

**LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT POLICY DOCUMENT ON
AFFIRMATIVE PROCUREMENT FOR WOMEN-OWNED
BUSINESSES**

2025

DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Definitions

Affirmative Procurement: Affirmative procurement refers to specific procurement policies that aim to include contracting with persons or categories of persons who have historically been disadvantaged due to unfair discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, or disability. These policies prioritize creating opportunities for underrepresented groups, such as women-owned businesses, in public procurement processes. The goal of affirmative procurement is to promote diversity, inclusivity, and economic empowerment by ensuring that historically marginalized groups have equitable access to procurement opportunities.

Gender Equity: Gender equity is the process of being fair to women and men. To ensure fairness, strategies and measures must often be available to compensate for women's historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field.

Gender-responsive procurement (GRP): Gender-responsive procurement is the selection of services, goods, and civil works that considers their impact on gender equality and women's empowerment. It involves making deliberate choices during procurement processes to ensure that the outcomes benefit women and promote gender equality.

Reputable Body: A Reputable Body includes Bodies such as UN Women, the Women's Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines, and Agriculture, an accredited certification organisation, or any other entity designated by the PPA as needed.

Women-Owned Businesses (WOBs): A WOB is an enterprise where at least 51% of ownership lies with one or more women. Additionally, women actively participate in the business's management and decision-making processes. A woman must be a signatory on legal and financial documents, and the business operates independently from non-woman-owned entities.

Women-Led Businesses (WLBs): WLBs are enterprises where women constitute at least 51% of senior management and are actively involved in shaping the organisation's strategic direction, policies, and operational decisions.

Women-Led Cooperatives (WLCs): WLCs are cooperatives where at least 51% of the total votes are held by women. Women predominantly occupy leadership positions on the board of directors and play a central role in decision-making. WLCs promote collective action and empower women within the cooperative structure.

Abbreviations

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

GRP - Gender-Responsive Procurement

LGAs - Local Government Areas

MDAs - Ministries, Departments, and Agencies

M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation

PPA – Lagos State Public Procurement Agency

SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals

SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound

STB - State Tender Board

UNCITRAL - United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

WAPA – Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation

WEEAP - Women’s Economic Empowerment through Affirmative Procurement

WLCs - Women-Led Cooperatives

WOBs - Women-Owned Businesses

PART 1- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Overview of the GRP Policy's purpose and goals

The Gender Responsive Procurement (GRP) Policy is a pioneering initiative aimed at promoting gender equity and empowering women economically within the State. This GRP Policy is carefully designed to provide Women-Owned Businesses (WOBs) and Women-Led Cooperatives (WLCs) with greater access to public procurement opportunities. It acts as an in-depth guide to remove longstanding obstacles that have traditionally excluded women entrepreneurs from public sector economic activities. The GRP Policy outlines a variety of support measures, including capacity-building programmes, financial incentives, educational resources, and mentorship opportunities, all crafted to enhance the abilities and market presence of WOBs and WLCs.

The GRP Policy is rooted in a deep commitment to create a supportive and favourable environment that actively promotes, sustains, and honours the business pursuits of women. Through these initiatives, the GRP Policy seeks to initiate a significant change in the public procurement domain, emphasizing inclusivity, equity, and transparency, thereby contributing to Lagos State's socio-economic progress. The primary aim is to go beyond conventional norms and set a new benchmark for gender-sensitive practices in procurement, thus solidifying Lagos State's role as a leader in gender equity and inclusive economic growth.

At its core, the GRP Policy represents not merely a collection of directives but a progressive movement to redefine women's economic roles by tapping into their potential as vital contributors to growth. It anticipates a future where gender imbalances in public procurement are obsolete, and women entrepreneurs are fully enabled to enhance the state's wealth. The GRP Policy is poised to inspire similar efforts in various sectors and locales, establishing a standard for incorporating gender perspectives into wider economic policies. Lagos State envisions the GRP Policy as a lasting testament to empowerment and parity, echoing through future generations.

1.2 GRP Policy scope and impact

The GRP Policy is a transformative strategy designed to foster gender equity and empower women economically through inclusive procurement practices. This policy,

which spans across all State Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), as well as Local Government Authorities (LGAs), ensures that every public procurement transaction is viewed through a gender-responsive lens. It is a universal mandate that not only aims to elevate the economic standing of WOBs and WLCs but also to bridge the gender gap in economic participation, thereby catalysing broader economic growth within Lagos State.

The GRP Policy's implementation is expected to lead to a surge in the number of WOBs engaging in public procurement, enhancing their growth and sustainability. Furthermore, it is anticipated to contribute to social inclusion by valuing women's contributions and realizing their entrepreneurial potential, in line with the state's commitment to social equity.

By encouraging MDAs and LGAs to revise their procurement practices to be more gender-responsive, the GRP Policy serves as a catalyst for systemic change, extending its impact beyond immediate economic benefits and fostering a cultural shift towards greater gender sensitivity in the public sector. Rooted in the recognition of existing gender disparities and the untapped potential of female entrepreneurs, the GRP Policy is a critical tool for promoting the inclusion of WOBs in public procurement processes, creating a more equitable business environment, and setting a precedent for inclusive economic policies.

The GRP Policy aligns with national and international frameworks, particularly the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), The Revised National Gender Policy (2022), The National Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Policy and Action Plan (2023) and reflects the Lagos State Government's dedication to socio-economic emancipation, gender equity, and social inclusion as integral parts of its broader development agenda. Through this policy, Lagos State aspires to create a legacy of empowerment and equity that will resonate for generations to come, inspiring similar initiatives across different sectors and regions.

PART 2- INTRODUCTION

2.1 Rationale for Affirmative Procurement for Women-Owned Businesses

The imperative for affirmative procurement policies for Women-Owned Businesses in Lagos State is compelling and multifaceted. It is grounded in a commitment to rectifying the gender imbalances prevalent in the public procurement landscape. Despite the considerable number of female entrepreneurs in Lagos, their representation in public procurement is disproportionately low. This disparity signifies the systemic obstacles women face in economic participation and the overlooked economic contributions they could make to the State's prosperity.

L A S G C O N T R A C T S	Category	Female-Owned Businesses	Male-Owned Businesses
	Overall Contracts Won	19%	81%
	Rehabilitation of Building Contracts	16%	84%
	Building Contracts	17%	83%
	Roads and Bridges Contracts	21%	79%
	Drainage Contracts	3%	97%
	Power Plants Contracts	9%	91%
	Goods Contract Conversion Rate	83%	57%
	Construction Work Conversion Rate	57%	49%
	Non-Consultancy Services Conversion Rate	88%	69%

LASG Contracts	Categories	Women-Owned Businesses	Male Owned Businesses
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	Power Plants contracts	9%	91%
	Goods Contract Conversion Rate	83%	57%
	Construction Work Conversion Rate	57%	49%
	Non- Consultancy Services Conversion Rate	88%	69%

Recent statistics highlight this imbalance starkly. Only 20% of contractors are female, with male contractors dominating non-consulting services, goods, construction works, and consultancy services. Specifically, women-owned businesses receive 16% of rehabilitation of building contracts, 17% of building contracts, 21% of roads and bridges contracts, 3% of drainage contracts, and 9% of power plant contracts. Female-owned

businesses account for 19% of the total contracts won, compared to 81% for male-owned businesses. Despite these challenges, female contractors exhibit higher success rates in converting bid contracts into actual wins for goods (83% vs. 57%), construction work (57% vs. 49%), and non-consultancy services (88% vs. 69%) compared to their male counterparts.

The GRP Policy is a strategic response to these challenges, aiming to ensure that women-owned businesses survive and thrive. This policy is not merely a corrective measure but an investment in the state's economic future. Lagos State taps into a reservoir of innovation, productivity, and resilience by supporting women-owned businesses. The potential benefits include increased economic growth, job creation, and a more robust and diverse marketplace.

The transition from the State Tender Board (STB) to the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency (PPA) emphasized a more evidence-based approach to contractual engagement. This transition aligns with the global recognition of public procurement as an essential instrument for sustainable development, as endorsed by Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) underscore the importance of gender-responsive procurement processes.

Historically, mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes to promote gender equity dates back to the late 1990s within the context of development policies. The endorsement of Agenda 2030 has further consolidated the role of public procurement in building a more inclusive economy. This vision promotes equitable socio-economic recovery, gender-responsive procurement, and sustainable development, creating outcomes for gender equity and women's empowerment.

Lagos State's collaboration with UN Women underscores its proactive stance in fostering economic opportunities for WOBs/WLCs. This partnership includes training and empowerment programmes designed to enable women-owned businesses to capitalize on public procurement opportunities. Such initiatives are crucial for addressing structural barriers and promoting gender responsiveness across procurement processes, practices, and institutions.

Lagos State's socio-economic profile further justifies the need for affirmative procurement policies. With a population estimated at over 27 million and contributing 30% to Nigeria's GDP, Lagos State is the economic, financial, and commercial nerve centre of West Africa. Promoting women-owned businesses in this context is a matter of equity and a strategic economic necessity. As the most industrialized economy in Africa, Lagos State stands to benefit significantly from an inclusive procurement policy that harnesses the full potential of its female entrepreneurs.

The rationale for affirmative procurement for women-owned businesses in Lagos State is clear. It is a strategic move to harness the full economic potential of women entrepreneurs, promote gender equity, and foster a more inclusive and prosperous Lagos State. This policy aligns with global objectives for sustainable development and gender equity, positioning Lagos State as a leader in inclusive economic reform.

2.2 Legal and Ethical Considerations

2.2.1 Legal Considerations

The cornerstone of this policy is the Lagos State Public Procurement Law 2021, enacted to promote the ease of doing business, engender best practices, and ensure the workability of public procurement while upholding the principles of probity, accountability, and fairness. This law provides a robust legal framework for the GRP Policy, ensuring it operates within established regulations. Additionally, it is informed by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) model, which sets an international benchmark for regulated procurement systems. This alignment with global standards enhances the credibility and integrity of Lagos State's procurement processes.

2.2.2 Ethical Considerations

Ethically, the GRP Policy reflects a commitment to gender equity and empowerment, resonating with the ethos of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The GRP Policy also addresses broader implications of affirmative procurement, such as fostering an inclusive economy and promoting equitable socio-economic

recovery, especially in the wake of challenges such as the global COVID-19 pandemic. By prioritising ethical considerations, the GRP Policy underscores the importance of fairness and inclusivity in public procurement practices.

2.2.3 Operational Guidelines

To operationalize these considerations, the GRP Policy includes clear guidelines that align with the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency's mandate to ensure transparency and accountability in procurement processes. The procurement manual and regulations are meticulously followed to ensure that Women-Owned Businesses receive fair opportunities to participate in public procurement. These guidelines are essential for maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the GRP Policy.

2.2.4 Capacity Building

The GRP Policy outlines strategies for capacity building among women entrepreneurs, enabling them to compete in procurement processes effectively. This includes providing access to necessary training, resources, and support systems that can enhance their business acumen and technical capabilities. Capacity-building initiatives are critical for empowering women-owned businesses to meet the standards required in public procurement and thrive in the competitive marketplace. In light of recent developments, the GRP Policy will also integrate the UN Women/Do's WEEAP Training Programme curriculum, designed to empower WOBs/WLCs to excel in the competitive procurement arena.

2.2.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

A robust monitoring and evaluation framework is integrated into the GRP Policy to track progress, assess the impact of affirmative procurement initiatives, and ensure that the intended benefits for Women-Owned Businesses are realized. This framework includes measurable indicators and benchmarks for success, allowing for continuous improvement and accountability. Regular assessments help to identify areas for enhancement and ensure that the GRP Policy remains effective and relevant.

2.2.6 Stakeholder Engagement

Active engagement with stakeholders, including women entrepreneurs, government bodies, and civil society organisations, is crucial. Their input provides valuable insights and helps to refine the GRP Policy, ensuring it is responsive to the needs of women-owned

businesses and aligns with the state's economic objectives. Stakeholder engagement fosters a collaborative approach and enhances the GRP Policy's effectiveness by incorporating diverse perspectives and expertise.

The GRP Policy is a living document that will evolve with the changing legal landscape and ethical considerations. It serves as a guideline for procurement practices and as a beacon for gender equity and women's economic empowerment in the region. By adhering to the extant procurement law, regulations, and manual and embracing a spirit of inclusivity and fairness, Lagos State can set a precedent for affirmative procurement policies that uplift women entrepreneurs and contribute to sustainable development.

2.3 Alignment with National and International Frameworks

This policy is in harmony with both national directives and global mandates, notably the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals represent a global pledge to eradicate poverty, safeguard our planet, and secure peace and prosperity for all.

Goal 1: No Poverty - This policy is dedicated to the economic empowerment of women, which is instrumental in alleviating poverty for them and their families. It acknowledges the profound impact that women's economic success has on their households and communities, leading to a ripple effect that enhances the welfare of society at large.

Goal 5: Gender Equality—The policy tackles gender equality head-on by guaranteeing equal economic participation opportunities for women. It aims to dismantle the historical obstacles that have hindered women's

access to procurement opportunities, thereby fostering a more gender-balanced business landscape.

Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth - The policy opens doors for women-owned businesses to procurement opportunities, thereby fuelling sustainable economic advancement. It ensures that women entrepreneurs can establish and expand their enterprises, which translates into job creation and the provision of decent work for others.

Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities - Serving as an instrument for diminishing disparities, the policy strives to equalize

opportunities for Women-Owned Businesses. It provides the necessary support for these businesses to compete

equitably in the marketplace, thus narrowing the income gap and enhancing social integration.

The GRP Policy outlines detailed implementation strategies, including identification methods for women-owned businesses, selection criteria for procurement, and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation frameworks to gauge the policy's impact. It also encompasses capacity-building initiatives to equip women entrepreneurs with the skills required to fulfil procurement prerequisites and compete effectively.

The policy also advocates for creating synergistic partnerships with diverse stakeholders, such as governmental bodies, private sector firms, and civil society organisations. These collaborations are intended to cultivate a supportive environment for women entrepreneurs.

PART 3- ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

In developing the GRP Policy, it is crucial to acknowledge and integrate the guidance provided by various international and national frameworks on women's rights and economic empowerment. Lagos State relied on key international instruments and national policies in designing this policy, underscoring its commitment to promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

3.1 International Instruments

Nigeria has adopted and ratified several international instruments that advocate for the rights and empowerment of women. These instruments provide a foundational framework that guides national and state-level policies, and were considered in developing this policy:

- i. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1981): Ratified by Nigeria in 1985, CEDAW is a landmark international treaty that focuses on eliminating discrimination against women in all forms. It obliges state parties to take appropriate measures to

- \ensure women's full development and advancement.
- ii. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) (1995): Adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the BPFA is a comprehensive policy agenda for the empowerment and advancement of women. It emphasizes the importance of women's participation in all spheres of society, including economic activities.
- iii. The African Charter on Human and People's Rights (1981): Ratified by Nigeria in 1983, this charter, also known as the Banjul Charter, guarantees a wide range of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights for all Africans, with specific provisions for women's rights.
- iv. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000): This resolution addresses the disproportionate impact of armed conflict on women and the importance of women's involvement in peace processes. It underscores the need for their participation in decision-making at all levels.
- v. The Maputo Protocol (2003): Formally known as the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, it was ratified by Nigeria in 2004. The protocol provides a comprehensive framework for the protection of women's rights in Africa, including economic and social rights.

3.2 National Instruments and Policies

In addition to international commitments, Nigeria has developed and enacted several national laws, policies, and frameworks to promote gender equality and women's economic empowerment. These national instruments provide critical guidance for this policy:

- i. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999): The Nigerian Constitution enshrines the principles of equality and non-discrimination, providing a legal basis for gender equality and the protection of women's rights.
- ii. The National Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Policy and Action Plan (2023): This is a strategic initiative by the federal government to address gender

- disparities and catalyse economic growth by empowering women through targeted actions in key sectors and with cross-cutting enablers
- iii. The Revised National Gender Policy (2022): This policy aims to make gender equality a key driver for economic growth and development. It emphasizes the need for gender mainstreaming across all sectors.
 - iv. The Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (2022): Developed by the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget, and National Planning (FMFBNP) and the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, this framework strengthens the monitoring and evaluation of WEE interventions in Nigeria.
 - v. The National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (2021): This policy aims to eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure that every Nigerian child, regardless of gender, has access to quality education.
 - vi. The Framework for Advancing Women's Financial Inclusion in Nigeria (2020): This framework addresses barriers to women's financial inclusion and focuses on driving sustainable access to and usage of financial services by Nigerian women.
 - vii. The National Action Plan on Gender and Climate Change (2020): This plan integrates gender equality into implementing national climate change initiatives, ensuring that women's needs and contributions are considered.
 - viii. The National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2019): This strategy enables Nigeria to leverage digital technologies to diversify the economy, with specific initiatives to support women's participation in the digital economy.
 - ix. The National Gender Policy in Agriculture (2019): Developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, this policy drives gender mainstreaming in the agricultural sector, promoting equal opportunities for women farmers.
 - x. The National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2018): Emphasizing women's financial inclusion, this strategy mandates that microfinance banks have at least

- 30 percent female staff and prioritizes women in financial services.
- xi. Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Regulations (2012): These regulations require commercial banks to have at least 30 percent female representation on their boards and ensure that 60 percent of loans under the MSME Development Fund are disbursed to women.
- xii. The Securities and Exchange Commission Code (2011): This code recommends that publicly listed companies consider gender when selecting board members, promoting gender diversity in corporate governance.

The GRP Policy is deeply rooted in the international and national commitments to gender equality and women's economic empowerment. By leveraging these frameworks, the policy seeks to create a more inclusive and equitable economic landscape, ensuring that women-owned businesses can thrive and contribute to the state's development. Continuous alignment with these instruments will be critical for the policy's success and sustainability.

Part 4- POLICY OBJECTIVES

4.1 Specific Goals

4.1.1 Increase the Percentage of Public Tenders Awarded to WOBs/WLCs

- i. Establish clear benchmarks for the percentage of public procurement contracts that should be awarded to WOBs and WLCs.
- ii. Designate certain contracts, particularly those below a certain financial threshold exclusively for WOBs and WLCs to encourage participation and success.
- iii. Introduce and enforce quotas across various sectors to ensure an equitable distribution of opportunities among WOBs and WLCs.

4.1.2 Enhance the Capacity of WOBs/WLCs to Compete in Public Procurement

- i. Develop comprehensive training programmes on procurement processes, bid preparation, financial management, and legal compliance to equip WOBs and WLCs with the necessary skills and knowledge.
- ii. Facilitate mentorship programmes connecting experienced business leaders with emerging women entrepreneurs, and establish networking opportunities to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- iii. Implement financial support mechanisms such as low-interest loans, grants, and advance payments to alleviate cash flow challenges and enable WOBs and WLCs to scale their operations.

4.1.3 Foster an Inclusive Procurement Environment that Supports Gender Equity

- i. Streamline and simplify procurement procedures to reduce complexity and ensure they are accessible to WOBs and WLCs. This includes standardizing documents, minimizing unnecessary requirements, and enhancing the transparency of the procurement process.
- ii. Mandate the inclusion of gender considerations in all procurement policies and practices. This includes gender-sensitive evaluation criteria and ensuring women's representation in procurement decision-making bodies.
- iii. Increase awareness and accessibility of procurement opportunities through targeted outreach efforts, including advertisements in women-dominated areas, and using local languages to reach a broader audience.

4.2 Expected Outcomes

4.2.1 Greater Economic Opportunities for Women-Owned Businesses

- i. A measurable increase in the number and value of contracts awarded to WOBs and WLCs, thereby boosting their revenue and market presence.
- ii. Increased procurement opportunities and capacity-building initiatives have enhanced the growth, sustainability, and competitiveness of WOBs and WLCs.

4.2.2 Increased Diversity and Innovation in Public Procurement

- i. A more diverse supplier base that reflects the demographics of Lagos State will lead to a wider variety of goods, works, services, and innovative solutions in the public sector.
- ii. The quality and efficiency of public services and infrastructure projects have improved due to the inclusion of diverse perspectives and approaches brought by WOBs and WLCs.

4.2.3 Economic Growth and Social Inclusion in Lagos State

- i. Stimulated economic growth and job creation through the increased participation of WOBs and WLCs in public procurement, contributing to the overall economic development of Lagos State.
- ii. Greater social inclusion and empowerment of women, leading to a reduction in gender disparities and the promotion of gender equity in the economic landscape of Lagos State.

By achieving these specific goals and expected outcomes, the GRP Policy aims to create a more equitable, diverse, and dynamic economic environment in Lagos State, where women entrepreneurs can thrive and contribute to sustainable development.

Part 5- SCOPE OF THE POLICY

5.1 Sectors and Entities Covered

The GRP Policy includes all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Government Authorities (LGAs) within Lagos State. It mandates the integration of gender-responsive practices in procuring goods, services, and works, ensuring a unified approach across the public procurement domain. Recent initiatives have included specific gender-responsive procurement clauses in procurement regulations and guidelines to bolster this integration.

5.2 Geographic and Demographic Reach

The GRP Policy's scope covers all procurement activities across Lagos State, with the goal of empowering WOBs and WLCs in various sectors and regions within the state.

5.3 Sectoral Coverage

The GRP Policy applies to all sectors engaged in public procurement in the State.

5.4 State-wide Inclusivity

Recognizing Lagos State's varied economic environment, the GRP Policy promotes the inclusion of WOBs/WLCs from urban, peri-urban, and rural locales. Efforts to ensure this include:

- i. Collaborating with business development entities and commerce chambers to connect with WOBs/WLCs in all areas of the State.
- ii. Broadcasting policy details and procurement notices in Yoruba alongside English to enhance accessibility.
- iii. Facilitating the establishment of local support centres, in partnership with LGAs, to offer localized assistance and training to WOBs/WLCs.

Part 6- ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

6.1 Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for the benefits and support measures outlined in this policy, businesses must meet the following criteria for classification as a WOB/WLC:

- i. **Ownership:** At least 51% of the business must be owned by one or more women. Ownership is demonstrably evidenced through legal documents such as incorporation certificates, shareholder agreements, and business registration documents.
- ii. **Management and Control:** One or more women must hold leadership positions with authority to make key decisions concerning the business operations and financial direction business operations and financial direction decisions. This can be verified through board composition documents, management organograms, and company bylaws.
- iii. **Independence:** The WOB/WLC must operate as a separate and distinct entity from any business not owned by women. This ensures that the benefits of the GRP Policy are directed towards fostering genuine women-led enterprises. Financial independence can be established through separate bank accounts and audited financial statements (if applicable).

6.2 Additional Considerations

- i. **Equity Ownership:** Additional benefits or incentives may be offered to WOBs with a higher percentage of female ownership (e.g., 100% female ownership).
- ii. **Joint Ventures and Consortia:** The GRP Policy allows WOBs/WLCs to form joint ventures or consortiums with established firms to participate in larger or more complex tenders, provided the WOB/WLC holds a significant decision-making role and demonstrates a clear contribution to the project's execution.

6.3 Documentation and Verification Processes

A robust and transparent documentation and verification process ensure that only genuine WOBs and WLCs benefit from the GRP Policy. This process, managed by the PPA, will maintain the policy's integrity and effectiveness.

6.4 Verification by PPA in Collaboration with a Reputable Body

6.4.1 Submission of Documentation

Businesses seeking certification as WOBs/WLCs must submit comprehensive documentation demonstrating compliance with the eligibility criteria. The required documents include:

- i. **Ownership Documentation:** Legal documents such as memorandum and articles of incorporation, share certificates, and ownership agreements showing that one or more women own at least 51% of the business.
- ii. **Management Documentation:** Organizational charts, management agreements, and employment contracts proving that one or more women hold key executive positions and control the business's daily operations and strategic decisions.
- iii. **Independence Documentation:** Financial statements, tax returns, and other relevant documents indicating that the business operates independently from non-women-owned businesses.

6.4.2 Initial Verification Audit

Upon submission of the required documentation, PPA may conduct an initial verification audit. This verification may be performed in collaboration with a reputable body. This process may include:

- i. A thorough examination of the submitted documents to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria.
- ii. Physical inspections of the business premises to verify operational independence and the presence of women in key management roles.
- iii. Interviews with the business owners and management team to assess their understanding and control over the business operations.

6.5 Certification

Once a business passes the initial verification audit, it will be certified as a WOB or WLC by PPA. This certification is valid for a specified period as stipulated by PPA, after which the business must undergo a re-certification process.

6.6 Periodic and Random Audits

To maintain ongoing compliance, the PPA, with or without a reputable body, will conduct periodic and random audits of certified WOBs/WLCs. These audits ensure that businesses continue to meet the eligibility criteria and have not undergone changes that would disqualify them.

6.7 Maintaining a Publicly Accessible List of Verified WOBs/WLCs

The PPA will maintain a publicly accessible register of verified WOBs and WLCs. This register will be available online and regularly updated to reflect the most current list of certified businesses. The register will include:

- i. Business Name and Contact Information: Details of the certified business, including name, address, contact information, and a brief description of the services or products offered.
- ii. Certification Status: The certification status and expiration date indicate the period during which the business is verified as a WOB or WLC.
- iii. Verification Reports: Summaries of the verification audits, providing transparency about the certification process and the business's compliance with the eligibility criteria.

6.8 Data Privacy and Security

To protect businesses' sensitive information, the PPA will implement stringent data privacy and security measures. This includes secure data storage, restricted access to sensitive information, and compliance with relevant data protection regulations.

6.9 Accessibility and User-Friendliness

The public registry will be designed to be user-friendly, ensuring easy access and navigation for stakeholders, including procurement officers, other businesses, and the general public. The website will feature search and filter functionalities to help users find specific businesses or categories of WOBs/WLCs.

6.10 Regular Updates

The registry will be updated regularly to add new certified businesses, remove those whose certifications have expired or been revoked, and reflect any changes in business details. This ensures that the information remains accurate and reliable for users.

PART 7- PROCUREMENT PROCESSES

The GRP Policy promotes procurement processes to ensure fair access to procurement opportunities for WOBs and WLCs. Such processes are designed to eliminate barriers, promote equity, and create a supportive environment for women entrepreneurs.

7.1 Steps to Ensure Fair Access to Procurement Opportunities

The following steps outline the key measures this Policy shall strive to promote vis-à-vis procurement processes:

7.1.1 Standardization

- i. Develop and provide standardized, clear, concise, and user-friendly tender documents that are easy to understand and complete. This includes simplifying legal and technical language to make the process more accessible to WOBs and WLCs.
- ii. Create comprehensive guidelines and templates for bid submissions, helping WOBs/WLCs understand and fulfil procurement requirements effectively.
- iii. Conduct regular training sessions for WOBs/WLCs on navigating tender documents, preparing bids, and meeting procurement criteria.

7.1.2 Harmonization

- i. Ensure that all procuring entities within Lagos State adopt consistent procedures and documentation standards to simplify the procurement process for WOBs/WLCs. This includes harmonizing eligibility criteria, evaluation processes, and contract terms across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Government Authorities (LGAs).
- ii. Establish coordination mechanisms among procuring entities to share best practices, streamline procedures, and reduce redundant requirements that may burden WOBs/WLCs.

7.1.3 Promotion of Contract Lotting

- i. Promote a system of lotting contracts into manageable sizes that are more accessible to WOBs/WLCs.
- ii. Encourage WOBs/WLCs to bid for manageable contract sizes by providing clear information on the contracts and the scope of work.

7.1.4 Optimization of Financial Costs

- i. Establish financial qualification criteria proportionate to the contract value and complexity. This involves setting reasonable thresholds that do not disadvantage smaller WOBs/WLCs.
- ii. Encourage the waiving or reducing the requirement for audited financial accounts for smaller value contracts, making it easier for WOBs/WLCs to qualify and compete.
- iii. Implement risk mitigation strategies, such as performance bonds or advance payment bonds, proportional to the size and nature of the contract, reducing the financial burden on WOBs/WLCs.
- iv. Promotion of fee waivers or reductions for the registration process of WOBs/WLCs with PPA.
- v. Encourage waiving or reducing tender fees payable by WOBs/WLCs.

7.1.5 Advance Payments

- i. Explore options for providing advance or interim payments to WOBs/WLCs, particularly for smaller businesses facing cash flow challenges.
- ii. Encourage the issuance of advance payments of up to 70% for contracts awarded to WOBs and WLCs within a certain threshold.
- iii. Establish clear and prompt payment timelines within contracts to ensure that WOBs/WLCs receive timely payments for completed work.
- iv. Promote structured interim payments based on project milestones or deliverables, providing WOBs/WLCs with ongoing financial support throughout the contract period.

PART 8- CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUPPORT

A critical component of the GRP Policy is the establishment of comprehensive capacity-building and support programmes WLCs. These programmes are designed to empower women entrepreneurs with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to participate successfully in public procurement processes.

8.1 Programmes to Enhance Capabilities

8.1.1 Tender Helpdesk

- i. Creation of a dedicated tender helpdesk within the PPA to serve as a centralized support point for WOBs and WLCs. This helpdesk will offer personalized assistance and guidance throughout the procurement process.
- ii. Assign a knowledgeable contact person or team to manage the helpdesk. This individual or team will be responsible for answering queries, clarifying tender documents and assisting with the submission process.
- iii. The helpdesk will function as a resource hub, providing access to templates, guidelines, and best practices for preparing tender submissions.

8.1.2 Training Workshops

- i. Organisation of comprehensive training workshops focused on tendering procedures. These workshops will cover the entire procurement cycle, including finding tenders, understanding tender requirements, and preparing compliant bids.
- ii. Offering specialized training sessions on proposal writing and contract negotiation. These sessions will help WOBs and WLCs craft compelling proposals and negotiate favourable contract terms.
- iii. Incorporation of practical exercises and case studies into the training programmes to provide hands-on experience. Participants will use mock tender evaluations and proposal writing exercises to build confidence and competence.

8.1.3 Networking and Partnerships

- i. Partnership with business development organisations with expertise in supporting women entrepreneurs.
- ii. Leveraging existing women's entrepreneurship networks to connect WOBs and WLCs with potential partners, mentors, and investors.
- iii. Fostering partnerships with industry associations and sector-specific groups to provide targeted support and resources.

8.1.4 Financial Literacy and Access to Finance

- i. Promote financial literacy programmes to educate WOBs and WLCs on managing business finances, budgeting for contracts, and understanding financial statements.
- ii. Collaboration with financial institutions to promote initiatives that improve access to finance for WOBs and WLCs.

8.1.5 Digital Literacy and E-Procurement Training

- i. Facilitate digital literacy workshops to enhance the technological competence of WOBs and WLCs.
- ii. Facilitation of training on using the e-procurement platform employed by the Lagos State Government.

8.1.6 Mentorship and Coaching

- i. Promotion of mentorship programmes that pair experienced business leaders with WOBs and WLCs.
- ii. Promotion of one-on-one coaching sessions to address specific business challenges WOBs and WLCs face.

PART 9- MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Ensuring the successful implementation and continual improvement of the GRP Policy necessitates a comprehensive and effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. This framework will be crucial in tracking progress, identifying challenges, and making data-driven adjustments to the policy. The following mechanisms are established to monitor and evaluate the policy's impact systematically.

9.1 Mechanisms for Tracking Progress

9.1.1 Monitoring Framework

- i. PPA will spearhead the development and implementation of a robust monitoring and evaluation framework. This framework will outline the key performance indicators (KPIs), data collection methodologies, and reporting schedules necessary to assess the policy's effectiveness.
- ii. Establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives and indicators. These indicators will cover various aspects of the policy, including the number of WOBs/WLCs participating in procurement, the value and number of contracts awarded, and qualitative measures such as satisfaction levels among women entrepreneurs.

9.1.2 Data Collection

- i. All Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs), as well as Local Government Areas (LGAs), will be required to submit detailed data on their procurement activities to the PPA regularly, ideally quarterly. This data should include:
 - Number of procurement opportunities made available to WOBs/WLCs.
 - Number and value of contracts awarded to WOBs/WLCs.
 - Types of goods, services, and works procured from WOBs/WLCs.
 - Challenges and barriers faced by WOBs/WLCs in the procurement process.
- ii. Implement standardized templates and digital platforms to facilitate uniform data submission and ease of analysis. This will ensure consistency and accuracy in the data collected across different entities.

9.1.3 Periodic Reports

- i. The PPA will regularly analyse the collected data to evaluate progress in achieving the policy's objectives. This analysis will identify trends, measure performance against targets, and uncover areas needing improvement.
- ii. The PPA will publish periodic reports, which may be annually, summarizing the findings from the data analysis. These reports will include:
 - Quantitative results, such as the number and value of contracts awarded to WOBs/WLCs.
 - Qualitative insights, such as feedback from WOBs/WLCs regarding their experiences in the procurement process.
 - Comparative analysis to highlight improvements over previous reporting periods.
 - Case studies or success stories showcasing exemplary practices and successful outcomes.

9.1.4 Stakeholders Feedback

- i. Establish feedback mechanisms such as surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder forums to gather input from WOBs/WLCs and other stakeholders. This feedback will provide valuable insights into the policy's practical challenges and successes.
- ii. Utilize the feedback and data analysis to make informed adjustments to the policy. This adaptive approach will ensure that the policy remains relevant and effective in addressing the evolving needs of women entrepreneurs.

9.1.5 Independent Evaluation

- i. Periodically commission independent evaluators of the procurement processes and policy's implementation. This evaluation will objectively assess the policy's impact and adherence to its guidelines.
- ii. Publish the findings of the independent evaluators to maintain transparency and accountability. These reports will also offer recommendations for further improvements.

PART 10- GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

A robust grievance redress mechanism is crucial for maintaining the integrity and fairness of the GRP Policy. This mechanism will provide WOBs/WLCs with a clear, transparent, and accessible process for addressing complaints and disputes arising during procurement.

10.1 Procedures for Addressing Complaints and Disputes

10.1.1 Grievance Submission Portal

- i. Establish and maintain an online grievance submission portal managed by PPA. This portal will allow WOBs/WLCs to submit complaints electronically, ensuring ease of access and documentation.
- ii. Provide an option for physically submitting grievances at the PPA office for those who may not have access to the online portal.

10.1.2 Clear Guidelines

- i. Publish clear guidelines outlining the steps for filing a grievance. These guidelines will include information on the required documentation, submission format, and contact details for support.
- ii. Conduct periodic awareness campaigns to inform WOBs/WLCs about the grievance redress mechanism and how to utilize it effectively.

10.2 Protection Against Retaliation

10.2.1 Anti-Retaliation Policies

- i. Implement protection measures to ensure that WOBs/WLCs can file grievances without fear of retaliation or negative consequences. This includes protection against blacklisting, unfair treatment in future procurement opportunities, or any other forms of discrimination.
- ii. Maintain the confidentiality of complainants to the greatest extent possible, disclosing identities only when necessary or with the complainant's consent.

10.2.2 Whistleblower Protections

- i. Allow for anonymous reporting of grievances to protect the identities of those who fear retaliation.

- ii. Establish support systems, such as legal assistance or counselling services, for those who experience retaliation.

10.3 Resolution Timeline

10.3.1 Specific Timelines

- i. Acknowledge receipt of the grievance within 48 hours of submission.
- ii. Conduct a preliminary review and provide an initial response within seven working days.
- iii. Complete a full investigation of the grievance within 30 working days, with the possibility of a one-time extension for complex cases, not exceeding an additional 15 working days.

10.3.2 Tracking and Updates

- i. Implement a case tracking system to monitor the status of each grievance.
- ii. Provide regular updates to the complainant at each stage of the grievance process, ensuring transparency and trust in the system.

10.4 Resolution and Follow-Up

10.4.1 Resolution Process

- i. Ensure that all grievances are evaluated fairly and impartially by a dedicated Grievance Redress Committee within the PPA, composed of procurement experts, legal advisors, and, in complex cases, representatives from women's business associations or Civil Society Organisations.
- ii. Outline clear remedial actions based on the investigation's findings. These actions may include re-evaluating tenders, compensation, or other appropriate measures to address the issues raised.

10.5 Appeals Process

- i. Provide a formal appeal process for complainants unsatisfied with the resolution. To ensure objectivity, appeals will be reviewed by a higher authority within the Lagos State governmental structure.
- ii. Ensure that final decisions on appeals are made within 30 working days of the appeal submission.

10.6 Post-Resolution Monitoring

- i. Conduct follow-up checks to ensure that the remedial actions are effectively implemented and no further issues arise.
- ii. Collect feedback from complainants on the grievance handling process to identify areas for improvement and enhance the overall effectiveness of the grievance redress mechanism.

PART 11- PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

A collaborative approach involving multiple stakeholders is essential to ensuring the successful implementation of the GRP policy. Each stakeholder group has a distinct and critical role in promoting gender equity and enhancing the participation of Women-Owned Businesses (WOBs) and Women-Led Cooperatives (WLCs) in public procurement.

11.1 Government

11.1.1 Legislative Framework

- i. The government, through PPA and other relevant bodies, will enact and enforce the policy. This includes establishing the legal and regulatory framework necessary for its effective implementation.
- ii. Develop and maintain mechanisms to monitor compliance with the policy across all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) and Local Government Areas (LGAs).

11.1.2 Capacity Building

- i. Organize training programmes for procurement officers within MDAs and LGAs to ensure they understand and effectively implement the gender-responsive procurement guidelines.
- ii. Allocate resources to support the implementation of the policy, including funding for capacity-building initiatives and technological enhancements to the procurement system.

11.1.3 Accountability and Transparency

- i. Conduct regular audits of procurement processes to ensure policy adherence and identify improvement areas.
- ii. Publish annual reports on the policy's progress and impact, providing transparency and accountability to stakeholders and the public.

11.2 Private Sector

11.2.1 Partner with WOBS/WLCs for Joint Ventures

- i. Develop supplier diversity programmes that prioritize partnerships with WOBS/WLCs. These programmes should include incentives for forming joint ventures and subcontracting with women-owned entities.

- ii. Facilitate mentorship programmes where established businesses can guide and support WOBs/WLCs in building capacity, enhancing competitiveness, and navigating the procurement process.

11.2.2 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- i. Investment in capacity-building initiatives for WOBs/WLCs as part of their CSR activities. This can include funding training programmes, technical assistance, and supporting entrepreneurship development.
- ii. Creation of networks and platforms where private sector entities can share best practices and collaborate on projects that promote gender equity in procurement.

11.3 Civil Society

11.3.1 Advocacy and Awareness

- i. Launch advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of gender-responsive procurement and the benefits of supporting WOBs/WLCs. These campaigns should target both the public and private sectors and the public.
- ii. Engage in policy advocacy to ensure that gender equity considerations remain prioritised in public procurement policies and practices. This includes lobbying for policy improvements and providing input during the policy formulation process.

11.3.2 Support Services

- i. Provide training and capacity-building programmes for WOBs/WLCs to enhance their skills and knowledge in proposal writing, financial management, and compliance with procurement regulations.
- ii. Offer technical assistance and advisory services to help WOBs/WLCs meet the requirements of public tenders and improve their chances of winning contracts.

11.3.3 Monitoring and Accountability

- i. Act as a watchdog to monitor the implementation of the policy and ensure that MDAs and LGAs adhere to gender-responsive procurement practices. Report any discrepancies or violations to the appropriate authorities.

- ii. Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from WOBs/WLCs on their experiences with the procurement process. Use this feedback to advocate for continuous improvements and address challenges women-owned businesses face.

The success of the GRP Policy hinges on the active participation and collaboration of these stakeholders. By working together, the government, private sector, and civil society can create an enabling environment that supports the growth and development of WOBs/WLCs, promotes gender equity, and drives inclusive economic growth in Lagos State. Through joint efforts, these stakeholders can ensure that the policy achieves its objectives and sets a benchmark for gender-responsive procurement practices across Nigeria and beyond.

PART 12- IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A detailed and structured implementation plan is essential to ensure the successful rollout and sustainability of the GRP Policy. The implementation plan outlines specific steps, timelines, responsibilities, and resources required for each phase of the implementation process.

12.1 Phase 1: Preparation and Planning

12.1.1 Stakeholders Engagement

- i. Map out all relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector partners, civil society organisations, and WOBs/WLCs.
- ii. Conduct initial consultations to gather input and build consensus on the policy objectives, strategies, and implementation approach.

12.1.2 Capacity Building

- i. Develop and deliver training programmes for procurement officers, WOBs/WLCs, and other stakeholders to ensure they are well-prepared for the policy implementation.
- ii. Secure the necessary resources to support the implementation activities, including funding, personnel, and technology.

12.2 Phase 2: Policy Rollout

12.2.1 Public Awareness Campaigns

- i. Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy to raise awareness about the policy, its benefits, and how to participate in gender-responsive procurement.
- ii. Conduct outreach activities like roadshows, media campaigns, and informational workshops to reach WOBs/WLCs across Lagos State.

12.2.2 Procurement Process Adjustments

- i. Review tender documents and procedures and the e-procurement platform to incorporate gender-responsive criteria and ensure they are user-friendly for WOBs/WLCs.
- ii. Establish support services, such as helpdesks and technical assistance programmes, to assist WOBs/WLCs navigate the procurement process.

12.3 Phase 3: Monitoring and Evaluation

12.3.1 Data Collection and Reporting

- i. Define the data collection and reporting requirements for MDAs and LGAs to track the participation of WOBs/WLCs in procurement activities.
- ii. Develop a schedule for regular reporting and analysis, with the PPA publishing periodic progress reports.

12.3.2 Performance Evaluation

- i. Implement the monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the policy's impact and effectiveness using qualitative and quantitative indicators.
- ii. Continuously gather feedback from stakeholders to identify areas for improvement and adjust the policy and its implementation strategies as needed.

12.4 Phase 4: Continuous Improvement

12.4.1 Policy Review and Updates

- i. Regular reviews of the policy and its implementation should be conducted to ensure it remains relevant and effective in achieving its objectives.
- ii. Make adjustments to the policy based on evaluation findings, stakeholder feedback, and emerging best practices.

12.4.2 Sustained Engagement

- i. Provide ongoing training and capacity-building opportunities for all stakeholders to update them on the latest developments and best practices in gender-responsive procurement.
- ii. Foster long-term partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure sustained support for WOBs/WLCs and continuous progress towards gender equity in public procurement.

PART 13- TIMELINE AND MILESTONES

A detailed and structured timeline with specific milestones is essential for successfully implementing the GRP Policy. This timeline outlines the key phases and activities, along with allocated responsibilities and resources, to ensure systematic and effective policy rollout.

13.1 Initial Phase (0-6 months)

Objective: Establish foundational structures and initiate awareness campaigns.

13.1.1 Month 0-2: Set Up the Gender Desk

- i. Milestone: Establish a dedicated Gender Desk within the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency (PPA).
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA
- iii. Resources: Office space, staffing, budget allocation.

13.1.2 Month 0-3: Establish the Tender Helpdesk

- i. Milestone: Create a tender helpdesk to guide and support women-owned businesses (WOBs) and women-led cooperatives (WLCs).
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA.
- iii. Resources: Staff training, informational materials, hotline setup.

13.1.3 Month 2-6: Start Awareness Campaigns

- i. Milestone: Launch comprehensive awareness campaigns to inform stakeholders about the policy.
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA, relevant MDAs, communication teams, and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).
- iii. Resources: Media budget, outreach materials, partnerships with women's business associations.

13.2 Mid-Term Phase (6-18 months)

Objective: Implement capacity-building initiatives and monitor initial impacts.

13.2.1 Month 6-12: Roll Out Training Programmes

- i. Milestone: Develop and deliver training workshops on tendering procedures, proposal writing, and contract negotiation.

- ii. Responsibilities: PPA, business development organisations, training consultants.
- iii. Resources: Training materials, venues, trainers.

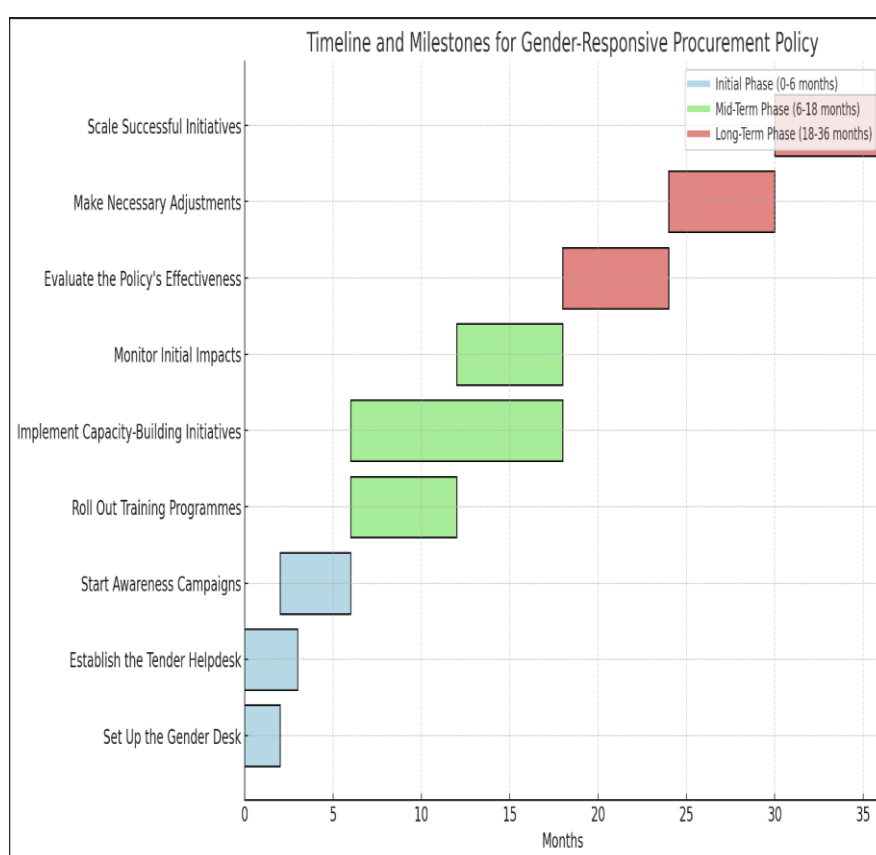
13.2.2 Month 6-18: Implement Capacity-Building Initiatives

- i. Milestone: Initiate capacity-building programmes such as mentorship, networking events, and technical assistance.
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA, private sector partners, civil society organisations.
- iii. Resources: Mentorship program budget, event organisation, technical experts.

13.2.3 Month 12-18:

Monitor Initial Impacts

- i. Milestone: Start collecting data and monitoring the participation of WOBs/WLCs in procurement activities.
- ii. Responsibilities: MDAs, LGAs, PPA.
- iii. Resources: Data collection tools, reporting systems, analytical support.



13.3 Long-Term Phase (18-36 months)

Objective: Evaluate the policy's effectiveness, make necessary adjustments, and scale successful initiatives.

13.3.1 Month 18-24: Evaluate the Policy's Effectiveness

- i. Milestone: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the policy's impact and effectiveness using collected data.
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA, independent evaluators, stakeholders.
- iii. Resources: Evaluation framework, data analysis software, evaluator fees.

13.3.2 Month 24-30: Make Necessary Adjustments

- i. Milestone: Adjust the policy based on evaluation findings and stakeholder feedback.
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA, policy advisors, MDAs, LGAs.
- iii. Resources: Consultation budget, policy revision teams.

13.3.3 Month 30-36: Scale-up Successful Initiatives

- i. Milestone: Expand successful programmes and initiatives to ensure broader impact and sustainability.
- ii. Responsibilities: PPA, Private Sector Partners, Civil Society Organisations.
- iii. Resources: Budget increase, strategic partnerships, additional staffing.

PART 14- RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESOURCES

14.1 Lagos State Public Procurement Agency

- i. Responsibilities: Overall coordination, setting up the Gender Desk and tender helpdesk, conducting awareness campaigns, and monitoring and evaluation.
- ii. Resources: Budget allocation, staffing, training resources, and data collection tools.

14.2 Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs)

- i. Responsibilities: Implementing procurement practices, submitting data, participating in training, and capacity-building initiatives.
- ii. Resources: Staff time, training and data collection budget, technical assistance.

14.3 Local Government Areas (LGAs)

- i. Responsibilities: Implementing local procurement practices, submitting data, and supporting awareness campaigns.
- ii. Resources: Local budget allocation, staff training, outreach materials.

14.4 Private Sector Partners

- i. Responsibilities: Partnering in training, mentorship programmes, and public-private initiatives.
- ii. Resources: Expertise, mentorship time, financial support for joint initiatives.

14.5 Civil Society Organisations

- i. Responsibilities: Advocacy, supporting awareness campaigns, and providing support services to WOBs/WLCs.
- ii. Resources: Advocacy tools, outreach capacity, support staff.

14.6 Women-Owned Businesses and Women-Led Cooperatives (WOBs/WLCs)

- i. Responsibilities: Participating in training, utilizing support services, and engaging in procurement.
- ii. Resources: Business readiness and engagement in capacity-building activities.

PART 15: RISK MANAGEMENT

Effective implementation of the GRP Policy requires careful consideration of various potential risks. Both exogenous and endogenous factors can pose significant challenges to the successful execution of this policy. The Lagos State Government will proactively identify, monitor, and mitigate these risks through strategic planning, robust advocacy, and adaptive strategies. The GRP Policy outlines the key risks categorised into strategic, financial, and political risks and potential mitigation measures.

15.1 Strategic Risks

Strategic risks refer to those factors that could undermine the core objectives of the GRP Policy. Key strategic risks include:

15.1.1 Inadequate Monitoring and Evaluation: Failing to incorporate robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms can prevent the accurate measurement of progress and impact. Mitigation includes:

- i. Establish a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework with clear indicators and regular reporting intervals.
- ii. Engage third-party evaluators to ensure transparency and objectivity.

15.1.2 Irregular Policy Reviews: Infrequent reviews of the policy and its implementation may fail to account for changing contexts and emerging challenges, thus weakening its impact. Mitigation includes:

- i. Implement a structured schedule for periodic policy reviews and adjustments.
- ii. Ensure stakeholder feedback is integral to the review process.

15.1.3 Lack of Public-Private Partnerships: Without strong collaboration between the public and private sectors, women's economic empowerment efforts may become inefficient and duplicative. Mitigation includes:

- i. Foster partnerships with private sector entities and civil society organizations.
- ii. Create collaborative platforms and forums to align efforts and resources.

15.2 Financial Risks

Financial risks are related to funding constraints and economic conditions that could impede the policy's implementation. Key financial risks include:

15.2.1 Conflicting Policies and Priorities: Governmental policies and priorities that conflict with the policy initiatives may limit resource allocation. Mitigation includes:

- i. Advocate for the alignment of policy initiatives with broader government priorities.
- ii. Secure dedicated budget lines for policy activities.

15.2.2 Global Economic Conditions: Instability in the global economy may reduce financial contributions from donors and investors. Mitigation includes:

- i. Diversify funding sources and create contingency plans to manage funding shortfalls.
- ii. Strengthen local fundraising and self-sustainability initiatives.

15.2.3 Delays in Fund Disbursement: Delays in releasing funds by government stakeholders and partners can exacerbate funding gaps and hinder progress. Mitigation includes:

- i. Establish clear timelines and accountability measures for fund disbursement.
- ii. Maintain transparent communication channels with all stakeholders to ensure timely fund allocation.

15.2.4 Inadequate Funding for Lead MDAs: Insufficient funding for key MDAs and relevant stakeholders can delay implementation and progress. Mitigation includes:

- i. Conduct regular financial needs assessments and advocate for increased budget allocations.
- ii. Engage in continuous dialogue with funding bodies to ensure sustained support.

15.3 Political Risks

Political risks involve governance, political support, and security factors that can affect policy implementation. Key political risks include:

15.3.1 Weak Political Support: Insufficient political backing at Federal, State and Local Government levels can hamper the effective implementation of the policy. Mitigation includes:

- i. Engage with political leaders to build broad-based support for policy initiatives.

- ii. Highlight the socio-economic benefits of the policy to garner political commitment.

15.3.2 Political Transitions: Changes in political leadership may result in the loss of trained staff essential for advancing policy goals. Mitigation includes:

- i. Develop a comprehensive transition plan to retain institutional knowledge and ensure continuity.
- ii. Provide training programs to promptly onboard new staff.

PART 16- THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Implementing the GRP Policy requires a coordinated effort across various government offices and departments. The following offices are integral to the Implementation Task Force for GRP Policy:

16.1 Office of the Governor

- i. Provides overall leadership and political support for the GRP Policy.
- ii. Ensures alignment with state priorities and resource allocation.

16.2 Lagos State Public Procurement Agency (PPA)

- i. Leads the implementation of procurement processes.
- ii. Ensures compliance with affirmative procurement guidelines.
- iii. Serves as the key implementer on behalf of the state, coordinating efforts across all relevant offices.

16.3 Ministry of Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA)

- i. Advocates for women-owned businesses and ensures their needs are met.
- ii. Provides training and support to women entrepreneurs.

16.4 Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget

- i. Ensures budgetary allocations for policy implementation.
- ii. Monitors financial expenditures related to the policy.

16.5 Ministry of Commerce, Cooperatives, Trade and Investment

- i. Facilitates the inclusion of women-owned businesses in trade and industry initiatives.
- ii. Supports business development and market access for women entrepreneurs.

16.6 Lagos State Employment Trust Fund (LSETF)

- i. Provides financial support and grants to women-owned businesses.
- ii. Offers capacity-building programs and financial literacy training.

16.7 Ministry of Finance

- i. Oversees the financial management of the policy implementation.
- ii. Ensures timely disbursement of funds to relevant stakeholders.

16.8 Ministry of Justice

- i. Provides legal support to ensure compliance with procurement law and regulations.
- ii. Addresses any legal challenges that may arise during implementation.

16.9 Ministry of Education

- i. Integrates gender-sensitive procurement education into curricula.
- ii. Supports educational programmes that promote entrepreneurship among women.

16.10 Local Government Areas (LGAs)

- i. Implements the policy at the grassroots level.
- ii. Ensures that local women-owned businesses are included in procurement opportunities.

16.11 Office of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- i. Aligns the policy with relevant SDG targets, particularly gender equality and economic empowerment.
- ii. Monitors and reports on the policy's contribution to achieving the SDGs.

16.12 Organised Private Sector

- i. Includes representatives from key industries and business associations.
- ii. Provides insights and recommendations on effective policy implementation.

16.13 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

- i. Advocates for the interests of women-owned businesses.
- ii. Monitors and evaluates the impact of the policy from a grassroots perspective.

16.14 Implementation Task Force Coordination

The implementation task force for the GRP Policy is not a standing committee; however, all listed offices are expected to play their designated roles in ensuring the policy's success. PPA remains the key implementer on behalf of the state, responsible for leading and coordinating the policy's implementation. PPA will guide and oversee the entire process, ensuring compliance with affirmative procurement guidelines and facilitating capacity-building initiatives. Other offices, including various MDAs and Local Government

Areas, support the PPA whenever needed. This collaborative approach ensures that while the PPA spearheads the efforts, each office contributes expertise and resources to foster an inclusive, efficient, and effective procurement environment for women-owned businesses in Lagos State.

PART 17- LIMITATIONS AND LEGAL DISCLAIMER

The GRP Policy aims to articulate the policy focus and thrust of the Lagos State Government concerning affirmative procurement for women-owned businesses. It represents a strategic commitment by the state to foster an inclusive economic environment, promote gender equity, and enhance the participation of women in public procurement processes.

While the Lagos State Government is dedicated to the principles and objectives outlined in this document, it is essential to note that the GRP Policy is not legally binding or justiciable. The policies, targets, and initiatives detailed herein are intended to guide the State's efforts and reflect its aspirations to support women-owned businesses. However, of realising these goals is subject to various factors, including but not limited to budgetary constraints, administrative feasibility, and changing socioeconomic conditions.

The Lagos State Government pledges to make earnest and concerted efforts to implement the directives and achieve the targets set forth in this GRP Policy. The State is committed to deploying its resources, within its capacity, to ensure that the affirmative procurement objectives for women-owned businesses are pursued diligently. Nevertheless, it must be understood that achieving all goals cannot be guaranteed.

In light of the foregoing, it is expressly stated that the Lagos State Government shall not be held liable or open to any form of liability for any shortcomings or non-fulfilment of the policies and objectives delineated in this document. This includes but is not limited to, any delays, partial implementations, or non-implementation of any specified initiative. The State's obligations under the GRP Policy are not enforceable through legal proceedings or any judicial process.

Stakeholders, including Women-Owned Businesses and other interested parties, are encouraged to view this policy document as a framework for collaborative engagement and continuous improvement, rather than a contractual or statutory guarantee.

This caveat, therefore, ensures that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of the nature and scope of the commitments made herein and the GRP Policy's non-justiciable status.

NOTES

- i. The GRP Policy represents the official policy of the Lagos State Government on Affirmative Procurement for Women-Owned Businesses.
- ii. The policy may be referred to by its short title: The Gender-Responsive Procurement Policy (GRP Policy).
- iii. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, the responsibilities outlined in the GRP Policy will be championed or executed by the Lagos State Public Procurement Agency (PPA).
- iv. In some special cases to be decided by the Lagos State Government from time to time, the benefits accruable to Women owned businesses in this Gender Responsive Policy may be extended to Women-led businesses.
- v. This GRP Policy articulates the policy stance of the Lagos State Government. However, it is to be understood that the policy does not supersede any existing laws, regulations, executive orders, or official circulars currently in effect.