

Transforming Education in Niger State (TENS II) Programme

OVERARCHING AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

ON THE WAY FORWARD IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Niger State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria



MRL[®]
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MRL[®] Public Sector Consultants
for the Niger State Ministry of Basic and
Secondary Education





His Excellency, Mohammed Umaru Bago

**Executive Governor of Niger State
Federal Republic of Nigeria**



His Excellency, Comrade Yakubu Garba

**Deputy Governor of Niger State
Federal Republic of Nigeria**

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1. INTRODUCTION

MRL[®] Public Sector Consultants Ltd (MRL) has been engaged by Niger State Government to drive the processes for the attainment of a Transformed Education System with particular emphasis on Basic and Secondary Education in the State.

Between June 2024 through to August 2024, MRL[®] conducted series of studies, reviews and development of strategy documents to explore various aspect of the assignment known as Transforming Education in Niger State(TENS II) Programme.

This process involved both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods including a comprehensive Education Census of the twenty-five (25) Local Government Areas (LGAs), Focus Group Discussions, semi- structured face-to-face and telephone interviews and participants observation by the consultants.

The aim of the approaches adopted was to identify the issues and challenges in the education sector, obtain reliable data and proffer solutions that would help transform education under the leadership of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Niger State, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mohammed Umaru Bago.

The insights gathered through this process informed the development of evidence-based recommendations aimed at addressing critical challenges and advancing a comprehensive strategy for transforming education in Niger State, which are identified in this report.



2. OVERARCHING CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

After carrying out data generation and undertaking of other critical processes required for the transformation of Education, the following urgent recommendations made by the TENS II Programme needs to be embarked upon and implemented immediately to arrest further systemic deterioration.

- 1 A '**State of Emergency**' should be declared immediately in the education sector, with all funds allocated to be put under special projects to be managed by a special education task force.
- 2 His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Niger State, Mohammed Umaru Bago, as declared, should make education one of the key priorities for 2025 backed by a minimum of thirty per cent (30%) annual budget funding over the next three years, i.e, 2025 - 2027.
- 3 All duplicate schools identified at ECCDE, primary and Secondary levels should be removed from the system.
- 4 A comprehensive database capturing all academic and non-academic teachers in the State, to include the Ministry of Basic & Secondary Education (MoB&SE), Niger State Universal Basic Education Board (NSUBEB) Local Government Secretariats and Parent Teachers Associations (PTA's) to be developed.
- 5 The Niger State Government should disseminate its education transformation TENS II reports, plan of actions and proposed initiatives amongst international organisations, global institutions, donor agencies, development partners, trilateral, bilateral and other classes of stakeholders to galvanise resources and active engagement to support the educational transformation of the State.
- 6 There should be properly constituted governance structures using appropriate programme and project management methodologies to develop, coordinate, manage and link the various initiatives and projects currently being implemented or to be implemented with a view to align them with the Transforming Education in Niger State Programme (TENS II) as part of the New Niger agenda.





3. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations specific to different aspects of the Education System provisions have been made in the various reports, reviews and strategic documents developed by the TENS II Programme. The following are key in achieving the transformation of the pre-tertiary education in the State.



Physical Infrastructure and Facilities

3.1 Recommendations on Physical Infrastructure and Facilities

- 7 The infrastructure of schools are in urgent need of investment and upgrading to fit Niger State for education in the twenty-first century. The lack of infrastructure affects learning, teaching, teacher status, and the security of children, young people, and their teachers.
- 8 The Niger State Government to immediately embark on an urgent renovation programme for all schools based on the outcome of the TENS II Infrastructure Survey to identify the relevant schools.
- 9 A comprehensive, evidence-based school-building programme to commence concurrently using the TENS II Infrastructure Survey outcomes to determine and select communities where new schools should be sited and built.
- 10 MRL[®] to work closely with the Adolescent Girls Initiative for Learning and Empowerment (AGILE) and use the results of the TENS II Census to optimise and refine the categorisation of the five hundred and thirty-four (534) schools to be renovated based on MRL[®]'s fieldwork.
- 11 MRL[®] to work closely with the Ministry for Basic and Secondary Education (MoB&SE) and the Niger State Universal Basic Education Board (NSUBEB) to optimise and refine the selection relating to the renovation of primary schools across the State.
- 12 The launch of a *“quick win Infrastructure Initiative”* that focuses on stabilising critical facilities that provide basic amenities such as, desks, chairs, blackboards, bore-holes or pipe borne water, toilets and other sanitation facilities to be commenced.
- 13 The establishment of public-private partnerships (PPPs) and community-based participatory models to fund and build new state-of-the-art schools under a *“Model School Initiative”* that focuses on scalable, cost-effective designs with ICT integration.





**Teacher Recruitment,
Training and Deployment**

3.2 Recommendations on Teacher Recruitment, Training and Deployment

- 14 The supply, retention, quality and monitoring of teachers are urgent issues in Niger State education. It is recommended that a realistic long-term vision and strategy is developed.
- 15 Support from external sources to be identified to assist with initial teacher training, continuing professional development, accreditation and registration as well as, monitoring and evaluation be commenced.
- 16 The recruitment of new teachers to commence before the 2025/26 new academic year to enable new staff to hold induction and resume at the start of the new school year. This initiative is to start from March, 2025 based on gaps identified from the TENS II Education Census.
- 17 Posting of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to schools and colleges to be distributed based on need and specialisation. Therefore, a dedicated unit to be established within the Niger State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoB&SE) with the responsibility for the requests of, posting, and welfare of NYSC staff within Niger State.
- 18 MoB&SE to work closely with the State NYSC secretariat to ensure the effective deployment and operation of NYSC activities within the school system.
- 19 The data from the TENS II Programme to identify the training needs of teachers at the Niger State Professional Development Teachers Institute (NTDPDI) to meet the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Continuous Professional Development (CPD) annual requirements for teachers on the professional trajectory.
- 20 From January 2025, all professional training of teachers should be conducted at the Niger State Teacher Professional Development Institute (NSTPDI) to optimise the facility, implement the TCRN policy, and improve and sustain the overall quality of teachers. In situations where the specialist training courses or the required skills are not available, the institute can partner with other professional organisation to provide the service.
- 21 The Niger State Government to introduce a *"Fast-track Recruitment Scheme"* for qualified teachers and a continuous professional development framework involving in-service training, mentorship, and coaching programmes tailored to enhance subject matter expertise and pedagogical skills.
- 22 A realistic and fundable *"Teachers Welfare Scheme"* to incentivise teachers especially those posted to hard-to-reach areas or teaching special subject areas like Sciences, Vocational and Technical Education should be established.
- 23 The introduction of local and international exchange programmes to foster cross-knowledge teaching practice.
- 24 For research, innovation in teaching methods, and leadership training, the centre of excellence in teacher education should be established through the Niger State Teachers Professional Development Institute, which is to serve as the States professional training hub.
- 25 A rapid curriculum review for updates should be undertaken to accommodate technical skills, numeracy, digital literacy, entrepreneurship, and life skills.



Sustainable Funding



3.3 Recommendations: Sustainable Funding

- 26 A transparent school funding portal should be established to enable the monitoring of budget allocations and expenditures in real time. This would enable accountability.
- 27 An “Education Investment Fund” should be established to leverage outcome-based funds, education bonds, corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions, and donor funding.
- 28 A decentralised “*Education Financing Hub*” should be introduced at the school and community levels to manage finances and diversify and stabilise funding streams.
- 29 Given the scale of development in the sector and the need to ensure proper implementation and accountability, proper project management methodologies and governance structures should be introduced across initiatives.
- 30 Adequate financial provision to be made for the collection of the Annual School Census data, by both the Ministry for Basic and Secondary Education (MoB&SE) and Niger State Universal Basic Education Board (NSUBEB).



**Reliable Educational
Database**

3.4 Recommendations for a Reliable Educational Database

- 31 The rate and nature of student enrolment and participation in schooling is a key issue. There is a need to have accurate data to measure rates of participation and drop out, as well as the number of children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), including issues of entitlement and human rights. This is central to meeting Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals – *‘Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all’*.
- 32 The Education Census is to be conducted annually, and the government should systematically use education data to support education planning. This should include working with other Ministries, Departments & Agencies (MDA) such as, Tertiary, State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), etc. to coordinate efforts to improve and build upon the TENS II Education Census data.
- 33 MRL® to work in conjunction with USAID to generate additional Education data for operational purposes as required by the Federal Ministry of Education by December 2024 / January 2025.
- 34 Student participation and outcomes are key factors in determining the quality and impact of teaching. Therefore, there is the need to have accurate data to measure both the rates of participation and teaching – learning outcomes.
- 35 An urgent baseline personnel audit of all teaching and non-teaching staff to be undertaken across the State at the basic and secondary school levels. This is to include those teachers under the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, the Niger State Universal Basic Education Board, Local Government Areas (LGAs), and Parent Teachers Association staff.
- 36 The introduction of annual monitoring of teacher turnover and retirement to enable consistent and forward planning for budgetary purposes to be initiated from January 2025.
- 37 The introduction of bi-annual monitoring of teacher ratios across the State to commence from January 2025.
- 38 The digitisation of processes and procedures and applicable services should be introduced to help inform decision-making and policy formulation.



Out-of-School Children



3.5 Recommendations on Out-of-School Children.

- 39 To achieve the education transformation in the State, a specific percentage of the education budget should be allocated and focused on out-of-school children.
- 40 Increased funding for investment in complementary/alternative education with a focus on Accelerated Education Programmes (AEP) or alternative initiatives.
- 41 Niger State Government to institutionalise a complementary/alternative system for reaching out-of-school children in the State.
- 42 A household survey (sample survey) in the 2nd quarter of 2025 to be conducted to determine and establish the realistic number of out-of-school children in the State.
- 43 A road map and action plan to be developed to tackle out-of-school children.
- 44 The State, working jointly with the Federal Ministry on out-of-school children, to introduce a complementary /alternative /accelerated education policy.



**Safe School
and Security**



3.6 Recommendations on Safe School and Security.

- 45 The introduction or further development of the 'Safe Schools Initiative' to ensure the safeguarding of students, teachers and staff in the learning environment.
- 46 MRL[®] to work with MOB&SE, SUBEB, and Ministry of Homeland Security to access and survey the remaining schools in security-prone areas. Exercise to be completed before the end of 2024 as part of the teacher's digitisation exercise (Teachers Digitisation Project).
- 47 Additional funding to be provided by the Niger State Government to conduct the exercise.
- 48 All schools to be fenced to provide additional security, minimise banditry, reduce encroachment, land grab and improper use of classrooms for activities such as poultry farming.
- 49 The provision of security lighting in schools for additional safety.
- 50 The deployment of adequate security personal to all schools with protective uniforms and associated accessories.

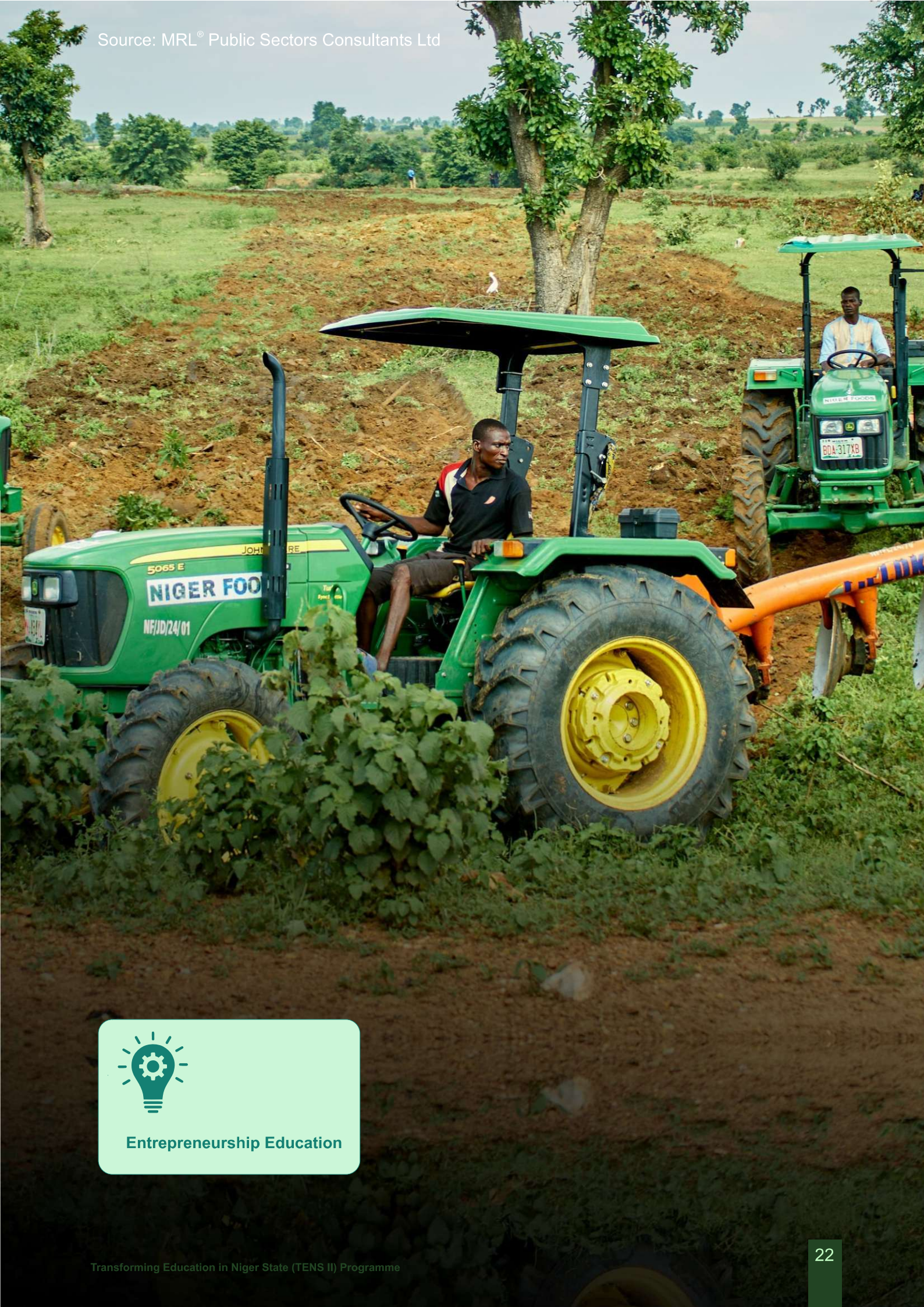


Nomadic Education



3.7 Recommendations on Nomadic Education

- 51 The infrastructure in nomadic schools should be improved, especially in areas with inadequate or no classroom structures. Priority should be given to constructing durable and permanent classrooms, particularly in regions with no structures, to provide a more conducive learning environment.
- 52 Niger State Government should consider building six mega-nomadic schools, two to be cited in each of the Geo-political zones taking into account the routes often used by these communities. The schools should be designed around their way of life and in close proximity to or within their communities to protect their culture and way of life.
- 53 Research should be undertaken on diversified and long-term financial flows, such as partnerships with the private sector or local commerce, to reduce dependency on government funding and mitigate risks associated with fluctuating financial resources. This is especially true in LGAs such as Bida, Lavun, and Mokwa, where financial situations are particularly challenging.
- 54 The introduction of new targeted programmes to help reduce schools' operating expenses by providing subsidies for utilities or materials would alleviate the financial burden.
- 55 Invest in specialised training programmes for teachers in nomadic education.
- 56 Community Engagement and fundraising should be promoted to help bridge funding gaps, particularly in areas with limited financial resources.
- 57 Stronger partnerships between schools and nomadic communities should be encouraged to ensure educational programmes are culturally relevant and widely accepted while providing much-needed financial support.



Entrepreneurship Education

3.8 Recommendations on Entrepreneurship Education

- 58** The development and training of an entrepreneur's mindset and life skills must be embedded in all subjects of the school curriculum and should be implemented appropriately from early years of education straight through to tertiary education.
- 59** Given the current state of the education system in Niger State, the government should strongly encourage the participation of the private sector and relevant NGOs to deliver the entrepreneurship education programme, particularly in the early stages.
- 60** Policymakers and officials responsible for developing education strategies need to strongly emphasise the development of creativity and problem-solving skills at all levels of education. Inquisitive minds, critical thinking, and growth mindsets need to be encouraged and valued if the education strategy is to achieve the goals of lowering unemployment and generating wealth.
- 61** Alternative sources of resources, such as the private sector and appropriate NGO programmes, should be harnessed to support the delivery of this programme. Resource mobilisation to support entrepreneurship education would also optimise attracting funding from development partners, donor agencies, foundations and individual contributions.
- 62** Government should scale up the Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) farms at the annual rate of 15 schools per Local Government Area commencing in 2025. The number of schools should be reviewed periodically to fast track the creation of critical mass within a reasonable period of time to align with agricultural potentials of the State in Niger Foods.
- 63** The partnership with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) should be strengthened to increase the number of SEA-Hub Centres across the State in order to provide pupils and students with variable opportunities to acquire entrepreneurship knowledge and build up their competencies in establishing and managing small scale businesses.



**Stakeholder Management
and Community Engagement**



3.9 Recommendations on Stakeholder Management and Community Engagement

- 64 To bolster the educational reforms, there should be an aggressive community engagement campaign that builds a coalition with religious and traditional leaders to advocate for school enrolment and equal education opportunities for both boys and girls.
- 65 The education stakeholder's database is to be reviewed and updated quarterly in line with the dynamics of the transformation and the governance arrangement.
- 66 Quarterly roundtable stakeholder meetings to be led the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education and supported by SUBEB and other relevant MDAs as may be required from time to time.
- 67 A robust communication strategy and action for all stakeholders to be developed by the first quarter of 2025.





The following recommendations are critical to moving the education transformation agenda forward under the '**New Niger**' agenda as follows: -

3.10 Recommendations for moving the Transformation Agenda Forward

- 68 A governance structure with associated processes and procedures should be developed and adhered to in order to implement the recommendations under TENS II as specified for the next stage of the TENS II Programme, known as TENS II (Phase II).
- 69 All the recommendations postulated under TENS II are to be adopted and integrated into the Niger State Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education Medium Term Education Sector Strategy (MTSS).
- 70 All recommendations specified in this document are to be implemented in accordance with the TENS II (Phase II) timeline, commencing 2nd January 2025 and ending 31st December 2027.

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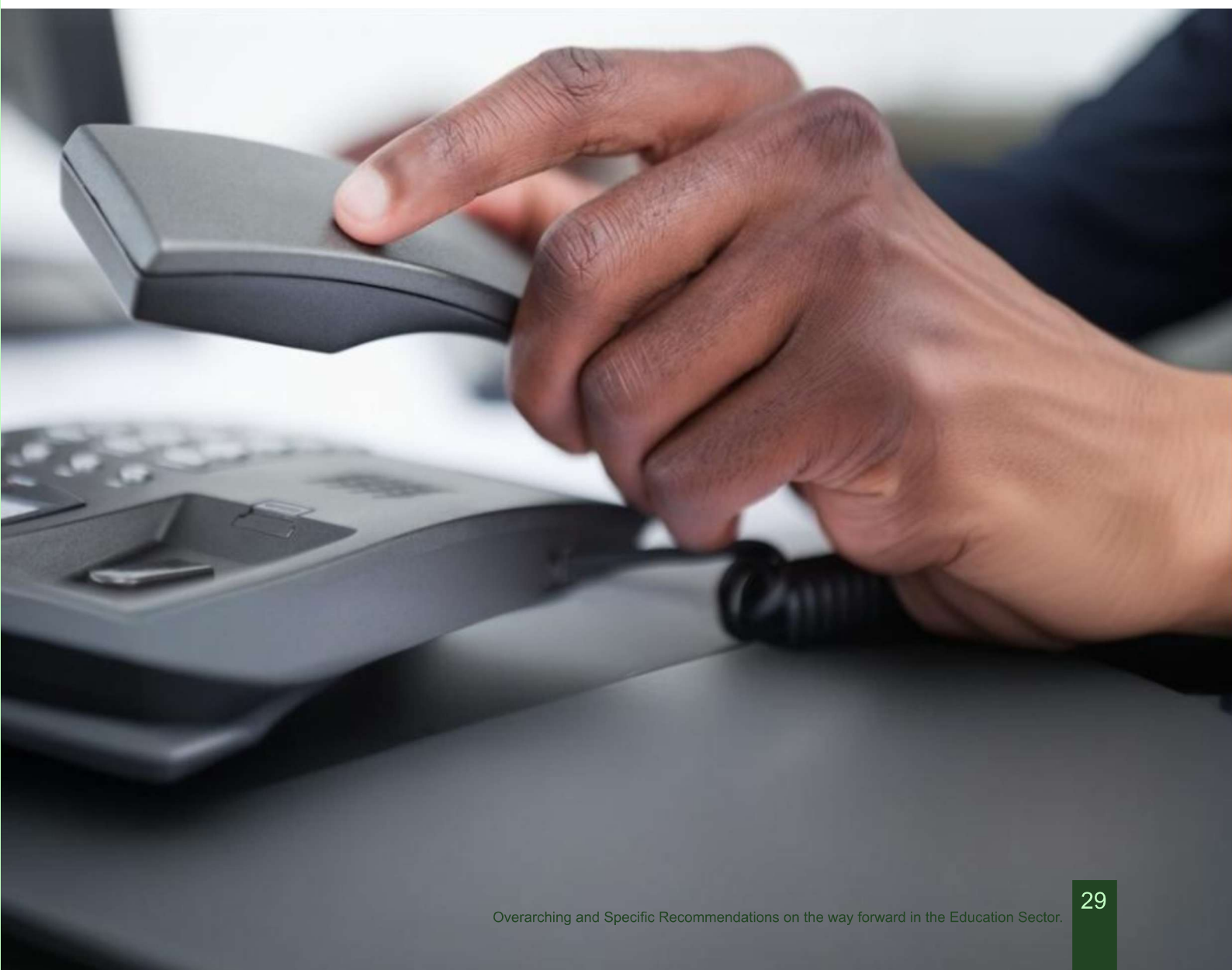
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