MCA-Niger ;
22	M. AMADOU Issaka,	Director Monitoring and Evaluation MCA- Niger
23	M. Moussa AMADOU,	The Support Unit Coordinator in charge of Monitoring Eligibility Indicators

Chairperson: M. SANI ABANI Ibrahim, Chairperson of the Board.

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

II. PROCEDURE.

At the opening of the meeting at 11:00 a.m., **the Chairman of the Board** verified and confirmed:

- That the notices for the holding of the present meeting were delivered to the members of the Board within the time required by the provisions of Section 3.12 (b) (i) of the By-Laws of MCA-Niger, i.e., by Tuesday, June 21, 2022;
- That the quorum was present due to the presence of a majority of the voting members of the Board, including at least one member who is not a government representative as provided in Section 3.12 (b) (ii) of the MCA-Niger Bylaws.

He therefore declared the meeting open

III. DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS ON AGENDA ITEMS

1- OPEN SESSION: for approval

A- Reading and approval of the Agenda of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session:

- 1- The Chairman of the Board read out the items on the agenda of this session.
- 2- The Chairman of the Board asked the opinion of the members of the Board on this agenda.
- 3- In the absence of any objection, the Agenda was adopted.

B- Adoption of the Minutes of the Fifteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Board held on March 8, 2022:

- 4- **Summary of discussions:** The Chairman of the Board submitted the minutes of the meeting of March 08, 2022 for adoption by the members of the Board.
- 5- Formal changes were made at the request of the Secretary General of the Ministry of the Promotion of Women and Child Protection.
- 6- Other members of the Board sent written comments on the Minutes, which were fully taken into account.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution No. 01

RESOLUTION No. 01: The Board of Directors approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the minutes of its Fifteenth Regular Session held on March 8, 2022.

C. Creation of a Procurement Subcommittee of the Board of Directors:

- 7- Summary of discussions: The Director of Legal Affairs of MCA-Niger** introducing this item indicated that in the context of the end of the Compact and with the extension for an additional year, several contractual documents will be submitted for approval by the Board members.
- 8-** He added that in order to have flexibility and speed in the validation of the documents in question, it is proposed to the members of the Board the creation of a Sub-Committee on Contract Awarding. This is a tool, which has already been used by other MCAs in the same circumstances, to enable the validation procedures for these documents to move forward quickly.
- 9-** The Sub-Committee as introduced will be made up of five (05) members, four (04) of whom will be voting and one (01) non-voting member, in the person of the Director General of MCA-Niger, who will act as the Committee's secretariat.
- 10-The Chairman of the Board** takes note of this initiative and encourages the establishment of this Committee

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution No. 02

RESOLUTION No. 02: The Board approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the creation of a Procurement Sub-Committee within the MCA-Niger Board of Directors. This Committee will be made up of five (05) members, including four voting members:

- **Three (03) members** representing the Government: (1) The Ministry of Equipment; (2) The Ministry of Livestock; (3) The Ministry of Agriculture;
- **One (01) member** representing the civil society: The person in charge of training at CONGAFEN, representing the women's organizations of the civil society;

And **one (01) non-voting member**; the Director General of MCA-Niger, who will act as the Committee's secretariat.

D. Amendment No. 3 to the Contract between MCA-Niger and DEGBEY Law Firm

- 11-Summary of discussions:** The General Manager indicated that the purpose of the Amendment is to extend DEGBEY Law Firm Contract, taking into account the extension of the duration of the Compact for an additional year.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution No. 03.

RESOLUTION No. 03: The Board approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, Amendment No. 3 to the DEGBEY Law Firm Contract.

E. Amendment N°3 to Contract N°IR/RMA/3/W.0204/20 between MCA-Niger and SOGEA SATOM for the Rehabilitation, Management and Maintenance Works by Levels of Service (GENiS) of the RN35 (Gaya-Margou Section 179.3km) and the Improvement and Maintenance Works by Community Approach of the Sambera Rural Road (36.6km)

- 12- Summary of discussions:** The Road Infrastructure Manager of MCA-Niger specified that this Amendment concerns both the Sambera Rural Road and the RN35 and relates to the execution of a set of works necessary for the completion of the work, which were not provided for when the Initial Contract was concluded.
- 13- The Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Equipment** added that these works are necessary because there is a project to asphalt this road after the Compact. Before this action is implemented, the aforesaid works will allow a temporary use of the concerned roads.
- 14- The Director General** indicated that the issue of extending the Contract execution period by an additional four (04) months concerns not only Sambera Rural Road, RN35 but also the works on RN7.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution No.04

RESOLUTION No. 04: The Board approves and adopts, by a majority of voting members present, Amendment N°3 to the Contract between MCA-Niger and SOGEA-SATOM for the rehabilitation, management and maintenance works by levels of service (GENiS) of RN35 (Gaya-Margou section 179.3km), and the development and maintenance works by community approach of Sambera Rural Road (36.6km)

F. Approval of the eighteenth Procurement Plan (PP18):

- 15- . Summary of Discussions: The Procurement Director of MCA-Niger** introduced this item. The Procurement Plan number 18 (PP18) for the period from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023, is made up of 104 projects, including 77 activities not launched from PP17 and transferred to PP18, one (01) activity with a change in amount and 26 new contracts.
- 16- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Women's Promotion and Child Protection** noted and appreciated the inclusion of two important aspects, namely the commemoration of the days of March 8, 2023 and May 13, 2023, and proposed that MCA-Niger contribute to the participation of Niger delegation in the session on the "Status of Women" which takes place every year in March in New-York.
- 17- The Gender and Social Inclusion Manager** has taken note of this proposal and believes that it is a plea that deserves to be made to MCC officials and partners to take this activity into account.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson put to the vote the adoption of the board resolution No. 05

RESOLUTION No. 05: The Board approves and adopts, by a majority of the voting members present, the Eighteenth Procurement Plan (PP18) covering the period July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

2. OPEN SESSION: for information

A- Update on the resolutions adopted by written consent since the Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Board:

18-Summary of discussions: The Director of Legal Affairs of MCA-Niger reminded the Board of the different resolutions adopted by written consent between the last session and the current one. These are the following resolutions:

- a. **Special Resolution No 009/04-2022** approving the seventeenth Procurement Plan (PP17)
- b. **Special Resolution No 008/10-2021** approving the Amendment No 3 to the Contract concluded between MCA-Niger and the CAMACHO ENGENHARIA SA/ RC SENEGAL SAU Group for the execution of the Rehabilitation Works of Konni Irrigated Perimeter
- c. **Special Resolution No 011/04-2022** approving Amendment No 01 to Contract N°IR/IPD/1/SS.243/21 concluded between MCA-Niger and University of Nevada, Las Vegas for the Realization of a hydrogeological simulation model in the low terrace Sia-Kouanza, commune of Tanda, Department of Gaya, Region of Dosso
- d. **Special Resolution No 012/04-2022** approving Amendment No 02 to Contract N°ADM/41/F.252 /21 concluded between MCA-Niger and the auditing firm KMC SA for the realization of the audit of the Compact resources
- e. **Special Resolution No 013/05-2022** approving Amendment No 02 to Contract N°CR/PRAPS/2/SSS/292/21 between MCA-Niger and BEERIA (Studies, Research, Engineering and Animation Firm).
- f. **Special Resolution No 014/05-2025** approving Amendment No 02 to the Entity Agreement dated April 03, 2018 concluded between MCA-Niger and the Ministry of Equipment.
- g. **Special Resolution No 015/06-2022** approving Amendment No 9 to Contract N°CR/PRAPS/1/F.0067/19 for the preparation of the preliminary design, the detailed design, the tender documents, the environmental and social impact studies and the environmental and social management plans (ESI/PDES)

B. Communication on MCA-Niger's Internal Audit

19-Summary of discussions: The MCA-Niger Audit and Compliance Manager presented the Internal Audit report, which focuses on two important points.

- 20-** The first point on the follow-up of recommendations made by the Internal Audit shows an average implementation rate of 73% in April 2022 compared to 54% in December 2021. The 2022 Audit has also been carried out and recommendations made to the Directors. The action plan will be followed up in July 2022.
- 21-** The second point relates to the conclusions of the last internal audit on the Entity Agreements concluded with the Communes of Gaya, Tanda and Tounounga. Under these agreements, MCA-Niger undertook to acquire all the necessary goods (equipment and financial resources) and make them available to the Communes for the implementation of the various activities
- 22-** This audit noted a low rate (3% at the date of this intervention) of disbursement of funds made available to the communes, due in particular to the lack of qualified human resources in the beneficiary communes,
- 23-** The audit also revealed that the equipment provided for in the Agreements has been made available to the communes. However, some of this equipment is not being used because of a lack of electricity and computer maintenance.
- 24- The Chairman of the Board,** in view of the level of disbursement, requested that these causes be analyzed so that appropriate solutions can be found
- 25- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Women's Promotion and Child Protection** in turn requested that the recommendations that were made be presented.
- 26- The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister** made a suggestion on the under-utilized equipment due to lack of electricity and proposed the exploration of alternative sources such as the use of solar energy to remedy this problem.
- 27- The MCA-Niger Audit and Compliance Manager,** in response to the various questions, said that a detailed report presenting all the recommendations and the action plan had been prepared and that these recommendations included a point concerning the 3% disbursement rate and the importance of adapting procedures to the context and realities of the communes.
- 28-** However, not all of the recommendations could be included in the presentation due to time constraints. The report containing all of the recommendations will be shared with the members of the Board of Directors at a later date.
- 29-** Regarding the question of electricity, it was recalled that this is a matter that falls exclusively under the jurisdiction of the Communes and not of MCA-Niger, whose responsibility is only to make available the computer equipment requested by the Communes.
- 30-** In the same line, **the Director General of MCA-Niger** recalled that these Entity Agreements concern five (05) so-called "high irrigation" Communes. In these agreements, it is planned that the Communes will receive equipment, especially computer equipment, to improve their capacities. Thus, the various problems that have arisen are the unavailability of connections for some offices and the difficulty in justifying the expenditure in order to request another disbursement. A first release of

funds was made and the Communes had difficulty justifying this first release in order to have access to the second disbursement. Hence the blockage that justifies the 3% disbursement.

31- The Support Unit Coordinator recalled the principle that MCC, in financing activities through MCA-Niger, does not give funds directly to the communes. The latter must pre-finance the activities and produce receipts in order to be reimbursed. In practice, it is the Support Unit that pre-finances the activities, and MCA-Niger collects the receipts from the communes and submits them to MCC, which then reimburses them to the Support Unit. The first experience was very difficult because most of the receipts produced were not eligible for reimbursement.

32- The Support Unit Coordinator said that with the correction of these difficulties, the disbursement rate could be increased in the coming months. However, he reminded us that the problem is essentially related to the production of valid supporting documents. The 3% referred to is only the first experience.

33- The Secretary General of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Child Protection, in his intervention, drew attention to the need to find solutions to this problem of receipts at the level of the Communes. He noted that those concerned needed capacity building in order to increase their capacity to absorb the funds granted.

34- The Chairman of the Board, in support of the previous intervention, proposed that a technical support mechanism for these Communes be designed and put in place. He also proposed that a letter be sent to the Minister of the Interior asking him to take charge of this issue so that these Communes can improve their capacity to consume the funds made available to them.

35- The President of the Peasant Platform also proposed the establishment of a facilitation mechanism that respects accounting criteria, given MCA-Niger procedures, which are known to be particularly complicated. He also proposed to solve the problem at the source by providing appropriate training. He also recalled that these are young communes that are subject to change, and when the mayors are changed, the whole system is renewed, hence the need to strengthen the capacities of the agents.

36- The Chairman of the Board also suggested that MCA-Niger review the complexity of the procedures so that the Communes could understand them.

37- The Deputy President of Niger Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in his intervention, considered that the solution to the problem posed was for the Communes in the same zone to pool their financial resources in order to have at least one trained and competent human resource to manage the production of receipts. This is before the implementation of a global solution by the Interior Ministry.

38- The Director of Administrative and Financial Affairs of MCA-Niger, in response to the various interventions, recalled that the Communes concerned were all trained face-to-face and online (during the COVID period). After the first transfer, the

Communes took a long time to provide the supporting documents; those finally provided, were mostly not in accordance with the requirements of the procedure.

- 39-** She pointed out that the real problem that arose was not related to the procedures, given that the funds made available are essentially related to fuel, workshops and catering. It is not a question of large-scale purchases that require the application of complicated procedures. However, it notes the change of employees in these Communes and believes that the difficulty noted may stem from this element, as the people trained are probably no longer active in these Communes. From this observation, it appears that there is a need to continue building the capacity of the Communes.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

J-1 Progress level of Irrigation and Market Access Project

Irrigation Activity :

- **Rehabilitation works of Konni Irrigated Perimeter; ;**

- 40- Summary of discussions: The Irrigation Manager of MCA-Niger**, in his presentation of the Konni irrigated perimeter component, pointed out an overall progress rate of 75%. Work is continuing despite difficulties in supplying diesel fuel, which is considerably slowing down the progress of activities on the site.
- 41-** He added that as regards the works of Water and Soil Conservation and Soil Defense and Restoration (CES/DRS), it is planned to plant 250,000 trees on an area of 2500 ha.
- 42-** He also specified that out of the 2500 ha planned; only 370 ha have been treated. In view of the delays recorded and the difficulty of biological treatment (tree planting), a solution is being considered with the Ministry of the Environment to make the plants available and ensure the continuity of the work even after the Compact.
- 43- The Chairman of the Board** expressed concern about the number of hectares treated, which represents a little more than 10% of the number planned. He called on the Ministry of Environment to respond to the situation with the means required to help achieve the objectives.
- 44- The representative of the Ministry of Environment/Consultant** having taken note of the file recalls that at the level of the Ministry, measures are being taken to allow the effective realization of these plantations.
- 45- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Women's Promotion and Child Protection**, following the different interventions, noted that concrete proposals must be made. He called on the Ministry directly involved in these activities to address the real problems and find solutions. He also noted that the issue of biological treatment, which is a difficulty in this context, is nothing other than a problem of human resources

- 46- The chairman of the Board** appealed to the General Management of MCA-Niger and the Ministry of Environment to present a much more satisfactory rate of execution and completion of these works at the next session of the Board
- 47- The President of the Peasant Platform** proposes that producers' organizations and cooperatives be called upon to support these activities;
- 48- The ESP Manager of MCA-Niger** pointed out that the real problem is that the activity itself is a seasonal activity. Physical activities can only be carried out in the dry season and planting in the rainy season. The availability of plants is an issue that can be addressed
- 49- The General Manager of MCA-Niger**, on his part, recalled the context of this work and noted the fact that this activity represents 3% of the work entrusted to the Contractor. It has therefore been the subject of some inattention. The Global Contract is scheduled to be completed in December 2022. Given the delays noted, the plantations will not be able to be carried out until the next rainy season. As a result, the realistic completion of the aforesaid works, risks to be done outside the Compact period.
- 50-** He added that all unfinished work, as provided for in the Compact Agreement, will be the responsibility of the Government of Niger. Therefore, MCA-Niger requests the Ministry of Environment, with the support of its deconcentrated services, to elaborate a completion plan in the event that these activities should be executed outside the Compact period.
- 51- The President of the Board** thus reiterates the need that at the next session of the Board, MCA-Niger with the Ministry of Environment proposes a completion plan and a better rate of achievement.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

- Irrigation in the Low Terrace of Sia-Kouanza :

- 52- Summary of discussions: The General Director** presented the situation of the project, which has a target of 640 ha. To begin the execution of the work, a tender was launched and only one bid was received. Negotiations with the sole bidder proved unsuccessful due to the significant difference between the projected cost and the bidder's financial proposal.
- 53- The Chairman of the Board** thus requests the intervention of the MCC Country Director in Niger on the measures taken to remedy this problem
- 54- MCC's Country Director in Niger** says that MCA-Niger and MCC are working hard to find a solution. However, the cost is too high, so it is not a model that can be applied in Niger. She encourages all teams to be creative in proposing a suitable model.

55- The President of the Peasant Platform proposed that discussions be held on this subject with ONAHA, which is authorized to make such arrangements

56- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Women's Promotion and Child Protection proposes that a local solution be considered and believes that experienced national companies should be used

57- The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister confirmed the proposals and recalled that the transformation of the International Call for Tender into a National Call for Tender could represent an ideal solution and an opportunity for local companies.

58- The Procurement Director of MCA-Niger, pointed out that there is no such thing as a national tender. The solution would be to make specifications in order to interest local contractors.

59- The Chairman of the Board to conclude on the issue requested that a team be formed to approach the General Directorate of ONAHA or possibly the Military Engineering to work on the possibility of building this perimeter.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

a. Roads Activity: Rehabilitation of the RN7 (Dosso-Bella 2) and the RN35 (Margou-Gaya) and the RRS (Guitodo-Sambéra);

60- Summary of discussions: The General Director of MCA-Niger proceeded to present the level of progress of the Roads projects. As of May 31, 2022 the work is as follows: Concerning the Rehabilitation of the RN7 national road on the Dosso-Bella II section (84km), the physical progress rate is 76.52% against 90.39% planned, corresponding to a performance rate of 84.65%. Concerning the rehabilitation of the RN35 Margou-Gaya (180km), and the Rural Road of Sambéra (RRS) these rates are respectively 67.28% and 72.81%.

61- Following this presentation, the Chairman of the Board expressed his satisfaction and congratulated the General Management of MCA-Niger for the work done.

62- The General Director of MCA-Niger recalled, however, that the pace of the work as a whole has been slowed down by the fuel shortage situation at the construction sites.

63- The Chairman of the Board reassured the members of the Board that the issue of fuel supply was being taken care of at the level of the Presidency and the Ministry of Petroleum

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

b. Market Access Management and Facility Services Activity

- **Agricultural Support Services and Sustainable Management of the Irrigation System**

- 64- Summary of discussions: The Management Service Manager** recalled that the Management Service is a component of the program that is responsible for strengthening the capacity of producers and their structures. It has two main areas of intervention.
- 65-** With regard to the sustainable management of the irrigation system, we note, for example, the establishment in Konni of an irrigation water users' association with 4,800 members.
- 66-** With regard to the second component, agricultural support services, in Konni we note the establishment of a cooperative society with 3,000 members and two cycles of functional literacy training organized for a cohort of 8,500 beneficiaries.
- 67-** In order to perpetuate the gains made in literacy, village libraries have been set up with facilitators trained to manage them.
- 68- The President of the Peasant Platform**, following this presentation, raised his fear that these cooperatives would disappear at the end of the project. He therefore proposed that farmers' organizations and umbrella organizations be more involved in order to ensure their sustainability.
- 69- The Chairman of the Board** supported this pertinent proposal and asked the General Management to take this contribution into account.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

- Fertilizer Reform Sector

- 70- Summary of Discussions: The Director of Irrigation and Market Access** at MCA-Niger provided a summary of the status of fertilizer sector reform.
- 71- The President of the Peasant Platform** noted a difficulty that represented a real obstacle. The President of the Peasant Platform noted a difficulty that represented a real obstacle: the soaring price of fertilizer at the international level due to the war in Ukraine. The other constraint is that the countries of the sub-region have subsidized the sector.
- 72-** To obtain fertilizer at affordable prices, negotiations are underway to set up a blending and fertilizer manufacturing plant.
- 73-** Thus, the need to subsidize the fertilizer sector, on an exceptional basis, in order to make fertilizer accessible and affordable during this transitional period.
- 74- The Chairman of the Board** proposed that this subsidy issue be addressed by MCA-Niger in collaboration with the Government of Niger
- 75-** In the same context, **the Director General** recalled the existence of a common fertilizer fund created by the reform so that contributions could be made and

announced that MCC/MCA-Niger would make available one million (1,000,000) US dollars as a contribution to this fund.

- 76-** In order for this fund to be effective, **the President of the Peasant Platform** recalled that the Partners should align themselves with it. It was therefore proposed that a meeting be organized with the Technical and Financial Partners to find an alignment with the fertilizer strategy

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

J-2. Progress level of the Climate Resilient Communities Project (CRC) :

- 77- Summary of discussion: The Director of Climate Resilient Communities (CRC)** of MCA-Niger, presented the overall progress of the CRC project.

- 78-** Concerning the PRAPS sub-project, the Government has committed, in the Compact Agreement, to carry out a reform that consists of setting up a sustainable financing mechanism for vaccination campaigns through the creation of a Livestock Security Fund (FOSEL) by adopting Decree No. 2021-079/PRN/MAG/EL of January 29, 2021, amending and supplementing Ordinance 2010-034 of June 4, 2010.

- 79-** In order to finalize the process, **the Chairman of the Board** proposed the organization of a working session by the General Management in order to prepare a correspondence to the attention of the Prime Minister's Office, so that arrangements can be made to advance the signing of the Decree concerned.

Discussions on this item being concluded, the Chairperson moves to the next item

K- Compact Closure Plan Information: :

- 80- Summary of discussion: The Director General, recalled that the implementation of a Compact Closure Plan is a requirement of the** Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), which applies to any country receiving assistance through its Programs. Through such a plan, MCA-Niger is required to ensure the closure of all activities related to the Compact program within 120 days of the Compact's end date, which is January 26, 2024

- 81-** For this purpose, it is important to note the role of the Government in this closure process:

- The requirement for approval of the compact closure plan through the Board of Directors;
- The need to take charge of the archiving of documents for five (5) years following the closure of the Compact;
- The continuation of unfinished projects by the Government of Niger;
- The redefinition of the status of MCA-Niger by the Government of Niger at the end of the Compact

- 82-** In order to take note of all these elements, **the Chairman of the Board** requested that an explanatory note be prepared, presenting the status of all projects at risk of non-

completion. The objective is to draw the attention of the various ministries concerned and the Council of Ministers

83- The Secretary General of the Ministry of Women's Promotion and Child Protection reminded the audience that it was important to involve the Ministry of Finance in this process from the beginning to the end, as it is the entity that is mainly responsible for allocating budgets to other ministries.

L- Closing :

84- The Chairman of the Board closed the meeting by thanking the Director General of MCA-Niger and his collaborators for the good organization of this session

The chairperson terminates the meeting at 1:00 PM

SIGNED :

FOR MCA-Niger	
M. Mamane M. ANNOU Secretary	M. Ibrahim SANI ABANI Chairperson