

FINAL DRAFT

STRATEGY

OF THE

RESEARCH INTO USE PROGRAMME - NIGERIA

JOINTLY PREPARED BY THE

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Executive Summary

1. This document outlines a strategy for potential involvement of the RIUP in Nigeria (RIUP-N) over the period 2008 – 2011. It summarises the overall purpose of the RIUP and its intended outputs, outlining how Nigeria can participate and benefit from this initiative. The document is targeted at RIUP's Senior Management Team (SMT), key stakeholders in Nigeria and the global Research into Use Programme (RIUP). The purpose of the strategy is to build consensus around a 3-year RIUP-N and to obtain agreement in principle from SMT and support from key stakeholders in Nigeria as well as the global RIUP. The draft paper also provides guidance to key stakeholders in Nigeria as to how they could engage with the RIUP and into what ends.
2. A country assessment team visited Nigeria from the 29th January to the 22nd February, 2007 to identify potential opportunities for putting research into use. The assessment report recommended a three-pronged strategy: (a) an engagement at the Federal level in the areas of policy; (b) an interaction with State Level policy and resource allocation through engagement with the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS); and (c) working through innovation platforms. At the federal level, the recently created Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) was considered a timely policy level partner. A concept note was produced in October 2007 to provide a rationale and justification for developing a Nigeria Country Strategy. An institutional assessment of potential innovation platforms was conducted between November-December 2007. That assessment concluded that greater possibilities for RIUP delivering on its Outputs (especially Output 1.2) and contributing to its purpose lay in developing and strengthening, in the first instance, the aquaculture, cowpea/soybean commodity systems and cassava processing into effective innovation platforms. A draft strategy was then produced in January 2008, following the institutional assessment exercise, as a basis for consultations with two broad groups of stakeholders: a) organisations likely to "champion" the innovation systems approach (ISA) in Nigeria, and b) agencies with whom RIU could work with to produce a policy climate conducive to pro-poor innovation. These were then invited to a workshop (on the 6th and 8th February, 2008 respectively) in Abuja, Nigeria to participate in refining a draft strategy for an RIUP in Nigeria.
3. The vision of RIUP-N is to see the widespread adoption of research based knowledge in the renewable natural resource sector to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods. The RIUP-N will strive to achieve this vision and overcome existing challenges by taking two strategic approaches:
 - a. Strengthening the demand side of the knowledge economy by enabling resource poor households, including women, to utilise research based knowledge in new ways to secure their livelihoods and benefit the environment. This will be achieved by enhancing the effectiveness of innovation platforms in the cowpea/soybean commodity systems, cassava processing and aqua culture. Cowpea/soybean platform offers opportunities for RIUP-N to enhance efforts at tackling poverty and environmental issues. Cowpea and soybean production is more prevalent in the northern parts of Nigeria considered the poorer part of the country. These are also crops where women are active both in cultivation and processing. Cassava is a major staple and cash crop in Nigeria and is grown in most of Nigeria's agro-ecological zones. An embryonic cassava processing platform exists and cuts across gender. It has a wide spectrum of

membership – from small-scale resource poor processors to industrial scale producers of cassava flour, researchers, intermediaries, government and private sector. Aquaculture is an emerging, small holder, uniquely private sector led commodity system applicable in all agro-ecological zones. It is an area where the linear model has not taken root primarily because it has not, until fairly recently, been an important area within the agricultural research and extension system.

- b. Nurturing coalitions of champions and other key actors at the level of the platforms as well as at the federal/state levels to promote a conducive policy environment that complements their work on innovation platforms
4. The Outputs of RIUP-N will include: developed and strengthened Innovation Platforms; a policy environment conducive to pro-poor innovation; and facilitated/supported coalitions of champions of pro-poor innovation
 5. MIL is an integral part of the Nigeria strategy aimed at guiding the country team take stock, review, reflect on lessons, learn from and revise the implementation of the strategy as and when necessary. An MIL framework has been developed which clarifies: the location of MIL within the innovation systems; explains the scope of the MIL system; draws attention to a proposed performance and learning framework; outlines the MIL implementation strategy; presents the MIL organisational structure; and shows how information will be gathered, reported on and communicated to different stakeholders.
 6. This strategy document also clarifies the partnership, governance and management arrangements that underpin RIUP-N. It highlights the centrality of building different and varied types of partnerships. It emphasises the role of RIUP-N as a catalyst/facilitator aiming to stimulate demand for research outputs in a manner that impacts positively on resource poor households and the environment. Implementation and management arrangements will be predicated on the need for continuous role clarification and adaptation during programme implementation.
 7. In terms of the architecture of the programme, the three innovation platforms are the building block of the programme. In each platform there will be facilitator chosen by platform members. Platform level facilitators will work in collaboration with an RIUP-N Innovation Platforms Facilitator who will work to the National Co-ordinator, the head of RIUP-N who will be supported by an MIL facilitator. Other human resource requirements will be determined as the programme gains ground. The platform development process will be assisted by a Platform Development Team, external to the platforms and utilised on demand¹ The platform development process will, amongst others, promote learning and sharing between platforms and with coalitions of champions of pro-poor innovation located at state level (if appropriate) but more likely to be at federal level. The governance arrangements anticipate representation from the innovation platforms, the policy cluster, the MIL representative and the RIUP West Africa Task Manager.

¹ This will be based on demand driven draw down contract.

8. The extent to which RIUP-N activities will continue after project closure will depend on the degree to which project outputs are achieved. The organizational and financial sustainability of the platform will be built into the design of the programme and the formation of the respective innovation platforms. The M&E process will also provide evidence of the effectiveness of the Innovation system and the innovation platform concept. Strengthening the capacity of the platforms to advance their interests by improving linkages between them and with others through the coalitions of champions will form a solid foundation for the sustainability of the strategy. Engagement with sub-regional and regional processes – NEPAD, ECOWAS, CADAPP – will further sustain the momentum for mainstreaming the ISA.
9. It is good practice to involve those who will manage a programme in the development of what they are expected to deliver on. In the interim, by the end of March 2008, a 6-month plan of activities can be finalised following approval of the strategy. That plan of activities will provide a basis for a MoU with an in-country hosting agency and the recruitment of core staff. Once a MoU is signed and skeletal staff are in place, the programme could be launched. By the beginning of May 2008, an RIUP-N could commence the activities outlined in the MoU. The process of facilitating the emergence of effective innovation platforms could be initiated as part of the 6-month plan. A fully costed 18 month implementation plan is expected to be produced, by the RIUP-N Country Team, within the first quarter on assuming responsibility.

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	List of Acronyms
ADP	Agricultural Development Project
AEZ	Agro-ecological zones
AFAN	All Farmers Association of Nigeria
A-PSF	Agriculture Policy Support Facility
ARCN	Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program
CAFAN	Catfish Society of Nigeria
CEDP	Cassava Enterprise Development Programme
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CSPD	Country Strategy and Programme Development
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FFAI	Food For All International
IARCs	International Agricultural Research Centres
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
ISA	Innovation Systems Approach
LGA	Local Government Authority
MARKETS	(Maximizing Agricultural Revenue Key Enterprises at Targeted Sites
MIL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Assessment
NAERLS	The National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services
NARI	National Agricultural Research Institutes
NEEDS	National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
NEPAD	The New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PCU	Project Coordinating Unit
PDT	Platform Development Team
PRONAF	West Africa Cowpea Network
PrOpCom	Promoting Pro-poor Opportunities through Commodity and Service Markets
PROSAB	Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Borno State
R&D	Research and Development
REFILS	Research-Extension-Farmer-Input-Linkages
RIU	Research into Use
RIU-N	Research into Use in Nigeria
RIUP	Research into Use programme
RNRR	Renewable Natural Resource Research
SEEDS	State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy
SG 2000	Sasakawa Global 2000
SMT	Senior Management Team

List of Acronyms	
T&V	Training and Visit
UAE	Unified Agricultural Extension System
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WARDA	West Africa Rice Research Association
WOFAN	Women Farmers Association of Nigeria

List of Annexes

Annex 1 – Nigeria Country Assessment Report

Annex 2 – Final Draft Concept for Strategy – Nigeria RIUP

Annex 3 – Draft Nigeria Strategy for Validation

Annex 4 – Contributions of the Innovation Systems, Aqua Culture, Cowpea/Soybean Specialists and MIL Advisor

Annex 5 – Strategy Development – Champions Cluster Workshop notes

PROPOSED STRATEGY FOR A RESEARCH INTO USE PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA ((RIUP-N)

1. BACKGROUND TO THE RIUP-N

1.1 Purpose of this strategy document

1. This document outlines a strategy for potential involvement of the RIUP in Nigeria (RIUP-N) over the period 2008 – 2011. It summarises the overall purpose of the RIUP and its intended outputs, outlining how Nigeria can participate and benefit from this initiative. The document is targeted at RIUP's Senior Management Team (SMT), key stakeholders in Nigeria and the global Research into Use Programme (RIUP).
2. The purpose of the strategy is to build consensus around a 3-year RIUP-N and to obtain agreement in principle from SMT and support from key stakeholders in Nigeria as well as the global RIUP. The draft paper also provides guidance to key stakeholders in Nigeria as to how they could engage with the RIUP and into what ends. Furthermore, the global RIUP will gain an insight into how the RIU initiatives in Nigeria will fit into global outputs and contribute to the achievement of programme purpose.
3. The strategy builds on a Country Assessment undertaken in early 2007 and will be supported by a more detailed implementation plan to be developed in early 2008.

1.2 Innovation Systems

4. The RIUP anchors its interventions around the innovation systems approach (ISA). An innovation system is usually seen as a network of organisations and individuals involved in generating, modifying, and using new knowledge. These activities are collectively called the 'innovation process'. The networks might be national, sub-national, regional or international. It comprises not only the users of the knowledge (farmers, consumers, artisans, labourers and traders) and the producers of new knowledge (researchers) but a host of intermediary organisations including extension workers, information brokers, enterprises in the supply chain, credit agencies and government. This systems approach considers not only the totality of the entire research, development and extension spectrum, but also the institutions, systems of production, and social relations in which these activities take place.
5. The innovation systems approach offers a way forward in that, by understanding and mapping the system, we are able to identify the critical points of intervention that may enhance the effectiveness of the system as a whole, and the types of intervention that might be most productive in varying contexts and for different groups in target countries.
6. RIUP's main organising principle is that of an *innovation system* combined with the hypothesis that: **"an innovations systems approach will prove more effective than linear approaches at getting research outputs into use for the benefit of the poor."**
7. The key elements of this principle and approach are outlined in Box 1 below.

Key Elements of the Innovation Systems Approach

- Involving the suppliers and users of knowledge in some form of partnership on a common platform
- Genuine and continuous involvement of suppliers of knowledge, intermediaries, policy makers, “enablers”, all “end-users” (producer, consumer or processor) to assist in the determination of the innovation bottlenecks.
- Putting as much emphasis on promoting technologies as promoting approaches and processes that have been proven to be effective in getting research into use.
- Investing in strengthening capacities where they are needed in the "innovation system" (not just R&D organizations but also in intermediary functions that enable communications between knowledge suppliers and users)
- Investing in an iterative process that enables the organisations within the system to learn from experience and improve their performance
- Introducing new technologies and/or new ways of doing things in a financially, socially and environmentally sustained basis
- Evolving new institutional arrangements by which the various organisations in the system operate
- Developing financially sustainable delivery systems/ viable business models (this often involves manufacturers, service providers, credit suppliers, and providers of technical assistance to users)

8. The RIUP is inspired by principles and values such as inclusiveness, empowerment, transparency, fairness, openness, accessibility, strategic focus; and innovation. All of the above are in recognition of the diverse cultural context within which RIUP will operate and have informed the approach adopted in developing the RIUP-N strategy. The principles and values are also consistent with RIUP’s goals of promoting sound environmental management practices and improving the livelihood conditions of resource poor households.

1.3 Purpose and Outputs of RIUP

9. RIUP was commissioned by DFID in 2006 to capitalise upon the achievements of DFID’s past research in renewable natural resources. Its purpose is:
 - To maximise the poverty-reducing impact of the RNRRS and other research, and
 - To increase understanding of how the promotion and widespread use of research can contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth as summarised by the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.
10. The RNRRS operated for 11 years between 1995 and 2006 with the objective of generating new knowledge and promoting its uptake and application so that livelihoods of poor people could be

improved through better management of renewable natural resources. The RNRRS comprised ten research programmes² covering the needs of people dependent on agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries. Whilst the RNRRS offers an important knowledge source from which to draw, it is also acknowledged that research from other sources will add value to the RIUP.

11. As a result, and following the inception phase, the RIUP **purpose** statement has been slightly revised to include other research beside that of RNRRS. It now reads, “to maximise the poverty-reducing impact of RNRRS and other research, and by so doing, increase understanding of how the promotion and widespread use of research can contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth”.
12. The main focus of RIUP-N will be to strengthen the demand for research-based knowledge and to strengthen those organisations and enterprises able to provide services between the suppliers of knowledge and those that need to use it for innovation (Component 1.2). The RIUP-N strategy is designed to build on already existing RIUP-type activities and promote these over the life of the programme.
13. At the same time RIUP-N may also be able to participate in Component 1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2 and 3.1 activities.

1.4 The process for developing an RIUP-N

14. A country assessment team visited Nigeria from the 29th January to the 22nd February, 2007 to identify potential opportunities for putting research into use. Following this visit, a concept note was produced in October 2007 to provide a rationale and justification for developing a strategy. Based on this note, an institutional assessment of potential innovation platforms was between November-December 2007. Out of potential platforms identified in the country assessment report three were prioritised as offering the best potential for promoting pro-poor innovation. Some agencies (and key individuals operating in them) were identified as adopting an innovation systems type approach and are referred to as “champions” in this document³. “Champions” from within the commodity systems of prioritised potential platforms, private sector operators as well as key actors in the policy arena were then invited to a workshop (on the 6th and 8th February, 2008 respectively) in Abuja, Nigeria to participate in refining a draft strategy for an RIUP in Nigeria.

1.4.1 An overview of the Nigeria Country Assessment Report⁴

15. The Nigeria Country Assessment process involved two teams covering the whole of the country divided into northern and southern zones. Both teams were asked to explore opportunities for putting research into use. Individual members of the team were also required to provide insights into the national innovation context in the following areas:

- policy arena (at federal and state level)⁵,

² These ten programmes were concerned with five strategic areas including: crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and natural resource management

³ The concept of champions is also used to include other actors in the policy arena who subscribe to pro-poor innovation type approaches.

⁴ See Annex 1 – Nigeria Country Assessment Report with supporting annexes

⁵ Agric. Research systems, macro-economic and trade policies, investment climate and seed laws were covered under federal level policy areas. Input supply and research extension systems (ADPs) were treated as state/LGA issues

- natural resource sector and agricultural research framework;
- private sector
- civil society and donor agency involvement

16. The report recommended a three-pronged strategy: (a) an engagement at the Federal level in the areas of policy; (b) an interaction with State Level policy and resource allocation through engagement with the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and (c) working through innovation platforms. At the federal level, the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN), an apex body recently reconstituted to coordinate funding and research, was considered a timely policy level partner. The ARCN offers RIUP an opportunity to implement its principle of working through existing institutions to influence research policy and research processes in ways that are consistent with RIUP's purpose. RIUP-N could also collaborate with the Agriculture Policy Support Facility (A-PSF)⁶ as a way of developing a multi-faceted engagement with the donor community. The challenges to be overcome include how to promote inter-agency collaboration and co-ordination as well as enhance synergy of different policy level initiatives.
17. A number of donor agency (for example - the World Bank, DFID, USAID, CIDA) projects are also involved in promoting the use of research outputs in a number of states. They are potential collaborators or partners in an RIU programme especially through an engagement with the SEEDS of appropriate states. The SEEDS document sets policy priorities in each state and determines the key intervention areas around which resources are allocated. The FADAMA programme, a World Bank-assisted programme whose third phase, FADAMA III, is just starting was identified as a potentially important vehicle for putting research into use.
18. Aquaculture, water harvesting, cassava processing, maize, soybean and cowpea production systems and ruminants were identified as offering the RIUP an opportunity to put RNRRS and other research outputs to use. The RIUP database contains some research outputs of potential relevance to Nigeria such as technologies for the management of cassava mosaic disease; specially developed cassava dryers and fermentation vats; ways of tackling fish loss; push-pull pest management methods; pheromone traps for cowpea and rice parboiling technologies⁷. In addition to what exists on the database, researchers, extension services, private sector operators as well as NGOs were contacted as part of the country assessment exercise to identify research outputs ready to be put into use and in particular those with a potential to impact positively on resource poor farmers and the environment.

1.4.2 Concept Note for developing an RIUP Strategy for Nigeria

19. The Concept Note aimed to take ideas in the country assessment report further and explain how the strategy and programme development process might evolve. The note argued that RIUP in Nigeria, and Output 1.2, in particular should begin its journey with some sense of its intended destination: to strengthen institutional arrangements through which all actors involved in promoting the uptake of research outputs that benefit the poor will continuously interact. Nigeria's size and complexity emphasises the importance of starting small and expanding as guided by the interests of key in-

⁶ The APSF had not taken off at the time of the country assessment.

⁷ PrOpCom is reported to be promoting rice parboiling technologies developed in Ghana by an RNRRS project.

country stakeholders. Furthermore, Nigeria's vibrant private sector offers enormous opportunities for a mutually rewarding public-private partnership including developing enterprises using RNRRS and other research outputs. The concept note recommended a rigorous assessment of potential platforms identified in the Country Assessment report with a view to identifying three platforms offering the best opportunities for RIUP to engage in Nigeria⁸.

1.4.3 INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

20. From mid-November to mid December, 2007 a team of four Nigerian consultants, divided into two sub-teams, covered the northern zone and southern zones of the country. They used rigorous organisational assessment criteria to assess the potential platforms identified in the country assessment report. Both teams reconvened in Abuja to pull together their findings and draw conclusions relevant to RIUP-N's strategy and programme. The Abuja meeting concluded that there are no formalised innovation platforms, as understood by the RIUP, currently operating in Nigeria. Nevertheless, RIU has a greater chance of delivering on its outputs (especially Output 1.2) and contributing to its purpose if it developed and strengthened, in the first instance, the aquaculture, cowpea/soybean commodity systems and cassava processing into effective innovation platforms. PROSAB emerged as the one agency whose modus operandi, in terms of the innovation systems approach, and raison d'être comes closest to RIUP's concept of innovation platform.

1.4.4 Strategy Consultations

21. A draft strategy⁹ was produced in January 2008, following the institutional assessment exercise, as a basis for consultations with two broad groups of stakeholders: 1) organisations likely to "champion" the innovation systems approach (ISA) in Nigeria, and 2) agencies with whom RIU could work with to produce a policy climate conducive to an uptake of the innovation systems approach
22. As will be seen from the next section, Nigeria is a country of considerable size and complexity – in geographic, political, organisational and institutional terms. As a consequence, the strategy development process has had to be more extensive than might have been the case in a smaller and less diverse country. Because it was important to narrow down and focus upon choices for platforms and partners that stand the best chance of successfully exploring RIU issues, the extended platform assessment exercise was conducted at this stage, rather than at the onset of implementation. Perhaps most importantly, it was felt necessary to gain confidence that potential partners and champions had significantly 'bought in' to the RIU venture.

2. NIGERIA CONTEXT

23. Nigeria contains five agro-ecological zones (AEZ) – the Sahel, Sudan savannah, Guinea savannah, derived coastal savannah and Rain forest – extended over a total land area of about 98.3 million hectares 57% of which is under crop or pasture. The remaining 43% is under forest (16%), rivers/lakes/reservoirs (13%) and other features (14%)¹⁰. Given RIUP's limited resources and timescale, there are significant challenges posed by the wide range of AEZs. Yet this diversity offers

⁸ See Annex 2 – Final draft concept for Strategy-Nigeria RIUP

⁹ See Annex 3 – Draft Nigeria Strategy for Validation, with its supporting annexes

¹⁰ See contribution of the natural resources specialist on in Country Assessment Report - Annex 1, and Annex 4, contribution of the Cassava, cowpea/soya bean innovation platform specialist..

opportunities for RIUP to explore compare and contrast the uptake of a wide range of research outputs (RNRRS and others) across agro-ecological zones and between value chains and commodity systems. Nigeria has an important influence on the West Africa sub-region and lessons derived from Nigeria have relevance across all the AEZs in the sub-region.

24. Nigeria's agriculture institution is characterised by extensive public research and extension systems. There are 17 National Agricultural Research Institutes (NARIs) under the control of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Water Resources, Department of Agricultural Sciences, and 59 higher education agencies and 3 International Agricultural Research Centres (IARCs) - namely the International Institute of Tropical agriculture (IITA), West African Rice Research Association (WARDA) and International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) that undertake agricultural research. Extension research is undertaken at the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS), Zaria. Much of the research and development undertaken by these institutions is based on the linear model.
25. Agricultural research outputs are made available to farmers, pastoralists, processors and other stakeholders by the agricultural extension services. The Federal Government agricultural extension services are jointly coordinated by the NAERLS, Zaria and the Project Coordination Unit (PCU – now National Food Reserve Agency), Abuja. They coordinate the activities of the state extension service institutions, the Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs). The responsibility for state extension services delivery in the 36 States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) resides with the ADPs. The ADPs operate the unified agricultural extension system (UAES); using the training and visit, (T&V) approach. This approach emphasizes on-farm visits; regular scheduled field supervision and training and concentrated effort on research-extension-farmer-input-linkages (REFILS). The local government authorities (LGAs) have agricultural units that, besides engaging in extension activities, may supply inputs, manage credit schemes, and mobilize farmers into groups.
26. Nigeria's public research and extension agencies, which had the reputation to undertake good work some years past, are currently hampered by numerous challenges that include: insufficient, unreliable and misallocated funding; absence of competitive modes of funding which limits the potential to boost the cost effectiveness and relevance of research; absence of a national research policy resulting in a lack of coordination and duplication between research institutes; supply-driven non participatory and top-down research disconnected from farmers needs and with limited or no accountability to them. The linkages between research and extension are weak; research outputs in Nigeria are largely not generated in response to specific demand or vision. Research is often conducted primarily in fulfilment of each institution's mandate and to advance researchers' careers; laws establishing the research institutions do not emphasize the need for the institutions to market their research products; public extension suffers from a lack of coordination between service providers at different levels of government. Non-participatory methods of extension (T&V is widely used) are the norm; women's access to improved technologies is limited by the staffing patterns of public extension agencies. The problem is particularly severe in the north where there are hardly any female extension workers, and cultural practices limit men's interaction with female farmers.
27. In spite of these numerous systemic challenges, there are important opportunities to get research into use by seeking participation (at the innovation platforms) from those elements of the National Agricultural Research System and the ADPs that still retain some vibrancy and undertake good work as a result of their interface with external agency actors and/or conducive policy and resource

environment at state level. Existing government institutions are influential in shaping Nigeria government policies and enjoy political leadership support for their various activities. Furthermore, the Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) an apex body recently reconstituted to coordinate funding and research offers RIU an opportunity to work through an enthusiastic partner.

28. The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) launched in May 2004 as Nigeria's home-grown growth and poverty reduction strategy offers opportunities for getting research into use. NEEDS emphasises the importance of the agricultural sector, and aims to generate 6% growth in the sector. The broad thrust of the strategy in relation to agriculture is to create conditions for the growth of a competitive private sector. There is a specific commitment to "strengthen agricultural research, revitalise agricultural training and streamline extension service delivery." NEEDS also states that the government will move towards a "private sector led input supply and distribution system." Nigeria's 36 states have also developed State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (SEEDS). The SEEDS document sets policy priorities in each state and determines the key intervention areas around which resources are allocated.
29. Ninety percent of Nigeria's government total foreign earnings is derived from the sale of oil, which is the main source of revenue for maintaining institutions at the federal, state, and local government levels. The state is perceived as primarily a vehicle for redistributing oil revenue rather than creating a favourable environment for enterprise. A number of challenges are deeply rooted in the Nigeria's political economy. Although, Nigeria has an active private sector involved in the natural resources sector, unfavourable enabling environment has stifled the growth of this sector. Private sector involvement in the agricultural sector has often emphasised production of agricultural produce rather than value adding production processes.
30. Government (and private sector) interest has largely been in the financial sector and the marketing of imported items, as against supporting Nigerian entrepreneurs to take advantage of the country's market size and thereby compete favourably on the international market. Nigeria no longer exports agricultural commodities on a significant scale, except within West Africa. The absence of export markets limits incentives for quality improvement and innovation. Many agricultural commodities are protected by high tariffs or import bans. This policy may have supported some commodity sectors in the short term, but the long-term impact on productivity and competitiveness has been damaging. Shielded from competition, Nigerian producers have little interest in improving efficiency and quality by developing and adopting new technologies.
31. Because of the dominance of oil, the agricultural sector has suffered from neglect with devastating consequences. The macro-economic environment has resulted in strong competition from agricultural imports thereby limiting the export potential for Nigeria's agricultural commodities. Frequent political instability and policy unpredictability in Nigeria has created a great deal of uncertainty in business expectations of returns to investment. The investment climate, especially infrastructural deficiencies, such as poor power and water supply infrastructure, greatly add to the costs of doing business and reduce incentives to invest. Although trade policies exist, they have not succeeded in strengthening the agricultural sector. The state still retains monopoly on the production of breeder and foundation seeds as well as the supply of fertiliser and inputs and has been unable or unwilling to develop and regulate private companies to complement its efforts. Abundant oil revenue has fuelled wasteful public expenditure with a large workforce in public institutions but with limited capacity to deliver goods and services.

32. In spite of the generally disabling policy context, there are important opportunities to get research into use by working around policy obstacles. The best opportunities to promote innovation, and to commercialise research outputs, will be to work with innovation platforms built around private sector principles. There will be opportunities to bring public agencies (such as vibrant and good National Agricultural Research System and the ADPs) into these coalitions on a selective basis. There is potential to foster innovative partnerships between public institutions and private investors, researchers and service providers. Such an approach is likely to find favour in Nigeria where recent progress in privatisation appears to have shifted public attitudes in favour of greater private participation in service provision.
33. There is a need to address the policy obstacles to innovation. However, it must be recognised that the potential to bring about policy change in Nigeria through a small donor funded project is limited, in particular in those areas where reforms run counter to powerful vested interests. A selective approach is required focusing on a small number of policy issues, where change is more likely. For example, the prospects for reforming the seeds laws are much greater than cutting fertiliser subsidies. In general, the approach should be to work with domestic constituencies pushing for change, for example reform minded private sector associations.
34. The above opportunities are further strengthened by the plethora of civil society and donor agency actors in Nigeria. There are formalised Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)¹¹ often linked to international development agencies that are active in the agriculture sector. There are also local NGOs driven primarily by private sector actors such as the All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) and the Catfish Farmers of Nigeria (CAFAN). These institutions have extensive networks and administrative structures on ground to facilitate interaction among stakeholders. RIU should seek to work through these existing institutions¹².
35. In addition, major donor agency projects active in the agriculture sector such as the DFID funded Agricultural Markets Project (PrOpcom), Promoting Sustainable Agriculture in Borno State (PROSAB) funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and Maximizing Agricultural Revenue of Key Enterprises at Targeted Sites (MARKETS) funded by United States agency for International Development (USAID) have structures (Innovation Platforms) in their various areas of operation. Forming synergies with them will assist RIU in the achievement of its mandate at lower costs since there will be no need to duplicate structures at such locations and areas of operation. Through MoUs that are properly designed, a lot of opportunities that have been identified can be tapped. Since the resources of the RIUP will be small in comparison to the scale of the problems in Nigeria, the programme should at all times seek to form complementary relationships with ongoing donor funded programmes/projects.

3. RIUP-N VISION, CHALLENGES, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND APPROACHES

36. The vision of RIUP-N is to see the widespread adoption of research based knowledge in the renewable natural resource sector to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods. In working to achieve this vision we recognise that success depends on the effectiveness and timeliness of the supply

¹¹ Examples include Oxfam-International, Nigeria, WOFAN, FFAI, SG2000

¹² RIU-N should make conscious effort to seek their participation in the identified platforms) to get research into use.

response to demand for research outputs as well as the extent to which the policy environment provides a context conducive to poverty reducing innovation.

37. There are a number of challenges which need to be overcome in order for the vision to be realised. These include the:

- existence or creation of appropriate incentives for farmers, intermediaries and researchers;
- existence or stimulation of effective formal and informal markets;
- extent to which local power structures, processes and relationships as well as values and attitudes change and are able to influence positively the cultural context in which the priority platforms operate;
- capacity of “champions” of pro-poor innovation to regularly identify and map changes in policies and practices which affect the uptake and out-scaling of innovations and by so doing collaborate to improve the policy environment;
- ability of “champions” operating within the prioritised innovation platforms (and outside them) to learn and share their experiences and recognise the need to form broad coalitions to feed their experiences into policy making.

38. The RIUP-N will strive to achieve this vision and overcome these challenges by taking two strategic approaches. It will:

- strengthen the demand side of the knowledge economy by enabling resource poor households, including women, to utilise research based knowledge in new ways to secure their livelihoods and benefit the environment; This will be achieved by enhancing the effectiveness of innovation platforms in three natural resource value chains and commodity systems;
- nurture coalitions of champions and other key actors at the level of the platforms as well as at the federal/state levels to promote a conducive policy environment that complements their work on innovation platforms.

39. Promoting effective innovation platforms, facilitating a conducive policy environment and supporting the emergence of strong coalitions of champions for pro-poor innovation are interrelated in several ways. The likelihood of effective innovation platforms emerging is greater if there are champions driving the processes in each of the platforms. Innovation Platforms will deliver pro-poor goods and services to their members if there is a conducive policy environment. And a conducive policy environment is more likely to emerge if evidence, emanating from knowledge and experiences within platforms, is used by champions within platforms and actors in the policy arena to influence policy in favour of resource poor households. Figure 1 below reflects these linkages.

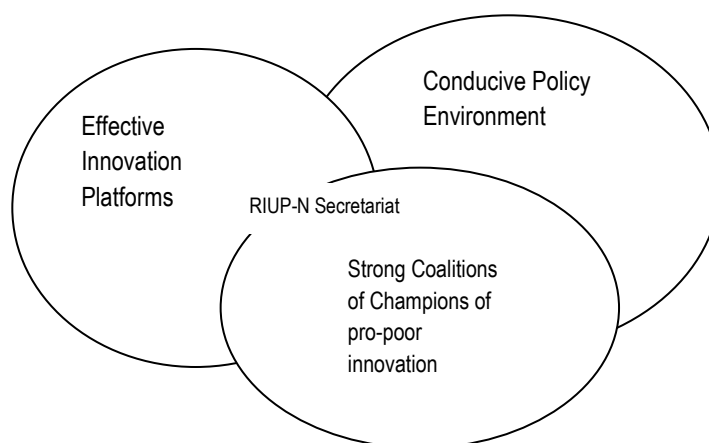


Figure 1-Pillars of RIUP-N

40. The Nigeria programme has chosen to focus on innovation platforms in aquaculture, cassava processing and cowpea/soybean commodity systems. The focus of RIUP-N strategy reflects not only the needs of Nigerians but is consistent with RIUP's priorities in a number of ways. First, the cowpea/soybean platform offers opportunities for RIUP-N to enhance efforts at tackling poverty and environmental issues. It offers an opportunity to strengthen the inclusive (men and women) and participatory action research and learning methodology in use. Farmers are already being linked to produce and commodity markets, agricultural producers to processors, farmers to input dealers through the MARKETS projects. Farmers are producing specific cowpea varieties to meet existing demand from flour millers. Cowpea and soybean production is more prevalent in the northern parts of Nigeria considered the poorer part of the country. These are also crops where women are active both in cultivation and processing. This platform already exists in an embryonic form and has a number of potential champions - internationally funded projects - GATSBY, PRONAF & USAID-MARKETS – willing to test RIUP's approaches to making research based knowledge more useful.
41. Second, cassava is a major staple and cash crop in Nigeria and described as a wonder crop because it is grown in most of Nigeria's agro-ecological zones. It is drought tolerant and grows well in marginal land of low fertility. It therefore offers an opportunity for RIUP-N to establish the appropriateness and uptake of research outputs in different agro-ecological zones. An embryonic cassava processing platform exists and cuts across gender. It has a wide spectrum of membership – from small-scale resource poor processors to industrial scale production of cassava flour. Its membership includes reasonably well educated, self motivated and well resourced members. Researchers (IITA), intermediaries (FFAI, CEDP), donor projects (PrOpCOM, MARKETS) government (the cassava secretariat) and private sector (Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry) are all active participants. There is an opportunity for RIUP-N to facilitate and strengthen these partnerships so that they will be sustainable long after the project has ended.
42. Third, aquaculture is an emerging commodity system, is uniquely private sector led and is applicable in all agro-ecological zones. It is an area where the linear model has not taken root primarily because it has not, until fairly recently, been an important area within the agricultural research and extension system. Aquaculture is largely a small holder affair although the scale of production can range from the household bath tub to an aquaculture farm covering a wide area. Women are active in the fish

industry, especially the demand side of the commodity chain, and are organised within powerful associations especially in the southwest. Women dominate the smoking and retailing fish. Currently, availability of good quality floating and sinking feed, estimated to constitute about 70% of production costs is an urgent and important priority for fish farmers on the platform. Aquaculture therefore provides an opportunity for RIUP-N to stimulate demand for a wide range of research outputs as well as focus on outputs which help reduce the drudgery that women encounter.

4. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

4.1 Innovation Platforms of three commodity systems developed and strengthened¹³

43. Enhancing demand and making use of RNRRS outputs and others (RIUP output 1.2) is the main output expected from the RIUP-N strategy. The “process” will entail improving confidence in building and strengthening innovation platforms and partnerships. The output will be achieved if the platforms in the three commodity systems operate efficiently and effectively. The strategy will analyse the functioning of the agricultural innovation system within each platform, and in particular will examine how the information market functions in terms of active interactions between problems and potential solutions, and will identify points at which capacity can be strengthened in order to improve the functioning of knowledge and information markets.

44. The strategy will also contribute to RIUP Output 1.3 by making the private sector key drivers in the respective platforms. It is hoped that given Nigeria’s market size, commercial mechanisms for the supply and purchase of research-based knowledge could emerge if private sector players invest in and are willing to supply proven research-based knowledge and technologies on a commercial basis for the Nigerian market and for export.

4.2 Policy environment conducive to pro-poor innovation enhanced

45. Outputs related to improving the policy environment for pro-poor innovation are primarily intended to enhance and provide better support to innovation platforms. Their raison d’être is to produce robust evidence for policy makers (in the public and private sectors) to demonstrate the policy changes required to support effective pro-poor innovation. The process of delivering this output will require close collaboration with Output 3 (influencing the policy agenda) and will rely heavily on the evidence produced by the Monitoring, Impact, Learning component of RIUP and therefore will contribute to RIUP (components 2.1 & 2.2). To deliver this output will require greater inputs from NEPAD into the work of the “policy cluster”. NEPAD’s reporting mandate could contribute to influencing the sub-regional and Africa wide agenda as well as act as a link to the global professional community.

4.3 Coalitions of Champions of pro-poor innovation facilitated and supported

46. RIUP-N strategy hinges on genuine and effective partnerships, constituency and trust building coalitions within and between platforms and between platforms and actors in the policy arena. The initial stages will be taken up by awareness raising and promotion, out of which demand-driven coalitions will be nurtured to address the priority challenges facing the commodity platforms. The

¹³ See Annex 4 for the contributions of the platform specialists, the innovation systems specialists.

key challenge to be addressed at this stage is how to encourage and nurture the coalitions. Subsequently the effectiveness of these coalitions will depend on their legitimacy and their ability to learn and share their experiences, and use emerging evidence to advocate for pro-poor policy conducive to the achievement of the objectives of innovation platforms. To that extent, the strategy will be contributing to RIUP's Output 3.1 if it is able to promote institutional or policy change, resulting in better knowledge and changes in values, attitudes and behaviour.

5. MONITORING, IMPACT AND LEARNING

5.1 The Purpose of the Nigeria MIL system

47. The purpose is to guide the Country Team in taking stock of, reviewing, reflecting on results, learning from, and revising the implementation of the country strategy and approach in an ongoing way. In so doing, it aims to institutionalize a simple, cost effective, integrated assessment and communication system. The proposed framework is consistent with the RIU-wide approach to monitoring, impact assessment, and learning.

5.2 The Innovations Systems Approach and Monitoring Impact and Learning in Nigeria

48. Institutional learning and feedback as well as reflections on the processes involved are critical requirements for a successful application of the ISA in Nigeria and involve interactive and socially embedded processes. The three selected innovation platforms, and the network of relationships developed around them are an integral part of the country's institutional and innovation context. RIUP-N's interventions will aim to change that context in ways that will enable pro-poor research knowledge to be demanded and used in a widespread way. This MIL framework will, therefore, focus on the institutional, social, political and cultural contexts of these processes.

49. Within the selected innovation platforms, monitoring, evaluation and learning will go beyond simply examining the nature of the technological changes. Greater attention will be paid to changes in the way the research community operates, as well as its interactions with other organizations within the existing institutional, political, social, and cultural contexts. To strengthen this process, it will be important to:

- Identify the systems nature of capacity-building, and carry out MIL activities in collaboration with partners as well as at the individual organizational level. Capacity-building will be an important outcome and purpose of the innovation platforms.
- Explore behavioural changes in the contexts of the innovation platforms as a way of monitoring progress and acquiring learning, and as a way of developing lessons within wider audiences in the Nigerian and international communities.

5.3 The Scope of the MIL System

50. The MIL system will use a judicious combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods as well as simple systems that rely on discussions with key actors and stakeholders. The preference would be to avoid gathering and processing large amounts of data but to rely, as much as possible, on discussions with key stakeholders and actors. Learning will, nonetheless, be an integral and critical part of all methods used. Learning will be supplemented by special case studies and periodic impact analysis, as and when needed. Participatory processes involving all the stakeholders

(including IP actors, staff responsible for collecting and analyzing the MIL data, staff implementing the Country programme, beneficiary or programme participants, and relevant RIU individuals) will be used wherever possible.

5.4 Performance Measurement and Learning Framework

51. The MIL framework will include the collection of information on purpose-level achievements as outlined in the overall objectives of the Country Programme as well as information on the programme's outputs and inputs. The RIUP-N strategy has identified its three expected outputs as:
- Developing and strengthening the three Innovation Platforms of Aquaculture, Cowpea/Soya bean commodity system, and Cassava Processing.
 - Facilitating and strengthening Coalitions of Champions (including Technical and Policy Champions).
 - Enhancing the policy environment.
52. The reference point for performance measurement and learning would be the linkages between the RIU-induced interventions and the institutional and behavioural changes that are taking place, as a way of providing the evidence base for policy making. The MIL framework will utilize multiple sources of quantitative and qualitative information to look closely at such changes to provide explanation and attribution.

5.5 The MIL Implementation Strategy

- Scope and synthesize existing documentation of relevance to the three selected innovation platforms.
- Identify and carry out baseline studies to help assess and measure the impact of changes that are expected to take place, especially in the innovation platforms.
- Institutionalise learning and feed-back mechanisms, facilitate the development of learning skills, promote processes for collective learning and reflection in each of the three innovation platforms.
- Position MIL activities in the policy and political arenas at the state, national and regional levels.
- Build MIL analytical capacity at the innovation platform, state and national levels.
- Commission case studies based on gaps identified by scoping and synthesizing activities as a basis for providing new "maintenance" knowledge to support the activities of the innovation platforms.

5.6 MIL Organizational Structure

53. An autonomous and independent MIL Unit will be integrated in the management structure of the RIUP-Nigeria. The MIL Unit would comprise a Country Monitoring and Learning Coordinator and a small team of administrative staff. Although closely connected with the management of the country RIU programme, its day to day activities would be independent of the management of RIUP-N.

5.7 Information Gathering, Communication and Reporting

54. "Performance questions" related to the three innovation platforms and the three expected outputs will be used to identify the appropriate indicators and other information needs for which to collect

data. The framework for the country MIL system¹⁴ will give an integrated picture of overall performance at the platform, state, national, and regional levels. These performance questions will attempt to find out what has been achieved in terms of purpose and outputs, why there is success or failure, and what has been learned in the process.

55. There will be need to communicate the MIL findings to different stakeholders and for different reasons. For example, evidence useful for evidenced-based policy making will be shared with Federal and State government officials either directly or via the “Policy Champions”. MIL information on how the Country Programme is working internally and externally and how well the different teams and individuals involved are delivering would be shared with RIU programme administrators and primary stakeholders. Documented lessons learned about the RIU strategy would also be shared with other RIU programmes. A detailed communication strategy will be developed which will indicate not only the formal reports to be produced but will also outline communication procedures that seek feedback about interim findings, and discuss what actions are needed, and will define the information needs of a range of audiences.

5.8 Implementation Plan

A proposed MIL implementation schedule is attached as an annexure¹⁵

6. PARTNERSHIP , GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

56. Effective partnerships and the ability to develop organisational networks will underpin the implementation of the programme at several levels; within innovation platforms, in the national policy group, among “champions” of the innovation systems approach and potentially in other areas such as private sector partnerships. Previous experience¹⁶ has shown that these partnerships need careful fostering and capacity strengthening, with adequate support being given both during their formation and throughout their operation. Support will be identified at a local level, supplemented by regional and programme-wide resources - including specialist expertise, tools and techniques. Unblocking constraints to effective communication within the partnerships will be an important element of the partnership approach of RIUP-N. The implementation plan will contain budgetary support for these activities.
57. RIUP-N sees itself more as a catalyst and facilitator aiming to stimulate demand for research outputs in a manner that impacts positively on resource poor households and the environment. It will provide training, facilitation and capacity strengthening support to focal innovation platforms and policy actors to enable the key stakeholders achieve their mandate including an articulation of demand for RNRRS and other research outputs. This mode of working is designed to ensure the sustainability of the programme’s support.
58. As a catalyst and facilitator, RIUP-N aims to keep its operational costs low by working through existing agencies and leveraging the support of existing donor initiatives whose goal and objectives are consistent with those of the RIUP. RIUP-N will **NOT** provide capital equipment or cover the

¹⁴ See Annex 4-Contribution of MIL Advisor re: Proposed Framework for the Nigeria Country MIL System

¹⁵ See Annex 4 – see above MIL Advisor’s report re: Proposed MIL Plan Implementation Schedule

¹⁶The RNRRS generated many useful outputs relating to partnership and coalition support, for example from the Crop Post-Harvest, Livestock and Crop Protection Programmes.

overheads of stakeholders engaged in activities outside those agreed under a MoU with RIUP-N. It will also **NOT** fund new research or provide resources to research institutes. Given the programme's limited resources, the programme is persuaded that the greatest contribution the RIUP-N can make is to convincingly demonstrate the practicality and potential dividends accruing from applying the ISA in Nigeria

6.2 Architecture of RIUP-N programme

Implementation and management

59. The implementation and management processes of the Nigeria programme shall be informed by the guiding and operational principles outlined during the September 2007 meeting held at Westminster Central Hall, UK. It is therefore anticipated that there will be continuous role clarification and adaptation during programme implementation.
60. This strategy envisages the three innovation platforms as the building blocs of the programme. It will support champions¹⁷ chosen by platform members to play lead roles in strengthening the respective platforms and co-ordinating activities. In this direction, RIUP is proposing to bear some of the costs of a facilitator in each of the platforms. RIUP-N supported facilitators within platforms, assisted by the Platform Development Team (PDT)¹⁸ will, amongst others, have the responsibility for promoting learning and sharing within and between platforms, collating policy advocacy issues relevant to the enhanced performance of the platforms and acting as the link for monitoring and learning. Facilitators chosen by platform members will liaise with an RIUP-N Innovations Platforms Facilitator and ultimately to the national co-ordinator.
61. The facilitators will collaborate with higher level coalitions of champions of pro-poor innovation located at state level (depending on the needs of each platform) but more appropriately at federal level. Relevant policy agencies, co-ordinated by the ARCN, will coalesce at federal level to unblock platform related policy challenges and use generalisable lessons and evidence from platforms to shape broader policy on science and innovation. The composition of coalitions and their period of engagement will be determined by the issues to be addressed and how quickly they achieve their mission. To that extent, coalitions are more about building partnerships to achieve specific objectives rather than forming "permanent" organisational structures.
62. RIUP-N envisages a skeletal operational secretariat with facilities, a human resource configuration and budget more suited to co-ordinating, facilitating, policy advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, information sharing and communication than field programme implementation. The programme will be headed by a National Co-ordinator supported by an MIL and an Innovations Platform Facilitator. Other human resource input will be on draw down basis with clear targets to deliver. The hosting organisation for the secretariat will be determined based on the extent to which that organisation is central to the work of RIUP-N as well as meets the management requirements of the RIUP in the UK.

¹⁷ Credible and reputable private sector champions would be ideal

¹⁸ See section 8 of this strategy document for further details

Governance

63. At the federal level, an advisory group will be formed and drawn from leaders of champions within the innovation platforms, the policy cluster, an MIL representative and the RIUP West Africa Task Manager. The advisory group will be serviced by the National Co-ordinator. At the platform level, whilst an inter-platform advisory body can play a role in shaping the evolution of the platforms it is recommended that annual learning and sharing events be held as a basis for developing broad guidelines on best practices in adopting the innovation systems approach. To that extent, governance will be more about processes rather than formal structures.
64. Broadly, the effectiveness of the architecture of RIUP-N will be measured, to a large extent, by the degree to which it facilitates empowerment and vocalisation of demand for research outputs as well as its ability to improve supply responsiveness to articulated demand. For this to happen, effective communication of knowledge and a reliance on modern ICT will be required.

7. SUSTAINING RIUP-N ACTIVITIES AND INNOVATION SYSTEMS BEYOND 2011

65. The extent to which RIUP-N activities will continue after project closure will depend on the degree to which project outputs are achieved. If the platforms operating within the three commodity systems continue to operate after project closure they are likely to promote spontaneous uptake and extension of the ISAs. The prospects of this happening are high given that RIUP-N strategy is to work through willing and able private sector champions in each platform. When this happens, there will be permanent changes in the innovation context and the institutional links and relationships. In such a situation, RIUP-N's mission would have been accomplished.
66. The organizational and financial sustainability of the platform will be built into the design of the programme and the formation of the respective innovation platforms. Some members of the innovation platforms (e.g. managing partners or Lead institutions, private sector actors etc) will be required to contribute to the functioning of the platforms and these issues will be addressed as part of the platform formation process. This is intended to lay a basis for the continuation of the innovation platforms and coalitions after the programme has finished, if they feel it continues to provide value. The managing partners or lead organisations, private sector actors etc are therefore intended to provide organisational and network sustainability.
67. The Monitoring and Evaluation process will also provide evidence of the effectiveness of the Innovation system and the innovation platform concept. If such evidence is positive it is expected to attract additional funding from other sources (e.g. donor, NGO, Government etc) in future, thereby supporting financial sustainability.
68. Furthermore, RIUP-N strategy of strengthening the capacity of the platforms to advance their interests by improving linkages between them and with others through the coalitions of champions will form a solid foundation for the sustainability of the strategy. Engagement with sub-regional and regional processes – NEPAD, ECOWAS, CADAPP – will further sustain the momentum for mainstreaming the ISA.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMME

69. Following the approval of the strategy by key stakeholders and RIUP management, an initial 6 month plan (containing preliminary activities) could be finalised with identified platforms and ARCN¹⁹. This plan could form the basis of a MoU' to be signed, by the end of March 2008, with the relevant Nigeria organisations. An early signing of a MoU would demonstrate RIUP's commitment to engage in Nigeria and will facilitate the development of a more detailed implementation plan and budget. An in-country team could then be recruited, the programme launched and the process for developing a detailed Implementation Plan with budget initiated in close collaboration with Nigerian stakeholders such as ARCN. Once an in-country team is recruited, a number of preliminary activities will be agreed and contained in the MoUs to be signed²⁰.
70. The facilitation of innovation platforms in the priority commodity areas is expected to take an evolutionary path guided by best practice from relevant international experiences and Nigeria's innovation context. The success or failure of the platforms will depend to a large extent on whether there are clear and strong private sector drivers (supported by appropriate champions) within each platform and the timeliness and appropriateness of relevant expertise available to the platforms.
71. Starting from May 2008, and over an initial period of about 6-months, the process²¹ could take the following path:
- Facilitate and negotiate the formation of three commodity platforms described above in which potential partners are linked together by a Memorandum of Understanding to work together to achieve the objectives of the platform and those of RIUP-N. Within each platform, there is expected to be a facilitator chosen by members of the platform and answerable to them. That facilitator shall be the main link between the platform and the RIUP-N programme.
 - Assist the potential partners of each commodity platform to develop a fully costed proposal for the operationalisation of three commodity platforms. This document – the Platform Implementation Proposal – will form a basis for RIUP-N resource support.
72. Within the period indicated above, a Platform Development Team (PDT)²² - comprising a Team leader (social scientist), Innovation system specialist and commodity specialist will be identified and utilised (on short term demand driven draw-down contracts) to support the development of the platforms. The PDT's role in facilitating the process of developing an effective commodity platform will be to act as a "marriage broker" and "marriage counsellor". An effective platform, one that responds to the priorities of all members of the network, is more likely to emerge if there are neutral arbiters with no vested interests or direct involvement in actual implementation and management of the platform.

¹⁹ See Annex 5 - the strategy consultations with champions generated a range of possible activities.

²⁰ Some preliminary activities contained in the draft strategy for consultation with Nigerian stakeholders, combined with those identified during the strategy consultations with the champions cluster could be prioritised into a 6 month workplan.

²¹ See the input of the innovation systems specialist for further guidance on the process and future trajectory of the ISA in Nigeria as well as the features and characteristics of a successful innovation platform.

²² Members of the team should not be drawn from the membership of the platform or face possible conflicts of interest.

73. The stakeholders for each platform will reflect the basic principles of the ISA. Some stakeholders have already been identified as part of the consultation process leading up to this strategy²³. The key justification for the platform will be the realisation in each platform that the ISA represents an important mechanism for removing blockages to their realisation of optimal benefits from the activities they are engaged in. RIUP-N added value will lie in the programmes ability to nurture and support the evolution of these platforms as well as its ability to bring international best practice and experiences to bear on the platform development process. In seeking to add value to the commodity platforms, the RIUP-N programme will emphasise its commitment to poverty reduction, gender equity and environmental sustainability.

²³ See the input of the specialists on the cassava processing, cowpea/soybean commodity systems and aquaculture as well as the Strategy Development – Consultation with the Champions Cluster workshop notes.