



EKITI STATE EXPORT STRATEGY AND GUIDELINES

UNLOCKING GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES

29th December, 2023

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EKITI STATE COMMITTEE ON EXPORT PROMOTION

Ekiti State Export Strategy and Guidelines was prepared by the State Committee on Export Promotion (SCEP). The Committee is made up of the underlisted Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and the private sectors:

1. Ministry of Trade Industry, Investment and Cooperatives (Anchor Ministry)
2. Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
3. Ministry of Information
5. Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.
8. Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency (SMEDAN) – Ekiti State office
9. National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) - Ekiti State office
10. All Farmers Association of Nigeria (AFAN) - Ekiti State Chapter
11. Standard Organization of Nigeria (SON) - Ekiti State office
12. Nigerian Association of Small Scale Industrialists (NASSI) – Ekiti State Chapter
13. Ekiti State Chambers of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (EKCIMMA)
16. Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) - Ekiti State Office
17. Nigerian Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (NASME) - Ekiti State Chapter
18. Export focused Banks operating in Ekiti (Fidelity Bank Plc., Wema Bank Pls, Premium Trust Bank, Sterling Bank Plc, and Access Bank Plc. Etc.)

The Committee also consulted with the following agency and private sectors stakeholders:

1. Nigeria Customs Services (NCS)
2. Nigerian Shippers Council (NSC)
3. Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)
4. Association of Nigeria Exporters (ANE)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In an ambitious pursuit of economic prosperity and international prominence, Ekiti State is charting a visionary course through the development of a robust Export Strategy. This strategic initiative is meticulously designed to unlock the vast potential inherent in the state, propelling it onto the global economic stage. Titled "Unlocking Global Opportunities: Ekiti State's Ambitious Export Strategy," this comprehensive blueprint is poised to become a catalyst for economic growth, job creation, and heightened competitiveness.

Key Findings:

The Export Strategy for Ekiti State is underpinned by a set of strategic objectives that collectively form the nucleus of its developmental framework. Foremost among these objectives is the diversification of the state's trade portfolio by reducing dependence on Federal Monthly allocations, the strategy aims to cultivate a resilient and dynamic economy capable of withstanding global/national economic shifts. Creating this export strategy document involves various elements and considerations and some of key findings includes; **Market Analysis** - Detailed analysis of target markets, including size, growth potential, competition, regulatory environment, cultural considerations, and market trends. Identify which markets offer the best opportunities for our products. **Product/Service Adaptation:** Evaluates how our product fits into the target market. Determine if any modifications or adaptations are necessary to meet local regulations, cultural preferences, or market demands. **Competitive Analysis:** Understands the competitive landscape in the target markets. Analyzed local competitors, their strengths, weaknesses, and market positioning. Identifying our unique selling proposition (USP) and how it stands out. **Distribution Channels:** Determined the most effective distribution channels for reaching customers in the target markets. This could involve partnerships, distributors, agents, or e-commerce platforms. **Regulatory and Legal Considerations:** Understood the legal and regulatory requirements for exporting to specific countries or regions. Address issues related to tariffs, customs, certifications, and compliance. **Financial Projections and Budgeting:** Outlined financial projections, including revenue forecasts, expenses, investment required, pricing strategies, and the expected return on investment (ROI). **Logistics and Supply Chain Management:** Planning for efficient logistics and supply chain operations to ensure timely delivery, quality control, and customer satisfaction. **Compliance with International Standards:** Ensuring adherence to international standards, certifications, and quality control measures to meet the expectations of global customers. **Training and Support:** Providing necessary training and support to our team and partners involved in the export process. This could include cultural training, language support, and product/service knowledge. **Monitoring and**

Evaluation: Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of the export strategy. Regularly monitoring progress, analyze results, and make necessary adjustments to improve performance.

Recommendations:

Ekiti State's export strategy is strategically centered on key sectors with immense potential for growth and global competitiveness. Agriculture, particularly the cultivation of high-quality crops and agro-processed goods, stands as a foundational pillar. The state's fertile land is poised to enhance food security and position Ekiti as a reliable international supplier. Simultaneously, the focus extends to the technology and innovation sector, where Ekiti aims to carve a niche in the global digital economy by fostering an ecosystem conducive to technological advancement. Within the Nano, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (NMSME), specific emphasis is placed on **Honey, African Black Soap, Palm Oil, Cocoa, Iru (Locust beans), Garri, Plantain Flour and Ekiti Rice Productions**. Leveraging the state's natural advantages, **Honey** production capitalizes on the favorable climate and diverse flora; **African Black Soap** production taps into local expertise, while **Palm Oil** production utilizes Ekiti's abundant resources. **Garri** is a derivative of Cassava, Cassava is widely grown in Ekiti and Ekiti is a leading producer of cassava in Nigeria, with a total output of 2 million MT per year, Ekiti is leveraging on this abundance. **Plantain Flour** take advantage of Ekiti being the largest producer of Banana and plantain in Nigeria according to NEPC. The Nigerian Bureau of statistics categorized Ekiti State as the 4th largest producer of **Cocoa** in Nigeria with about 36,400 Metric tonnes and cultivation area of about 98,015 hectares of land, building on this, the revitalization of Cocoa production aligns with global demand for high-quality of Cocoa. **Ekiti Rice** is among the brands of Nigerian rice locally produced in agricultural towns of Ekiti State; Ijero, Esure, Emure, Ise-Orun, Erijiyan, Efon and other towns in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria. With government support for local rice production, ban on importation and recent health awareness among Nigerians, Nigerian people have started turning to locally produced rice which is usually unpolished. Iru Ekiti stands one of the best in Nigeria, while Ekiti State does not grow the *Parkia bigloposa* from which the locust bean is produced, the State however have a competitive advantage in the production of dirt-free, high quality processed Iru for the whole nation. Going by these hence the following recommendations; **Market Research:** Identifying potential target markets by conducting thorough market research. Consider factors such as market size, growth trends, competition, cultural nuances, and legal/regulatory requirements. **Product Adaptation:** Tailoring the products to meet the specific needs and preferences of the target market. This might involve adjustments in packaging, branding, features, or pricing to better suit the international market. **Legal and Regulatory Compliance:**

Understanding the trade regulations, tariffs, and compliance requirements of the target country or region. Ensuring our products meets all necessary standards and certifications. **Distribution Channels:** Determining the most effective distribution channels for reaching our target customers. This might involve partnerships with local distributors, agents, or establishing our own presence (e.g., setting up offices or partnerships). **Pricing Strategy:** Developing a pricing strategy that considers local market conditions, competition, tariffs, taxes, and other costs associated with exporting. **Logistics and Supply Chain Management:** Planning for efficient logistics and supply chain management to ensure timely delivery and minimize costs. Consider transportation, warehousing, inventory management, and customs clearance. **Build Relationships:** Cultivating relationships with local partners, distributors, customers, and relevant industry networks. Networking and partnerships can significantly impact success in a new market. **Seek Expert Advice:** Considering seeking advice from export consultants, industry associations, or government agencies that specialize in international trade. Their expertise can be invaluable in navigating the complexities of exporting.

Expected Outcomes

Recognizing the interconnected nature of the global economy, Ekiti State's Export Strategy places a strong emphasis on forging strategic partnerships and enhancing market access. Collaborations with international entities, both governmental and private, will facilitate technology transfer, skill exchange, and the opening of new avenues for export. At the execution of this document, the following are the expected outcomes; **Increased Market Presence:** Expansion into new international markets can lead to increased visibility and presence for our products. **Revenue Growth:** Accessing new markets can result in increased sales and revenue streams for the identified products and by extension, the State economy. **Enhanced Profitability:** Entering new markets strategically and effectively can lead to improved profitability due to increased sales and economies of scale. **Brand Recognition:** Successful international expansion can boost brand recognition and credibility globally, strengthening the brand's position. **Competitive Advantage:** Penetrating new markets ahead of competitors or offering unique value propositions can provide a competitive edge in the global marketplace. **Partnership and Collaboration Opportunities:** Export strategies often involve forming partnerships or collaborations with local distributors, manufacturers, or businesses in the target market, fostering growth opportunities. **Enhanced Knowledge and Skills:** Managing international operations requires a unique set of skills and knowledge. Developing an export strategy will improve the State's expertise in international trade, compliance, logistics, and cultural

understanding. Overall, the expected outcomes aligned with the state Export Business's objectives and will contribute to its growth, profitability, and sustainability in the global market landscape.

Regular evaluation and adjustments to these strategies are essential to ensure it remains relevant and effective in achieving desired outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Ekiti State, nestled in the southwestern region of Nigeria, is embarking on a transformative journey towards economic prosperity and global recognition through the implementation of a visionary Export Strategy. This comprehensive blueprint, aptly titled "**Unlocking Global Opportunities,**" represents a meticulous effort to position Ekiti State on the world economic stage by capitalizing on its inherent potential. This strategic initiative serves as a catalyst for economic growth, job creation, and heightened competitiveness, aiming to reshape the state's economic landscape.

Strategic Objectives: Fostering Resilience and Diversification



At the heart of Ekiti State's Export Strategy lies strategic objectives that collectively form the nucleus of its developmental framework. Foremost among these objectives is the diversification of the state's export portfolio, a pivotal move aimed at reducing dependence on Federal Monthly allocations and stimulating the local economy for shared prosperity through a market-led approach. By cultivating a resilient and dynamic economy capable of withstanding global and national economic shifts, Ekiti State aspires to achieve sustained economic growth.

The strategy places a significant emphasis on leveraging the state's unique strengths and resources. The State's rich agricultural heritage, abundant mineral deposits, highly educated population, and skilled workforce provide a solid foundation for the cultivation of high-value exportable goods and services. The integration of innovative technologies and sustainable practices further amplifies the state's competitive edge in the global market, ensuring long-term viability and relevance.

The primary goals of this Export Strategy are multi-faceted and they include:

i. Diversification of Exports: Ekiti State acknowledges the imperative of expanding its export portfolio beyond its current absence in the global market. The strategic objective is to invigorate and diversify its export base by cultivating a range of high-value products in the agricultural sector. This proactive approach is designed to mitigate dependency on a limited set of products. Specifically, the state is poised to stimulate the export of commodities such as Honey, Cocoa, Palm Oil, African black soap, garri, plantain flour, Iru (Locust Beans) and Ekiti Rice thereby establishing a robust and diversified presence in the international trade landscape.

ii. Capacity Building: Capacity building stands as a fundamental pillar of the strategy, emphasizing the upliftment of local businesses in Ekiti State. Presently, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the state operate in isolated silos, lacking the robust capacity necessary to produce for international markets. In response, Ekiti State endeavors to implement targeted initiatives geared towards strengthening the capabilities of these entrepreneurs. This involves equipping them with essential skills, knowledge, and resources particularly in product standardization, packaging, branding, export certification requirements and procedures and fostering an environment where they can meet international standards and adapt to evolving market demands

iii. Infrastructure Development: A pivotal element in ensuring the success of our export-oriented strategy lies in robust infrastructure development. Ekiti State is unwavering in its dedication to completing the construction and activation of the Ekiti State Cargo airport, a key initiative aimed at facilitating seamless export operations. Furthermore, the state is making significant investments in the construction of rural access roads, establishing agro processing hubs in each senatorial district, creating an industrial park in the state capital for shared services, and expanding the independent power project to critical installations. These endeavors are strategically aligned to reduce operational costs, enhance efficiency, and provide vital support to local industries for export.

iv. Market Research and Intelligence: Recognizing the critical importance of staying abreast of global market dynamics, Ekiti State is strategically investing in the establishment of a robust system for market research and intelligence. This proactive approach enables the identification of lucrative

export markets, insightful analysis of consumer trends, and the discovery of strategic opportunities. By committing resources to market research and intelligence, the state aims to position itself strategically and adapt effectively to the rapidly changing landscape of the global market.

Sectoral Focus: Nurturing Growth in Key Sectors

Ekiti State's Export Strategy strategically centers on key sectors with immense potential for growth and global competitiveness. Agriculture emerges as a foundational pillar, with a focus on the cultivation of high-quality crops and agro-processed goods. The state's fertile land is poised to enhance food security and position Ekiti as a reliable international supplier. Simultaneously, the strategy extends its focus to the technology and innovation sector, aiming to carve a niche in the global digital economy by fostering an ecosystem conducive to technological advancement.

Within the Nano, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (NMSME), specific emphasis is placed on **Honey, African Black Soap, Palm Oil, Cocoa, Iru (Locust beans), Garri, Plantain Flour and Ekiti Rice Productions**. Leveraging the state's natural advantages, **Honey** production capitalizes on the favorable climate and diverse flora; **African Black Soap** production taps into local expertise, while **Palm Oil** production utilizes Ekiti's abundant resources. **Garri** is a derivative of Cassava, Cassava is widely grown in Ekiti and Ekiti is a leading producer of cassava in Nigeria, with a total output of 2 million MT per year, Ekiti is leveraging on this abundance. **Plantain Flour** take advantage of Ekiti being the largest producer of Banana and plantain in Nigeria according to NEPC. The Nigerian Bureau of statistics categorized Ekiti State as the 4th largest producer of **Cocoa** in Nigeria with about 36,400 Metric tonnes and cultivation area of about 98,015 hectares of land, building on this, the revitalization of Cocoa production aligns with global demand for high-quality of Cocoa. **Ekiti Rice** is among the brands of Nigerian rice locally produced in agricultural towns of Ekiti State; Ijero, Esure, Emure, Ise-Orun, Erijjyan, Efon and other towns in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria. With government support for local rice production, ban on importation and recent health awareness among Nigerians, Nigerian people have started turning to locally produced rice which is usually unpolished. Iru Ekiti stands one of the best in Nigeria, while Ekiti State does not grow the *Parkia bigloposa* from which the locust bean is produced, the State however have a competitive advantage in the production of dirt-free, high quality processed Iru for the whole nation. Going by these hence the following recommendations;

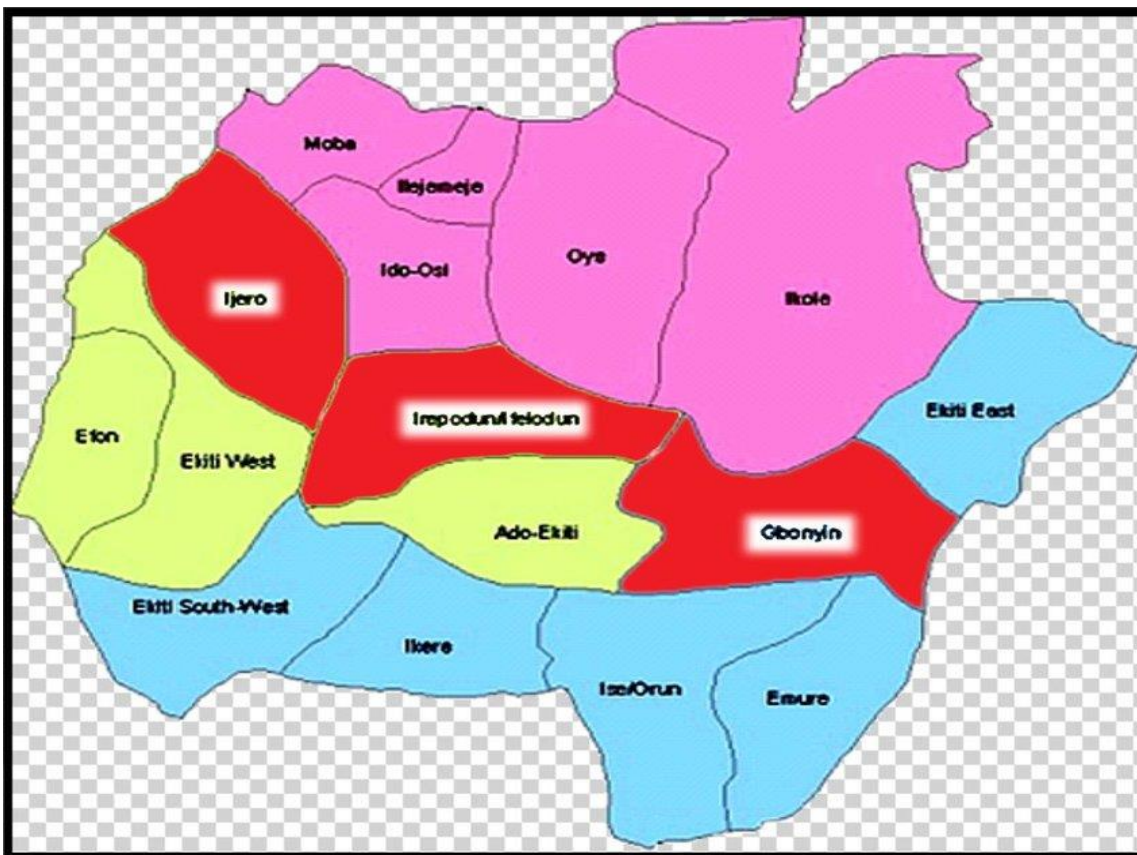
Global Partnerships and Market Access: Navigating the International Arena

Recognizing the interconnected nature of the global economy, Ekiti State's Export Strategy places a strong emphasis on forging strategic partnerships and enhancing market access. Collaborations with

international entities, both governmental and private, will facilitate technology transfer, skill exchange, and the opening of new avenues for export. This global perspective positions Ekiti State as an active participant in the international marketplace, fostering a climate of innovation and collaboration.

Furthermore, the strategy incorporates measures to streamline trade processes, reduce bureaucratic impediments, and enhance the ease of doing business. This commitment to efficiency and transparency not only attracts foreign investors but also positions Ekiti State as a reliable and competitive player in the global economic landscape. As Ekiti State charts its course towards economic prosperity, the "Unlocking Global Opportunities" Export Strategy stands as a testament to its commitment to a sustainable and globally relevant future.

SOCIOECONOMIC AND POLITICAL OVERVIEW OF EKITI STATE



Situated in southwestern Nigeria, Ekiti state was created on October 1, 1996; with Ado-Ekiti as the capital of the state. The name Ekiti is “Okiti” which means hills. It is also believed the ancestors of Ekitis migrated from Ile-Ife and it’s one of the largest ethnic groups in Yoruba Land. Ekiti State’s economy is predominantly driven by activities in the crop production (c.35%) and trading (c.22%)

subsectors. Services and Agriculture jointly account for c.86% of Ekiti's economy. Between 2013 and 2017, the service sector experienced a growth 12.78% while agriculture sector grew at roughly 6.43%. Trading is the single largest component in services as it accounts for c.48% of the services sector. The Economy is relatively diversified with substantial contributions from trade, ICT and manufacturing. The State enjoys tropical climate with two distinct seasons. These are the rainy season (April–October) and the dry season (November–March). Ekiti's vegetation straddles savannah and rainforest (*Tropical forest exists in the south, while savannah occupies the northern peripheries*). The soil type is predominantly made up of loamy-clay soil. Ekiti State is comprised of 16 local government areas, 3 major hubs and 6 sub hubs for agricultural products and three arms of government; the executive, the judiciary and the legislature.

Home to a population of 3.5 million people and estimated GDP of USD 2.8 Billion, the government in recent times has embarked on initiatives to diversify the economy, extending beyond agriculture to sectors such as mining, tourism, and education. Simultaneously, strategic infrastructure development endeavors have been undertaken to bolster overall economic growth. There are also ongoing efforts to improve the ease of doing business, provide incentives for investors, and create an entrepreneurial-friendly. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and limited access to funding persist, potentially impacting the pace of economic development

Capital	Ado-Ekiti	
Slogan	Land of Honour and Integrity	
Location	7°40'N 5°15'E (South West,	Nigeria)
GDP	US\$2.848 billion	
Land Mass	6,353 km ²	
Population	3,270,798	
Population Density	514/km ²	
HDI (2016)	0.561 (medium development)	
Culture	Agrarian, Dressing, Dancing, Festival, Religion and Food	
Climate	Dry Season: November - March Wet Season: April - October Average Temperature: 21 ⁰ C and 28 ⁰ C	

Border States

Kwara, Kogi, Ondo, Osun

The state has an arable land areas of about 5,568.Sq kilometers and is mainly an upland area; rising between about 250 metres and 1,650 metres above seas level. With a favorable climate, rich soil, and a growing population eager to contribute to the nation's food security, Ekiti State's agricultural sector holds immense promise, boasting a diverse range of agricultural activities, with crops such as Cocoa, rice, yams, cassava, and vegetables dominating the landscape. Although the state's agricultural sector has been primarily characterized by smallholder farmers, but there is a growing push towards modernizing and commercializing farming practices; particularly in recent years, the state has made significant strides in revitalizing its agricultural industry, not only to meet domestic demands but also to position itself as a potential exporter of agricultural product

SECTORAL ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF EXPORT POTENTIAL

As Ekiti State actively pursue economic growth and diversification through a comprehensive export strategy, a sectorial analysis, focusing on key products within the agricultural sector was conducted Part of the process was the facilitation of a stakeholder’s dialogue on 4th December 2023 with key

players in the targeted sector and product lines. The meeting aimed to unravel the intricacies of export market dynamics within these vital sectors. Through open dialogue, the stakeholders sought to identify challenges, pain points, and potential areas for government intervention, laying the groundwork for driving Ekiti State's exports market to new heights. Key pain points include insufficient information on export processes, a lack of technological know-how, fragmented production practices among SMEs, difficulties in obtaining international certification, and a lack of information about global market potentials. Through the stakeholders engagement State identified six key products which it has comparative advantage. The products are Cocoa, Palm Oil, African Black soap Bee Honey, Garri, Plantain Flour, Iru (Locust Bean) and *Ekiti Rice*

Cocoa Production



According to Nairametrics; with about 300,000 tons of Cocoa annually, Nigeria is the 4th largest producer of Cocoa in the world. In 2022, the Cocoa Farmers Association of Nigeria predicted Cocoa production in the country to hit 500,000 tons. The Nigerian Bureau of statistics categorized Ekiti State as the 4th largest producer of Cocoa in Nigeria with about 36,400 Metric tonnes and cultivation area of about 98,015 hectares of land.

Cocoa production in Ekiti State has a rich historical background deeply intertwined with the broader narrative of Nigeria's agricultural history. The state, like many others in the southwestern region, became a significant player in the global Cocoa trade during the colonial era due to favorable climatic conditions of the region, with its abundant rainfall and suitable soil, proved conducive to the cultivation of Cocoa plants. The cultivation of Cocoa quickly became a pivotal economic activity for the people of the State. It provided an alternative to subsistence farming and traditional cash crops, offering a lucrative source of income for farmers.

Key Issues/Challenges

1. Perennial Bush Burning: The recurring practice of bush burning significantly jeopardizes Ekiti State's Cocoa export potential, as Cocoa plants are highly vulnerable to heat and fire. The continuous loss of Cocoa crops due to this destructive method not only impacts the local economy but also hampers the state's ability to meet export demands. Implementing stringent regulations and community awareness programs can mitigate the adverse effects of bush burning on Cocoa production for export.

2. Lack of Access to Improved Seedlings: Ekiti State's Cocoa export potential is hindered by the low yields resulting from the use of outdated Cocoa varieties with poor resistance to drought. To boost export capacity, concerted efforts are needed to provide farmers with access to improved seedlings through collaborations with research institutions, extension services, and agricultural cooperatives.

3. Inadequate Access to Finance: Limited access to finance poses a significant barrier to the growth of Cocoa exports in Ekiti State. Establishing financial support mechanisms, such as low-interest loans and grants targeted at Cocoa farmers, cooperatives, and processors, is essential to encourage investment in the sector and enhance the state's export capabilities.

4. Knowledge Gap in Best Practices: The knowledge gap in modern agricultural practices negatively impacts Cocoa productivity and quality, directly affecting export potential. Closing this gap through farmer training programs, extension services, and the dissemination of research findings is imperative for ensuring that Ekiti State's Cocoa meets international standards and remains competitive in the global market.

5. Archaic Farm Practices and Use of Old Farm Implements: Outdated farming practices and the use of antiquated farm implements hinder efficiency and productivity, limiting Ekiti State's ability to meet the demand for quality Cocoa in the global market. Introducing modern farming techniques, machinery, and providing training on their utilization can improve overall Cocoa production, making Ekiti State's Cocoa more attractive for export.

6. No Structured Market: The absence of a structured market system impedes Ekiti State's capacity to add value to Cocoa products and limits the diversity of exports. Developing a structured market, establishing processing units, and fostering partnerships with chocolate industries are vital steps in creating value-added opportunities and increasing the state's income from Cocoa exports.

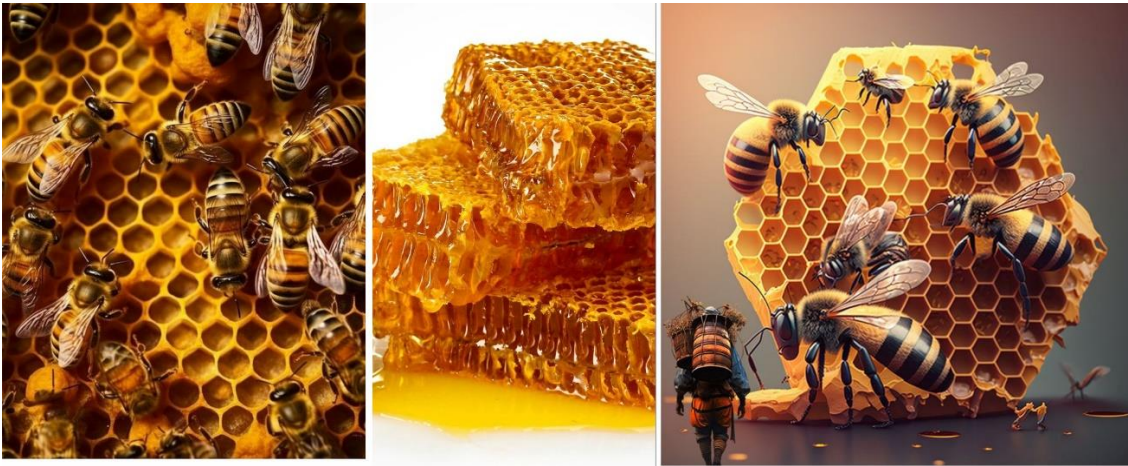
EXPORT PROMOTION STRATEGIES:

1. Regulation and Awareness Campaigns on Bush Burning: A stringent regulations against bush burning during critical Cocoa growth periods will be enforced. Buy-in of the communities will be secured to support awareness campaigns towards educating farmers about the detrimental impact of this practice on Cocoa crops.
2. Promoting Access to Improved Seedlings: Ekiti State will establish collaborations with research institutions such as IITA to develop and distribute improved Cocoa seedling, particularly to young people through **Ekiti Cocoa Transformation Initiative** that will be launched as soon as possible to promote young people's involvement in the Cocoa production. In the same vein, an Agriculture extension services to educate farmers on the advantages, such as increased yields and drought resistance, of adopting these improved varieties will be launched
3. Facilitating Access to Finance: Ekiti State will collaborate with financial institutions to create specialized financial products, including low-interest loans and grants, targeting Cocoa farmers, cooperatives, and processors, and conduct workshops to enhance financial literacy and promote investment in the Cocoa sector.
4. Closing the Knowledge Gap: Ekiti State will develop and implement comprehensive farmer training programs covering modern agricultural practices, pest management, and sustainable farming techniques, and strengthen extension services to provide continuous support and disseminate research findings to Cocoa farmers.
5. Promoting Modern Farming Techniques: Ekiti State will introduce subsidized programs to facilitate the adoption of modern farming techniques and machinery among Cocoa farmers,

organizing workshops and training sessions to educate them on the benefits of modern practices and collaborating with machinery providers to improve accessibility.

6. Establishing a Structured Market: Ekiti State will develop a transparent and structured market system for Cocoa, incorporating clear pricing mechanisms and quality standards, while establishing processing units locally to add value to Cocoa products and fostering partnerships with value adding industries and exporters to create a reliable market for Ekiti State's Cocoa.

Honey Production



In the dynamic landscape of the global Honey industry, valued at a substantial USD 8.58 billion in 2021 and projected to burgeon to USD 12.9 billion by 2030 with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 5.2%, Nigeria finds itself holding a modest stake, contributing less than 3% to this lucrative market. This shortfall is particularly poignant considering the significant market potential within the country, as highlighted by a December 2018 report from the Ministry of Agriculture, revealing that Nigeria expends over \$2 billion annually on Honey imports.

A closer look at this scenario unveils a promising prospect in Ekiti State, situated in the lush rainforest ecological zone of Nigeria. Despite Nigeria's limited presence on the global stage, Ekiti State emerges as a beacon of opportunity, ready to spearhead a transformative role in the burgeoning Honey market. Notably, the state currently produces an estimated 5000 liters of Honey monthly, showcasing its inherent potential as a key player in the industry.

Ekiti State's advantageous geographical location, nestled within the rich rainforest, creates an ideal environment for beekeeping. This, coupled with a proactive stance towards harnessing its beekeeping potential, positions Ekiti State to bridge the existing gap and bolster Nigeria's standing in the global

Honey sector. The state's commitment to fostering local production is not only economically prudent but also aligns with the national goal of reducing dependency on imported Honey.

As the world increasingly recognizes the significance of sustainable and locally sourced Honey, Ekiti State's dedication to beekeeping presents a compelling narrative. By capitalizing on its unique ecological attributes, the state is poised to emerge as a major contributor to the global Honey market. The projected growth from USD 9.03 billion in 2022 to USD 12.9 billion by 2030 sets a promising trajectory, and Ekiti State is well-positioned to play a pivotal role in this transformative journey, not only for the state itself but also for Nigeria as a whole.

Issues/Challenges

During a recent stakeholders forum with Honey bee farmers in Ekiti State, several challenges were identified that could impede the growth of Honey export potential in the State. These challenges include:

- i. ***Infrastructure and Logistics:*** Inadequate infrastructure, particularly, the lack of modern storage and processing facilities raised concerns about the preservation of Honey quality and shelf life in the State.
- ii. ***Quality Assurance and Standards:*** Participants expressed concerns about the need to meet international quality standards and certifications for Honey exports.
- iii. ***Market Access and Distribution Networks:*** Beekeepers discussed the challenges of establishing reliable market access and distribution channels to reach global consumers. They stressed the importance of forging partnerships with international distributors and retailers. Understanding and navigating complex international trade regulations and tariffs were identified as critical aspects.
- iv. ***Capacity Building and Training:*** Beekeepers highlighted the necessity of comprehensive training programs to enhance their skills in sustainable and efficient beekeeping practices. The discussion underscored the importance of developing the capacity to handle larger-scale production while maintaining stringent quality standards.
- v. ***Climate Change and Environmental Factors:*** The impact of climate change on beekeeping, including shifts in floral patterns and nectar availability, was a topic of concern. Participants also discussed the potential effects of environmental factors such as deforestation and pesticide use on bee health and Honey quality.
- vi. ***Market Intelligence and Promotion:*** Limited awareness and visibility of Ekiti State Honey in the global market emerged as a challenge. Beekeepers emphasized the need for

investments in effective marketing strategies and participation in international trade events. Understanding consumer preferences and market trends was identified as essential.

- vii. ***Financial Support and Access to Capital:*** Participants highlighted the initial investments required in beekeeping, emphasizing the importance of ensuring beekeepers have access to affordable financing options. The need for collaboration between the government and financial institutions to provide supportive financial mechanisms for the beekeeping sector was discussed.

Proposed Strategies:

1. **Infrastructure Improvement:** Ekiti State will establish and upgrade modern storage and processing facilities to ensure the preservation of Honey quality and extend its shelf life, thereby meeting international standards.
2. **Quality Assurance Programs:** The State will implement comprehensive quality assurance programs that involve training beekeepers on international standards and certifications. A monitoring and certification system will be established to ensure adherence to quality control measures throughout the Honey production process.
3. **Trade Facilitation and Partnerships:** The State will establish a trade desk to facilitate trade by establishing partnerships with international distributors and retailers. The Trade Desk will be tasked with the responsibility of engaging directly with global buyers, fostering relationships that enhance market access and provide support in navigating and complying with international trade regulations and tariffs.
4. **Capacity Building Initiatives:** The State will launch capacity-building initiatives focused on providing advanced training to beekeepers and support the development of skills and knowledge required for larger-scale production while emphasizing the importance of maintaining high-quality standards.
5. **Climate-Resilient Beekeeping Practices:** Ekiti State will promote climate-resilient beekeeping practices to mitigate the impact of climate change as well as provide education and resources to beekeepers on adapting to changing floral patterns and addressing environmental factors like deforestation and pesticide use.
6. **Global Marketing and Promotion:** The State will invest in global marketing and promotion campaigns to raise awareness of Ekiti State Honey. Also, Ekiti will participate actively in

international trade events, showcasing the unique qualities of the Honey produced in the State and tailor marketing strategies to align with consumer preferences and global market trends.

7. Financial Support Mechanisms: The State will collaborate with financial institutions to establish supportive financial mechanisms for beekeepers who will be formed into cooperative groups.



African Black Soap:

The African black soap market is project to grow at Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 7.12% from 2021 to 2028 and Ekiti State is poised to emerge as a significant contributor to the expanding global market. Renowned for its unique production method involving the ash of locally sourced African plants and dried peels, African Black Soap, or simply black soap, is characterized by its distinct dark color.

The state's strategic readiness to tap into this growing market underscores its commitment to becoming a major player in the global soap industry. Leveraging the abundant natural resources within its borders, Ekiti State aims to position itself as a hub for the production and distribution of high-quality African Black Soap.

As the demand for natural and sustainable beauty products continues to rise worldwide, Ekiti State's endeavors align with market trends, making it well-positioned to cater to a discerning consumer base. The state's commitment to quality, coupled with its dedication to environmentally conscious

production practices, further strengthens its potential to carve out a significant market share in the global African Black Soap industry.

Key Issues/Challenges

Through a series of engaging dialogues with key stakeholders in Ekiti State's African Black Soap industry, significant challenges were identified, providing valuable insights into the state's journey to becoming a major player in the global market:

- i. **Market Access and Promotion:** Limited access to global markets and insufficient promotional efforts emerged as concerns. Stakeholders emphasized the necessity of robust international trade networks and effective marketing strategies to enhance Ekiti State's visibility in the global African Black Soap market.
- ii. **Quality Assurance Challenges:** The discussions underscored the significance of meeting international quality standards and obtaining certifications. Also consistent product quality and compliance with regulatory requirements were identified as crucial factors for market acceptance.
- iii. **Technological Hurdles:** Technological constraints in soap manufacturing processes were recognized as impediments to innovation. Stakeholders stressed the need for investments in modern technologies and research and development to stay competitive in the evolving global market.
- iv. **Financial Limitations:** Limited access to financing and capital for local producers emerged as a recurring theme. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of financial support to enable producers to scale operations, invest in modern equipment, and compete effectively.
- v. **Competitive Landscape Awareness:** The competitive nature of the global skincare market was acknowledged. Stakeholders stressed the importance of strategic marketing and product differentiation to position Ekiti State's African Black Soap distinctively in the international market.
- vi. **Capacity Building Needs:** Discussions revealed a demand for capacity building and training programs. Stakeholders emphasized the necessity of enhancing the skills of local artisans in both traditional soap-making techniques and modern production processes.

Proposed Strategies:

1. **Market Access and Promotion:** Ekiti State will develop a comprehensive international trade promotion plan, emphasizing participation in global trade fairs, exhibitions, and networking events. Partnerships will be established with international distributors and retailers to enhance the reach of

Ekiti State's African Black Soap. Investments will be made in digital marketing and online platforms to establish a robust online presence and directly connect with global consumers.

2. Quality Assurance Challenges: A rigorous quality management system, adhering to international soap production standards, will be implemented. The industry will strive to obtain key certifications such as ISO, organic, and fair trade to instill confidence in global consumers. Collaboration with quality control experts will ensure regular audits are conducted to maintain consistent product quality.

3. Technological Hurdles: Funds will be allocated for research and development to modernize soap manufacturing processes and incorporate cutting-edge technologies. Partnerships with research institutions and technology providers will be fostered to stay abreast of industry innovations. A technology transfer program will be established to train local producers in adopting new manufacturing technologies.

4. Financial Limitations: Collaboration with financial institutions and government agencies will facilitate access to financial resources, providing low-interest loans and grants to local producers. A dedicated revolving fund will be created for African Black Soap producers to invest in modern equipment and expand their operations. Public-private partnerships will be encouraged to attract private investments into the industry.

5. Competitive Landscape Awareness: A thorough market analysis will be conducted to identify key competitors and market trends. A unique selling proposition for Ekiti State's African Black Soap will be developed, highlighting its distinct qualities and cultural significance. A targeted marketing strategy will be implemented, emphasizing the unique aspects of the soap to stand out in the competitive global skincare market.

6. Capacity Building Needs: A comprehensive training and capacity-building program will be established for local artisans, covering both traditional and modern soap-making techniques. Collaboration with educational institutions and industry experts will lead to the design of specialized courses for skill enhancement. Mentorship programs will be created to enable experienced artisans to share their knowledge with newcomers, fostering a culture of continuous learning.

Palm Oil:



In 2022, the global Palm Oil market reached a substantial value of USD 67.3 billion, with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.1% from 2023 to 2030. This growth is driven by escalating demand across diverse industries such as food, beverage, biofuel, energy, personal care, and cosmetics. Notably, Nigeria emerged as the largest consumer of Palm Oil in Africa, with an estimated consumption of 3 million metric tons (MT) of fats and oils in 2018. Within this consumption, Palm Oil held a significant share of 44.7%, equivalent to 1.34 million MT. Also, the national Palm Oil production volume stands at an impressive 1.7 million MT, showcasing the country's commitment to becoming a major player in the Palm Oil sector. In this context, Ekiti State is positioned to play a pivotal role in Nigeria's and the global Palm Oil export market.

Key Issues and Challenges:

- i. **Access to Capital:** Establishing and maintaining Palm Oil plantations and processing facilities requires significant investment. Access to capital for small and medium-sized farmers and entrepreneurs in Ekiti State are limited, thereby impacting their ability to participate effectively in the Palm Oil sector.
- ii. **Technology and Mechanization:** The Palm Oil industry has modernized with the use of technology and mechanized processes. However, small-scale farmers in Ekiti State do not have access to these technologies. Even if the technologies are made available, there is a possibility of facing adoption challenges due to factors such as education, and technical know-how as most current player in the sector are old illiterate women

- iii. Market Access and Pricing: Access to global markets and ensuring fair pricing for Palm Oil products can be challenging.

Ekiti Rice Production:



Ekiti Rice is among the brands of Nigerian rice locally produced in agricultural towns of Ekiti State; Ijero, Esure, Emure, Ise-Orun, Erijiyan, Efon and other towns in Ekiti State, South West Nigeria. With government support for local rice production, ban on importation and recent health awareness among Nigerians, Nigerian people have started turning to locally produced rice which is usually unpolished. Unpolished rice has been found to be rich in Manganese and essential nutrients like Magnesium and Selenium. Apart from these, due to its rich mineral contents, brown rice has been found to prevent Artherosclerosis and reduce risks of colon cancer and good for hair, teeth and nails. All these factors have contributed to making Ekiti Rice a major sought-after staple food across the globe. Needless to say that the global rice market; (predicted to grow at CAGR of 3.1% to USD 274 Billion by 2028) is very huge and Ekiti intends to be a major player with its unique and mineral rich upland rice.

Key Issues/Challenges

- i. **Abandonment by Farmers:** Farmers especially young people who were previously engaged in planting Ekiti rice have abandoned it for other businesses due to challenges in the indigenous rice industry particularly with regards to equipment, market access, logistics and other critical factors
- ii. **Competition from Imported Polished Rice:** The dominance of imported polished rice in the market has overtaken the demand for locally produced Ekiti rice, making it challenging for local rice producers to compete.
- iii. **Lack of Government Support:** Limited government support for the indigenous rice industry, in terms of subsidies, infrastructure development, and research, has contributed to the challenges faced by Ekiti rice producers.
- iv. **Inadequate Processing Facilities:** The absence of modern and efficient processing facilities for Ekiti rice hampers the quality and competitiveness of the locally produced rice compared to imported alternatives.
- v. **Harvesting Challenges:** Issues related to harvesting techniques, including outdated methods and a lack of mechanization, contribute to inefficiencies and lower yields in Ekiti rice production.
- vi. **Limited Access to Finance:** Farmers involved in Ekiti rice cultivation face challenges in accessing financial resources, hindering their ability to invest in modern farming practices and technology.
- vii. **Marketing Issues:** Ineffective marketing strategies and distribution channels for Ekiti rice result in reduced market visibility and consumer awareness, further diminishing the demand for locally produced rice.
- viii. **Infrastructure Deficiency:** Poor rural infrastructure, including inadequate transportation and storage facilities, adds to the overall challenges faced by Ekiti rice producers in getting their products to the market efficiently.

Export Strategies

- a) **Government Advocacy and Support:** Efforts will be made to increase government support in terms of subsidies, infrastructure development, and research for the indigenous Ekiti rice industry. The State will strengthen collaboration among relevant government agencies to establish and implement policies that favor local rice production and export.
- b) **Investment in Processing Facilities:** The State will seek foreign and domestic investments to establish modern and efficient processing facilities for Ekiti rice. The State will also explore

partnerships with technology providers to introduce state-of-the-art processing equipment for better quality control and increased production capacity.

- c) **Mechanization and Training:** The State will encourage the adoption of modern farming practices through mechanization and establish training programs for farmers to educate them on advanced harvesting techniques and technology.
- d) **Financial Access:** The State will collaborate with financial institutions and government agencies to create special financing programs for Ekiti rice farmers; as well as facilitate partnerships with microfinance institutions to provide accessible loans to small-scale farmers.
- e) **Market Diversification:** Ekiti State will identify and explore new international markets for Ekiti rice and develop targeted marketing strategies to promote the unique qualities of Ekiti rice, such as its organic nature and traditional cultivation methods.
- f) **Quality Assurance and Certification:** The State will implement stringent quality control measures to ensure Ekiti rice meets international standards. Obtain relevant certifications to build trust among international consumers and meet import regulations.
- g) **Logistics Improvement:** Advocate for improvements in rural infrastructure, including transportation and storage facilities and establish partnerships with logistics companies to streamline the supply chain from farm to market.
- h) **Technology Integration:** The State will leverage technology for better farm management, crop monitoring, and yield optimization. Also, Ekiti will explore e-commerce platforms to expand market reach and improve accessibility for consumers.
- i) **Collaborative Marketing Strategies:** The State will form partnerships with local and international retailers to enhance market visibility and develop marketing campaigns highlighting the cultural and environmental benefits of choosing Ekiti rice.
- j) **Community Engagement:** The State will engage local communities in the export process, creating a sense of ownership and pride in Ekiti rice. A feedback mechanism to address concerns and continuously improve the export strategy will be developed.

Iru (Locust Beans) Production:



The African locust bean is one of the natural condiments, known under different names throughout West African countries: it is known as Iru in Yoruba, Dawadawa in Hausa, Ogiri in Igbo, Soumbola in Mali and guinea, Netetou in Senegal, Iru or Sonru in Republic of Benin, Kinda in Sierra Leone, Kpalugu in Northern Ghana and nere in Burkina Faso. Locust bean seed are 30-44 % rich in protein and are generally added to soup as low cost meat substituent by low income families in parts of Nigeria. The food condiment is also used to flavor soups and stews in Nigeria. Large quantities of African locust bean seed are produced in the savannah region of Oyo, Osun, and Kwara States of Nigeria. It is estimated that about 200,000 tons of these seeds are gathered each year in Nigeria. While Ekiti State does not grow the *Parkia biglobosa* from which the locust bean is produced, the State however have a competitive advantage in the production of dirt-free, high quality processed Iru for the whole nation.

While Ekiti State may have a competitive advantage in the quality of African locust bean (*Parkia biglobosa*) production, there are still several challenges that could be associated with the export trade of this product as derived from the stakeholders' engagement:

Key Issues/Challenges:

1. Limited Production Scale: The limited production scale in Ekiti State is adversely impacting its capacity for export, primarily attributable to a shortage of producers. The exodus of young

individuals from the industry in pursuit of alternative endeavors has left the sector predominantly in the hands of older women. This demographic shift has resulted in a significant reduction in overall production levels, thereby hindering the state's ability to meet export demands. The absence of a youthful workforce, traditionally responsible for innovation and increased productivity, has led to stagnation and challenges in maintaining competitive export standards. Addressing this demographic imbalance is crucial for revitalizing the production landscape and ensuring a sustainable and robust export-oriented industry in Ekiti State.

2. Supply Chain Management: In Ekiti State, the absence of *Parkia Biglobosa* tree; the primary source of locust beans seeds, hampers the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the supply chain, particularly in the procurement of raw materials for African Locust beans production. This deficiency is adversely affecting the export potential of the state. The reliance on traditional market outlets further compounds the challenges, proving to be inefficient and negatively impacting profit margins for producers. This inefficiency not only hinders economic growth for the producers but also discourages young entrepreneurs from engaging in the locust beans business. As a result, the overall export potential of Ekiti State is significantly hampered.

3. Quality Control: The current production process of African Locust beans in Ekiti State relies heavily on manual methods, lacking adherence to international food safety and hygiene standards. This situation poses a significant challenge to the export potential of the product as the absence of standardized procedures compromises the overall quality and safety of the beans, potentially hindering their acceptance in international markets. Therefore, the State will prioritize and invest in upgrading production practices to align with international standards towards ensuring the quality and safety of the product and thereby unlocking its full export potential in Ekiti State

Export Strategies

- a) Youth Engagement and Training Programs: The State will develop and implement programs to attract and train young individuals in the locust bean production industry with a focus on modernizing the production process and training on agribusiness management. Also, the State will offer incentives/subsidies to encourage young entrepreneurs to enter the locust bean business, thereby addressing the demographic shift and limited production scale.
- b) Technology Adoption and Innovation: The State will introduce modern production technologies and innovations to improve the efficiency and productivity of the locust bean production.
- c) Supply Chain Optimization: The State will develop a comprehensive supply chain management system that addresses the inefficiencies in the procurement of raw materials towards ensuring a

more reliable and cost-effective supply of locust bean seeds to producers in the State. The State will also explore partnerships with private enterprises to improve logistics and distribution channels, thereby reducing dependence on traditional market outlets.

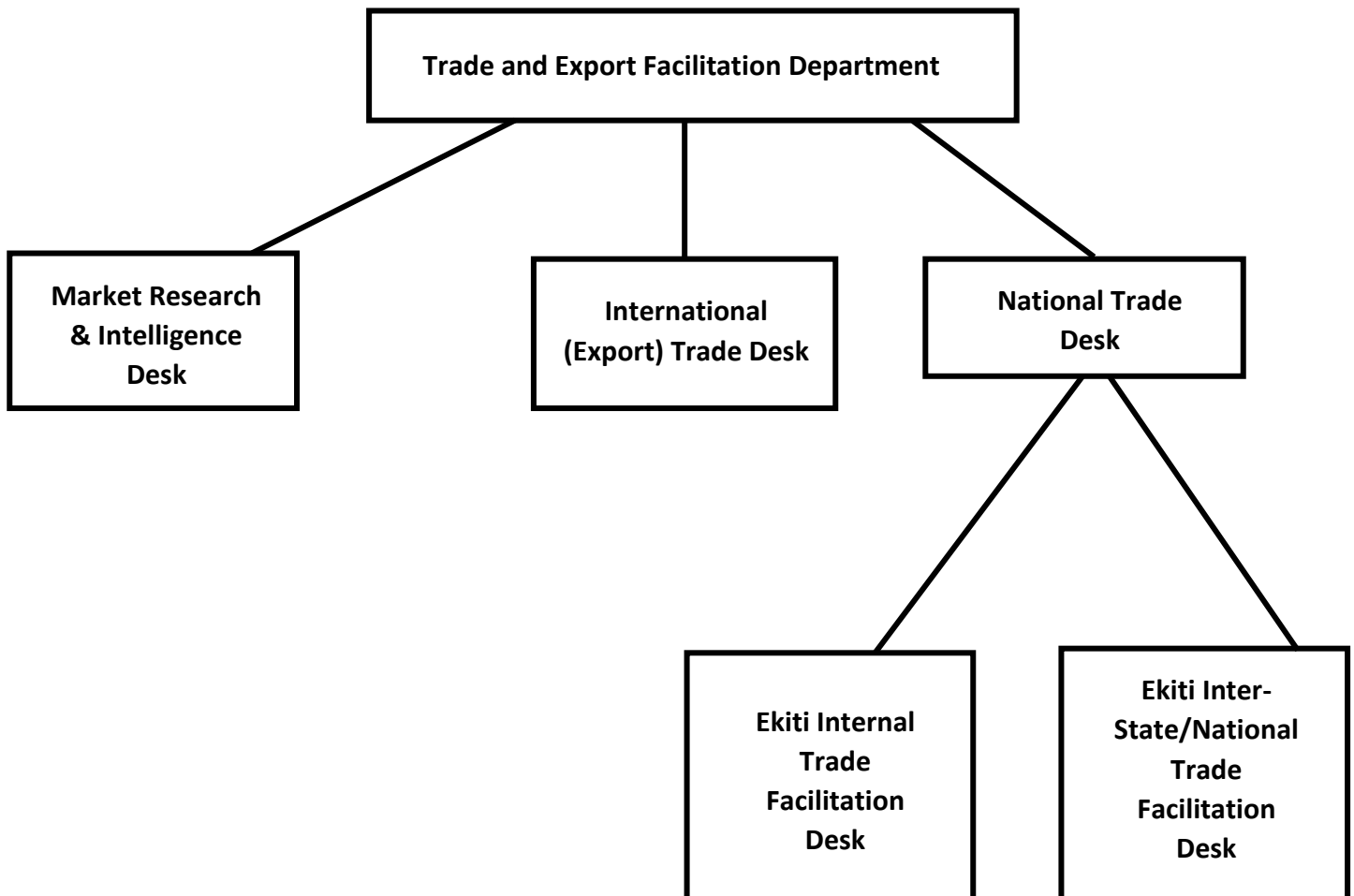
- d) **Quality Assurance and Certification:** The State will invest in training programs for local producers to ensure compliance with international food safety and hygiene standards. Also the State will establish a quality control and certification system for locust bean production to guarantee that the product meets or exceeds international standards while also promoting the adoption of best practices in processing, storage, and packaging to enhance the overall quality of African locust beans.
- e) **Market Diversification and Promotion:** The State will identify and target specific international markets with high demand for African locust beans. This is in addition to conduct market research to understand consumer preferences and regulatory requirements in these markets. Thereafter, the State will develop marketing campaigns to promote Ekiti State's locust bean products, highlighting their unique qualities and adherence to international standards. Also, the State will participate in international trade fairs and exhibitions to showcase the quality and diversity of locust bean products from Ekiti State.
- f) **Enhancing Export Potential through Financial Inclusion:** To facilitate improved access to finance, the State Government will organize the locust beans producers into cooperative groups; thereby enabling the scaling of production to meet both local and international demands. By forming cooperative groups, the state intends to create a unified platform for locust bean producers, fostering collaboration and efficient resource utilization. Through these cooperative structures, the government will streamline financial support mechanisms, ensuring that producers have the necessary resources to enhance and expand their production capabilities.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS AND ACTIVITIES

Achieving Ekiti State's vision of becoming a major export player in Nigeria requires the establishment and implementation of a robust institutional mechanism. The State Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment which will spearhead the implementation of the export strategy will ensure the creation of strong frameworks, policies, and systems that can support and drive the state's export strategies.

Trade Promotion Agencies:

The Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Cooperatives will establish the Department of Trade and Export Facilitation (DTEF) to be headed by a Director in the Ministry. Below is the organogram:



The DTEF will be divided into sub-units which include International (Export) Trade Office, National Trade Office and Market Research and Intelligence Desk. Each of the units will be manned by a Deputy Director and will be responsible for providing essential services such as market research,

trade information, and export promotion activities. The Ministry will activate/inaugurate the office in the first quarter of 2024.

Policy Development and Implementation:

The Ekiti State Government through the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Cooperatives will constitute/strengthen the Export Promotion and Trade Facilitation Committee to formulate and drive the implementation of policies that are conducive to trade and export-oriented activities in the State. A budget line to support the activities of the committee will be included in the 2024 Budget of the State. The committee will be saddled with the responsibility of reviewing and aligning the state trade and export strategies with the national objectives towards creating the Ekiti Export Readiness and Promotion Policy document which will encompass key issues such as creating a business-friendly environment, streamlining existing regulations, and offering incentives to encourage businesses to engage in export activities. Part of such policy actions is the Grievance Redress Mechanism which has been enacted through an executive order and the committee will be inaugurated in the first quarter of 2024. The committee will be inaugurated in the first quarter of 2024

Infrastructure Development:

Adequate infrastructure is crucial for export success. Therefore, the State will ensure the speedy activation of the Cargo Airport, invest in Agro-processing hubs along the product belts, expand the Independent Power Projects particularly to the proposed Industrial Park and facilitate the construction of rural access road through the Rural Access and Agricultural Market Project (RAAMP) to enhance farm-to-market schemes in the State. Additionally, reliable energy and communication infrastructure which are essential for the efficient functioning of businesses engaged in export activities will be invested in

Skills Development:

Training programs and educational initiatives will be put in place to develop the skills of the workforce, ensuring that they are equipped with the knowledge and expertise needed to engage in trade facilitations. Specifically, in the second quarter of 2024, a week-long Workers Retreat for the Staff of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Cooperatives will be facilitated as part of efforts to enhance the strategic focus of the Ministry and position it for efficient service delivery. Also Staff of the ministry, particularly in the Trade Desk Office will be trained on Market Research

and Intelligence, Trade Information Management, Export Promotions, international standard production, packaging and labelling.

Quality Standards and Certification:

Complying with international quality standards is essential for accessing global markets. The State will establish mechanisms for quality control, certification, and compliance with international standards towards enhancing the competitiveness of the State's exports. This mechanism will be coordinated through the Trade Desk Office situated in the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment.

Access to Finance:

Facilitating access to finance for exporters is crucial. This involves working with financial institutions to create favorable lending conditions and providing support mechanisms such as export credit guarantees to mitigate risks associated with international trade. Specifically, the State will tap into the huge informal sector finance through the aggregation, strengthening and regulation of the cooperative societies. Already, over One Billion Naira has been earmarked and will be disbursed in the first quarter of 2024 to support Cooperative Societies structured along the identified product value chains and others; while other micro-finance structure will be explored to mobilize resources to expand their activities

Market Research and Information:

The State will invest in market research to identify potential export markets and opportunities. Access to up-to-date and relevant market information is vital for businesses to make informed decisions and tailor their products or services to meet international demand. This will be pursued by the State Government

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):

Collaboration between the public and private sectors is essential for the success of export strategies. The State will establish an effective PPP framework that can leverage the strengths of both sectors to create a supportive ecosystem for export-oriented businesses.

Technology Adoption:

Ekiti State will embracing technology in various aspects of the export process; from production to logistics and marketing, towards enhancing efficiency and competitiveness. Various digital platforms for trade facilitation and e-commerce will be explored

INTERVENTIONS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND SENSITIZATION

Recognizing capacity building and sensitization as crucial components in enhancing the export potential of the State, a simple Capacity Building and Sensitization Framework aimed at equipping individuals, businesses, and institutions with the necessary skills, knowledge, and awareness to participate effectively in international trade will be developed. The Framework will contain the following:

Export Training Programs:

The State will partner with various organizations and individuals to implement export training programs targeted at entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and government officials involved in trade-related activities. The training program will cover topics such as market research, trade regulations, logistics, and documentation among others

Attendance of Trade Workshops and Seminars:

The State will facilitate the attendance of targeted at entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and government officials involved in trade-related activities on international trade and export-related topics.

Export Advisory Services:

The State through the Trade Desk Office will establish export advisory services that provide personalized guidance to businesses interested in exporting. These services will assist with market entry strategies, regulatory compliance, and other aspects of the export process.

Awareness Campaigns:

The State will conduct awareness campaigns to educate businesses and the public about the benefits of exporting. This will include media campaigns, outreach programs, and the dissemination of information through various channels

Cluster Development:

Recognizing that collaborative efforts within specific industries can lead to economies of scale, shared resources, and collective marketing strategies that enhance the competitiveness of Ekiti State's exports; Ekiti State will facilitate the formation of industry clusters and associations.

Customs Facilitation:

The State through the Trade Desk Office will streamline customs procedures to reduce the time and costs associated with exporting.

Capacity Development and Export Promotion Activities

S/N	Activity	KPI	Timeline	Responsibility
1	Activation/Inauguration of Trade Desk Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Trade Desk Office inaugurated in the Ministry of Trade Industry and Investment, — Trade Desk Officer appointed 	Quarter 1, 2024	Honorable Commissioner, MITI, Permanent Secretary MITI,
2	Constitution/Inauguration of the Ekiti State Trade Facilitation and Export Promotion Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Committee members identified and appointed from relevant MDAs and organizations — Terms of engagement developed and shared with the committee — Committee holds inaugural meeting 	Quarter 1, 2024	Honorable Commissioner, MITI, Permanent Secretary MITI, Director of Trade and Export Facilitation
3	Review and Alignment of State Export Strategy with National Export Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Desk Research on National Export strategies conducted — Stakeholder policy dialogue conducted — Document on export strategy alignment developed and approved. 	March-June 2024	Honorable Commissioner, MITI, Permanent Secretary MITI, Director of Trades, Facilitation and Export Promotion Committee
4	Inaugural/Annual Retreat and on Trade and Export Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Number of MITI Staff that participated, — Number of stakeholders that participated — % of Ministry Staff with enhanced capacity on trade and export facilitation, — Quality of feedbacks and engagements by MITI Staff — Communique/Plan of action developed 	Quarter 2 2024 and Quarter 1 (For subsequent years)	Permanent Secretary MITI, Director of Trades, Technical Assistant, Trade, Trade Facilitation and Export Promotion Committee
5	Training on Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — 5 days Training of Trainers 	Quarter 2	Market Research and

	Research and Intelligence, Trade Information Management, Export Promotions, international standard production, packaging, and labeling	(ToT) conducted — Capacity of Staff of Trade Desk Office enhanced — Number of target market captured by Ekiti products — Accuracy and timeliness of trade information provided to stakeholders, including market trends, regulatory changes, and competitor analysis.	2024	Intelligence Desk Office
6	Annual Step-down Training on Export Promotions, international standard production, packaging, and labeling	— Annual Step-down training for export players conducted — Number of participants — % increase in knowledge and capacity — % increase in export sales — % of products that meet or exceed international quality and safety standards. — % of products with accurate and compliant packaging and labeling. —	2nd Quarter Annually	DTEF
7	Conduct of Market Research and Intelligence	Quality of insights gathered	Biannually	DTEF
8	Publishing and Launch of Ekiti State Export Information Handbook	Successful publication	Quarter 3 2024	DTEF
9	Attendance of the Kingdom of Netherlands Trade Fair	Number of business linkages established Number of products exhibited Number of SMEs supported to attend	April 2024	DTEF
10	Attendance of Lagos International Trade Fair	Number of partnerships formed Number of products exhibited Number of SMEs supported to attend	Annually	DTEF
11	Activation of Ekiti Industrial Park	— % of the industrial park's available space that is occupied by businesses. — Number of jobs created within the industrial park. — Volume of private investment attracted to the industrial park. — % utilization of infrastructure facilities within the industrial park — Number/volume of exportable	Quarter 3-4 2024	Honorable Commissioner, MITI, Permanent Secretary, DTEF

		products being produced from the park		
12	Ekiti State Trade and Investment Summit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Number of participants, — Number of investment commitments made during the summit — Number of new business partnerships and collaborations established. 	Quarter 3-4 2024	Trade and Investment Department
12	Quarterly Review Meeting of Trade Facilitation and Export Promotion Committee			

TRADE INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

Ekiti State Agro-allied International (Cargo) Airport:



The construction of the Agro-Allied International Airport in Ekiti State is a pivotal development poised to significantly boost the state's economic landscape. The strategic infrastructure, designed as a Category 4E airport, is tailored to expedite the import and export of a diverse range of goods and commodities, thereby enhancing Ekiti State's export potential. With an expansive Cargo Apron measuring 155m x 128m, capable of accommodating two 747-400 aircraft simultaneously, and a Passenger Apron spanning 137m x 100.5m, capable of hosting three Boeing 737 aircraft, the airport stands as a formidable hub for both cargo and passenger operations.

The runway, extending over 3.2km with a width of 60m (45m at full strength and 7.5m on each shoulder), further underscores the airport's capability to handle large-scale cargo aircraft efficiently. This robust infrastructure allows for seamless international and domestic operations. The terminal building, meticulously designed to facilitate the processing of both international and domestic passengers, adds another dimension to the airport's significance in fostering economic growth.

By providing a gateway for the swift movement of goods and people, the Ekiti Agro-Allied International Airport emerges as one of the critical assets that is set to catalyze Ekiti State's export potential, stimulate trade activities, and propel the overall economic prosperity of the State.

Ekiti State Independent Power Project:



In November 2023, Ekiti State successfully inaugurated its newly completed 3.5-megawatt Independent Power Project (IPP). The primary objective of the IPP is to enhance the state's export potential by ensuring a reliable and robust power supply to support key sectors. The project is also

designed to provide essential energy support to key government infrastructures and industrial clusters thereby playing a critical role in driving export potentials and enhancing economic prosperity of the State

Purpose-Built Dams:



Ero and Egbe Dam are the two largest dams in Ekiti State with a combined surface areas of 722.5 hectares. The colossal capacities of these dams transforms them into vital reservoirs which can meet the water needs of agriculture, industry, and households across the state. The dams, built for water supply and irrigation purposes, hold the potential to significantly enhance the agricultural productivity of the state while laying the foundation for a thriving export-oriented agricultural sector.

The combined impact of these Dams on Ekiti State's export capacities is multifaceted. Firstly, these reservoirs can ensure a reliable and consistent water supply for agricultural activities, enabling farmers to cultivate high-value crops throughout the year. This increased agricultural output will create a surplus for export, positioning Ekiti as a key player in the global market for agricultural products.

Secondly, the dams can contribute to the establishment and growth of industries that can harness the abundant water resources for processing and manufacturing. From food processing to textile production, the availability of water from these dams can drive industrialization, leading to the production of export-quality goods that meet international standards.

Ekiti State Special Agro-Processing Zone:



Ekiti State is poised to unlock its export potential with the establishment of a Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone (SAPZ). This ambitious initiative spans across a vast 40,000-hectare area, strategically designed to host processing operations centered on key agricultural commodities such as rice, cassava, dairy, Cocoa, cashew, and maize.

The SAPZ is positioned to leverage Ekiti State's dual strengths in scholarship and agriculture, marking a significant milestone as the first service-oriented zone of its kind in Nigeria. By harnessing the State's comparative advantages, the SAPZ is not only geared towards fostering domestic agricultural development but also dedicated to elevating Ekiti State's status as a major player in the international export market.

Through targeted investments and innovative agricultural practices within the SAPZ, Ekiti State aims to enhance the value chain for its agricultural products. This, in turn, will facilitate increased

production efficiency, adherence to international quality standards, and the creation of export-ready goods.

Establishment of Industrial Hub:



Ekiti State will establish Innovative and Industrial Hub. The hub will be strategically designed to function as a dedicated cluster for small-scale manufacturing, with the primary objective of amplifying the export potential of the State. This initiative aims to foster a collaborative ecosystem for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by offering shared facilities within the hub. Through this Industrial Hub, Ekiti State is poised to champion the "Made in Ekiti" agenda, capitalizing on advancements from the Technology Incubation Center. This center will play a pivotal role in identifying innovative products with the potential to penetrate the international export market. Selected products will not only be endorsed but also receive financial backing to facilitate mass production and subsequent exportation.

By strategically aligning the efforts of SMEs with shared facilities and leveraging the Technology Incubation Center's innovations, Ekiti State aims to propel its export potential to new heights. This comprehensive approach ensures that promising products undergo a rigorous process of evaluation, adoption, and financial support, ultimately contributing to the realization of the State's vision for a thriving and internationally competitive export sector.

POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

To facilitate effective export strategies, Ekiti State through the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Cooperatives will develop and implement a robust policy and regulatory framework. The frameworks will be focused on significantly impacting the ease of doing business, trade facilitation, and the overall success of export initiatives.

1. ***Trade Policy and Agreements:*** The State will set-up a committee that will be coordinated through the Trade Desk Office to review the Ekiti State export strategy and align with the broader national objectives, as well as identify and leverage existing trade agreements that Nigeria has with other nations toward accessing preferential export market.

2. ***Customs and Tariffs:*** Ekiti State will streamline customs tariffs and procedures to reduce the time and cost of exporting goods. Efficient clearance processes facilitate smoother trade. Through the Trade Desk Office, the State will set up a system aimed at understanding tariff structures and ensuring that they are predictable and transparent towards encouraging businesses to engage in export activities.

3. ***Export Financing and Incentives:*** Ekiti State will explore the possibility of implementing tax incentives, subsidies, or grants towards encouraging businesses to invest in export-oriented activities. In the same vein, the State will facilitate access to export financing through credit agencies to support businesses in Ekiti to expand their international reach.

4. ***Quality Standards and Regulations:*** Meeting international quality standards is critical to the export vision of the state. Specific effort will be made at adhering to standards such as ISO certifications towards ensuring that the products from the State are accepted in global markets. Compliance with Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures in sectors like agriculture and food processing will also be guaranteed.

5. ***Trade Facilitation and Ease of Doing Business:*** Serious attention will be paid to Streamlining administrative processes and reducing bureaucratic hurdles that can make it easier for businesses in Ekiti to engage in international trade.

Risk Management: The State will develop a framework that encourages businesses to use export credit insurance and risk mitigation tools to minimize the impact of uncertainties in the global market

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Key Activity	Description	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Objective Setting	Clearly define export strategy objectives, specifying goals for export growth, market diversification, and economic impact.	- Annual export volume growth rate - Increase in revenue from exports - Number of new markets entered
Stakeholder Engagement	Identify and engage relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector players, and development partners.	- Number of stakeholder meetings and collaborations - Stakeholder satisfaction surveys - Timeliness of information exchange with stakeholders
Policy and Regulatory Framework	Establish and communicate clear policies and regulations supporting and facilitating the export strategy.	- Compliance rate with export-related policies - Time taken for customs clearance - Number of regulatory hurdles addressed
Export Infrastructure Development	Invest in and upgrade export-related infrastructure such as transportation, logistics, and trade facilitation facilities.	- Reduction in transportation and logistics costs - Improvement in port efficiency - Time reduction in goods transit
Market Research and Development	Conduct market research to identify target markets and assess the demand for products.	- Number of market research reports conducted - Percentage increase in market share - Customer satisfaction with products in target markets
Capacity Building	Implement training programs to enhance the skills and capabilities of exporters, officials, and other stakeholders.	- Number of training sessions conducted - Improvement in export-related skills - Rate of adoption of new skills by stakeholders
Risk Management	Develop strategies to identify and mitigate risks that may affect the success of the export strategy.	- Number of identified risks - Time taken to mitigate identified risks - Cost of risk mitigation measures implemented
Financial Resource Allocation	Allocate financial resources to support the implementation of the export strategy.	- Budget utilization rate - Return on investment in export promotion activities - Cost-effectiveness of financial allocations
Performance Evaluation	Conduct periodic evaluations of the overall export strategy's performance against set targets and objectives.	- Achievement of export strategy objectives - Overall export growth rate - Alignment of outcomes with set targets

Key Activity	Description	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Documentation and Reporting	Establish a robust system for documenting M&E data and produce regular reports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timeliness and accuracy of M&E reports - - Number of actionable insights derived from reports - - Transparency and accessibility of M&E information

CONCLUSION

This export strategy document outlines a comprehensive plan for entering international markets, for the State, focusing on market analysis, target identification, distribution channels, marketing approaches, and operational logistics. By leveraging on this strategy, the State aims to expand its global footprint, increase revenue streams, enhance brand visibility, and establish strong partnerships worldwide. The document serves as a roadmap, highlighting key steps and considerations to successfully navigate the complexities of international trade, ensuring sustainable growth and competitive advantage in the global marketplace.



Hon. Adeola Omotayo
Hon. Commissioner for Trade, Industry, Investment and Cooperatives
29th December, 2023