Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Hand-in-Hand
Initiative

Benin

HAND-IN-HAND INITIATIVE | 2026 INVESTMENT FORUM

IMPORTANT NOTES

FAO'S HAND-IN-HAND INITIATIVE

The investment opportunities presented in this document derive from government-led investment plans developed under FAO's Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative. The Initiative supports countries in identifying high-impact agrifood system investments through a combination of data-driven territorial analysis, value chain assessments, and close collaboration with national counterparts. Using the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform, the Initiative integrates geospatial, biophysical, and socio-economic data to identify priority "green zones" where agricultural potential and poverty incidence overlap, creating strong opportunities for transformative investment. Based on these analyses, national governments lead the development of investment plans that identify priority value chains, key bottlenecks, and potential investments required to accelerate agrifood system transformation. These investment opportunities aim to raise incomes, improve nutrition, and empower poor and vulnerable populations, while strengthening resilience to climate change and supporting the sustainable management of natural resources. The Initiative focuses on territories where targeted investments can generate the greatest impact in reducing poverty and hunger, contributing to progress towards Sustainable Development Goals SDG1 (No Poverty), SDG2 (Zero Hunger), and SDG10 (Reduced Inequalities), while balancing economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

IMPORTANT CLARIFICATIONS

The opportunities presented in this document are derived from government investment plans and reflect national development priorities identified through the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. FAO provides analytical and technical support in the identification and assessment of these opportunities and facilitates engagement with potential partners. The concepts presented are indicative and require further structuring and discussion with the relevant governments and potential investors. This document therefore presents a pipeline of government-prioritized agrifood investment opportunities that have been pre-screened using FAO's Hand-in-Hand analytical tools. FAO can support interested partners by facilitating technical exchanges and follow-up discussions with relevant government counterparts.

IMPACT TAGS

Investment cases are classified across four impact areas to highlight their primary development contributions and ensure comparability across countries and value chains.

Livelihoods	Income, productivity, jobs, and market access
Gender & Youth	Inclusion and opportunities for women and young people
Planet & Environment	Climate resilience and sustainable resource management
Digital	Use of technology to improve efficiency and access

BENIN

A fast-growing West African economy with untapped agricultural potential and strategic regional access

KEY INVESTMENT SIGNALS

POPULATION

14.5M

(MILLION)

GDP

USD 22.4B

(BILLION)

ARABLE LAND

2.7M ha

(MILLION HECTARES)

INVESTMENT CASE

STRONG ECONOMIC MOMENTUM

- GDP growth among the fastest in West Africa (2024–2025)
- Inflation contained at 1.1%, supported by CFA/euro currency peg
- Public debt moderate at ~54% of GDP, underpinning macro stability
- PNIASAN III and PAG 2021–2026 anchor long-term policy continuity

ENABLING INVESTMENT CLIMATE

- One-stop shop for business creation and streamlined establishment contracts
- Tax exemptions ranging from 5 to 17 years for qualifying investors
- Free capital transfer and legal protection for foreign investment
- GDIZ industrial zone: 14 units operational, 40+ more in development

STRATEGIC REGIONAL GATEWAY

- Direct access to Nigeria and CEDEAO's 400M-consumer market
- Port of Cotonou handles 90% of Benin's external trade
- AfCFTA preferential access with progressively reduced customs duties

BENIN: INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO

Structuring public-private investment across Benin's three priority agrifood value chains

INVESTMENT PLAN **BENIN**	INVESTMENT CASE **1. RICE PRODUCTION & PROCESSING**	INVESTMENT CASE **2. SOYBEAN PRODUCTION & PROCESSING**	INVESTMENT CASE **3. POULTRY PRODUCTION**
IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS	IMPACT TAGS
INVESTMENT **USD 172.7 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 79.3 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 48.0 million**	INVESTMENT **USD 45.4 million**
NPV **USD 111.2 million**	NPV **USD 46.4 million**	NPV **USD 32.3 million**	NPV **USD 32.5 million**
AVG IRR **20.1%**	IRR **16.0%**	IRR **26.1%**	IRR **18.3%**
DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **44.8 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **21.3 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **5.5 thousand**	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES **18.0 thousand**
INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **173.3 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **82.4 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **21.3 thousand**	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES **69.6 thousand**
AVG PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 995**	AVG PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 740**	AVG PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 1,740**	AVG PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE **+USD 504**
GHG IMPACT **-13.2 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **-3.5 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **-4.0 thousand tCO2-e**	GHG IMPACT **-5.7 thousand tCO2-e**

1. RICE PRODUCTION & PROCESSING

Hand-in-Hand Initiative

From import dependency to homegrown rice self-sufficiency

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 79.3M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 46.4M
(MILLION)

IRR
16.0%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Strong hydro-agricultural potential in the Ouémé and Mono valleys, largely untapped
- Structural import dependency creates a ready-made import-substitution market
- Backed by the SNDR 2.0 national rice strategy targeting self-sufficiency
- Significant yield upside via irrigation (AWD) and certified seed varieties

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Deficit in hydro-agricultural development (unimproved lowlands); sub-mechanization (78% of farms <2ha); limited access to certified seed	**Public** Development of 3,500 ha of irrigated lowlands (hydraulic works, roads, drainage); ~280–350t certified seed supply; mechanization via SoNaMA (650–850 kits); advisory support to 13,000 producers, PMU & MIS setup (USD 52.3 million)
2. Limited transformation capacity (milling, parboiling); weak competitiveness vs. subsidized imported rice	**Private** 6 modern mini rice mills (12 t/h combined capacity); modernization of 80 parboiling units + 8,500t storage capacity; commercial partnerships; local rice branding & marketing (USD 16.7 million)
3. Limited access to agricultural finance; weak interprofessional structuring	**PPP** Guarantee fund (~800M FCFA) to mobilize USD 10-15M in agricultural credit; FNDA/IMF credit lines; structuring of IFRIZ-Bénin interprofession; institutional market access (school canteens, WFP, public procurement) (USD 10.3 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
21.3K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
82.4K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+740
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
-3.5K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

2. SOYBEAN PRODUCTION & PROCESSING

Turning raw soybean exports into local value-added oil and feed products

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 48.0M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 32.3M
(MILLION)

IRR
26.1%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Robust production base with strong regional (CEDEAO) and export demand
- Heavy reliance on imported vegetable oil signals major substitution potential
- Growing industrial demand for oil, animal feed, and tourteaux products
- Well positioned to benefit from CEDEAO/AfCFTA regional trade integration

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Low yields (1.1 t/ha vs. 2.5–3 t/ha potential); insufficient access to certified seed	**Public** Supply of 700t certified seed (SoDeSEP), INRAB research support; rural road improvement; strengthening of I-Soja governance & M&E (USD 14.4 million)
2. Near-absent crushing/trituration capacity, forcing raw exports	**Private** 4 crushing/trituration plants (126,000 t/year combined capacity); transformation, storage & regional commercialization equipment (USD 23.6 million)
3. Degraded rural roads / high post-harvest losses; weakly functional interprofession	**PPP** Development of farm-mill-market model; FNDA/IMF guarantee fund; quality labels; CEDEAO/AfCFTA trade agreements (USD 10.0 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
5.5K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
21.3K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+1,740
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
-4.0K
(THOUSAND tCO_2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

Hand-in-Hand Initiative

3. POULTRY PRODUCTION

Building a modern, biosecure poultry industry to replace frozen imports

INVESTMENT PROFILE (INDICATIVE)

INVESTMENT
USD 45.4M
(MILLION)

NPV
USD 32.5M
(MILLION)

IRR
18.3%
(%)

RATIONALE

- Import ban on frozen poultry creates a captive domestic market
- Fast-growing protein demand driven by urbanization and rising incomes
- Substantial existing poultry herd base (17.6M head) to build on
- Strong policy backing through the national poultry modernization plan

KEY BOTTLENECKS	PROPOSED INVESTMENTS(*)
1. Absence of modern certified slaughterhouses; sanitary vulnerability (Newcastle, avian flu)	**Public** 8 modern certified abattoirs, FNDA guarantee fund, IMF micro-credit; biosecurity reinforcement, veterinary labs, epidemiological surveillance; land development & governance (PMU, MIS) (USD 21.3 million)
2. Low local availability of day-old chicks/improved genetics; dependence on imported inputs	**Private** 6 modern hatcheries; 40 new farms + 15 feed mills; 20 cutting units + cold chain infrastructure (USD 15.4 million)
3. Limited credit access (<8% bancarization of small farmers); informal competition	**PPP** Guarantee fund (800M FCFA), FNDA-IMF credit lines, insurance; "Poulet du Bénin" label & certification; interprofessional governance (IAB) & trade agreements (USD 8.7 million)

SUSTAINABILITY BENEFITS

DIRECT BENEFICIARIES
18.0K
(THOUSAND)

INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
69.6K
(THOUSAND)

PER CAPITA INCOME INCREASE
+504
(USD/PERSON)

GHG IMPACT
FAO EXACT CARBON TOOL
-5.7K
(THOUSAND tCO2-e)

Note: (*) Opportunities reflect government priorities identified through the FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative and require further structuring with relevant public and private stakeholders.

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