

International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

**MSc Agricultural Economics (Livelihood and  
Natural Resource Economics)**

Centre for Dryland Agriculture  
Bayero University, Kano

Nigeria

**December 2021**

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High Council for evaluation of research and higher education

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International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION REPORT

### **MSc Agricultural Economics (Livelihood and Natural Resource Economics)**

Centre for Dryland Agriculture  
Bayero University, Kano

Nigeria

**September 2021**



Bayero University, Kano has mandated the Hcéres to perform the evaluation of its Agricultural Economics (Livelihood and Natural Resource Economics) master programme. The evaluation is based on the "External Evaluation Standards" of foreign study programmes, adopted by the Hcéres Board on October 4th, 2016. These standards are available on the Hcéres website ([hcieres.fr](http://hcieres.fr)).

On account of exceptional circumstances, the organization of the evaluation was adapted (replacement of the physical on-site visit by the panel by a visit by videoconference), while remaining compliant with the fundamental principles of institution or study program evaluation: external evaluation standard applied, the self-evaluation report (SER) and requested annexes sent by the institution, panel of experts set up by the Hcéres, collegial work by the panel, interviews with the institution and its partners by videoconference, report drafted and then sent to the institution in its provisional and then final version, response by the institution to the report by the panel. This specific procedure is in line with the official position defined jointly by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR).

#### **For the Hcéres<sup>1</sup>:**

Thierry Coulhon, President

#### **On behalf of the experts committee<sup>2</sup>:**

Carole Molina Jouve, President of the committee

In accordance with the decree n°2014-1365, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014,

<sup>1</sup> The president of Hcéres "countersigns the assessment reports made by the experts' committees and signed by their president" (article 8, alinea 5).

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation reports "are signed by the president of the committee" (article 11, alinea 2).

## I. STUDY PROGRAMME IDENTITY SHEET

- **University/institution:** Bayero University, Kano (BUK), Nigeria.
- **Component, faculty or department concerned:** Centre for dryland agriculture (CDA), department of agricultural economics and extension, faculty of agriculture.
- **Programme's title:** MSc agricultural economics.
- **Training/specialty:** Livelihood and natural resource economics (LNE).
- **Year of creation and context:** Established in 2012 as an on-site full-time programme of the centre for dryland agriculture (CDA) in BUK, to respond to the needs of the West and Central Africa (WCA) dryland region, through relevant high-level human capacity development and demand-driven research.
- **Site(s) where the programme is taught (Town and campus):** Kano, Bayero University main campus, centre for dryland agriculture (CDA).
- **Programme director:**
  - a. Surname, first name: Abdullahi, Ali
  - b. Profession and grade: Senior Lecturer, PhD
  - c. Main subject taught: Agricultural Extension

## METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

- **Methodology and agency:**  
The accreditation of the master programme in agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics) was conducted by the National Universities Commission (NUC) of Nigeria in March 2017.
- **Results:**  
This programme, which achieved 93.7% overall in the National Universities Commission accreditation exercise, is accredited for a period of 5 years.

## HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAMME

- **Human resources:**  
The staff is composed of 16 full-time academic staff (including 9 professors, 2 associate professors, 4 senior lecturers and 1 lecturer), 6 senior technical staff and 2 junior staff.
- **Material resources:**  
The master programme agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics) benefits from CDA and BUK facilities. 16 offices are made available for academic staff, and students have access to:
  - Classrooms of the University, shared among departments, and 4 CDA classrooms fully air-conditioned and equipped with projectors and electronic smartboards;
  - Central library and internet facilities in the CDA office complex, reading room and lecture rooms;
  - Agricultural resource centre (GIS laboratory) and agricultural extension studio;
  - 22 hectares training and research farm, well equipped with drip and sprinkler irrigation facilities with full automation, net houses, screen houses, and a greenhouse, field research equipment including green seekers, GPS units, android phones.

Photographs of lecture rooms, laboratories, showing equipment and staff involved in trainings and research, were presented to the committee. These photographs allow to assess the quality of the accommodation, material resources, teaching and training conditions.

Also, CDA students have access to campus-wide license for numerous software. Free internet connection is available for all faculty members and students. They use emails, newsletters, websites and other electronic media for communication and social media platforms. All information on professional training events, scholarship opportunities, conferences and research activities are hosted on the CDA website. Experts could not verify this information as the website did not work. In addition, numerous e-resources are available for students, including database such as Science Direct, Scopus, EBSCOHOST, LAN TEEAL and AGORA.

## STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

Year	Female (National)	Male (National)	Female (Foreign)	Male (Foreign)	TOTAL enrolled	Applicants	Graduates
<b>2015/2016</b>	5	6	0	0	<b>11</b>	10	7
<b>2016/2017</b>	2	9	0	1	<b>12</b>	12	0
<b>2017/2018</b>	0	5	0	0	<b>5</b>	22	0
<b>2018/2019</b>	1	1	0	3	<b>5</b>	21	0
<b>2019/2020</b>	3	5	0	0	<b>8</b>	20	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>7</b>

## II. ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

### COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

President:

- Carole Molina Jouve, Professor, Institut National des Sciences appliquées de Toulouse

Experts:

- Christophe Bressac, Assistant Professor, Université de Tours
- Delphine Latour, Assistant Professor, Université de Clermont-Auvergne
- Mathilde Colas, PhD student (Student expert), Université de Technologie de Troyes

The Hcéres was represented by Pierre Courtellemont, science advisor, accompanied with Antoine Devoucoux du Buysson, head of project.

### ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

- Date of the visit: January 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Organization of the visit: the virtual visit (due to COVID-19 sanitary crisis) took place over 2 days from January 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. The first day started with a welcome speech by the Vice-chancellor and a discussion with the management team in charge of the self-assessment CDA's training programmes auditioned: PhD natural resource management and climate change, PhD agronomy (crops and cropping systems in dryland), MSc & PhD agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics) and MSc & PhD animal science (livestock production and range management in african drylands). Others meetings followed with each team leaders of these training programmes (in the order listed above) and then academic staff from all training programmes. The second day started with closed meeting with students, followed with alumni and partners and finally a wrap-up meeting with head and leaders in charge of all programmes.
- Cooperation of study programme and institution to be accredited: perfect cooperation by all stakeholders.
- People met:

Vice chancellor and management team

Vice chancellor - Professor Sagir Adamu Abbas  
 Director, Academic planning - Professor Haruna Musa

Director, CDA - Professor Jibrin M. Jibrin

Deputy Director Training - Professor Sanusi Gaya Mohammed

Deputy Director Outreach and publications - Professor Amina Mustapha

Deputy Director Research - Dr Kabir Mustapha Umar

Project manager - Dr Yusuf Garba

Coordinator Training - Dr Murtala Muhammad Badamasi

Coordinator Outreach - Dr Amina Lawan Mustapha

Student liaison officer - Dr Aminu Alhassan Fagge

Team leaders in charge of MSc & PhD degrees in agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics)

Dr Ali Abdullahi

Professor Aminu Suleiman

Dr Ibrahim Tafida

Professor Ahmed Bakori Mohammed

Professor Abba Aminu

Professor Ahmad Muhammad Makarfi

Dr Amina Aminu Idris

Dr Muhammad Sabiu Suleiman

Professor Amina Mustapha  
Professor Mahmud Ibrahim Daneji

Other teachers and scientists (from MSc & PhD agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics), MSc & PhD animal science (livestock production and range management in African drylands), PhD agronomy (crops and cropping systems in dryland) and PhD natural resource management and climate change)

Kabir Mustapha Umar  
Saleh B. Momale  
Bashir Musa  
Suleiman Rufai Babura  
Lawal Abdul Sani  
Dr Alpha Y. Kamara  
Dr Hakeem Avinde Ajeigbe  
Dr Foloronso Akinseye  
Professor J.M. Jibrin  
Professor S.G. Mohammed

Students and alumni (from 2 MSc & 4 PhD degrees)  
20 students, 8 alumni

Industrial partners (from 2 MSc & 4 PhD degrees)  
ICRISAT - Dr H.A. Ajeigbe  
IITA - Dr A.Y. Kamara  
Sassakawa Africa Association/SG2000 – Professor Sani Miko  
NEWMAP - Musa Shuaibu

- Any problems: None
- Other: None

### III. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

#### 1 – PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

The study programme of the MSc agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics) was established in 2012 as an on-site full-time programme of two years. This programme is delivered in the department of agricultural economics and extension, faculty of agriculture, Bayero University, Kano (BUK). It is coordinated by the centre for dryland agriculture (CDA), established by the University Senate in 2011, become an African center of excellence (ACE) in 2014, to respond to the needs of the West and Central African (WCA) dryland region.

The main objective is to provide the training needed for the improvement of the human conditions, and produce highly specialized professionals with an advanced knowledge of the fundamentals of agricultural economics and agricultural extension. Graduated students will help to develop high level manpower in dryland agriculture. At local and regional scale, there is no direct competition from other masters in the fields of livelihood and natural resource economics.

The target group are applicants coming from good postgraduate diploma in agricultural engineering, dryland agriculture, farm management and agricultural economics.

This training includes both course work and a research/dissertation phase. The course phase is composed of core courses, common to all CDA supported programmes, and specific core courses to the MSc agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics). In addition, one optional course is available in this programme. To be graduated, candidates must pass a minimum course work of 29 credits, 1 credit internship and a non-credit seminar. In addition, students have also to successfully defend a dissertation based on original research work for 6 credits.

This MSc is specially designed to train graduates to be qualified for PhD in agricultural economics or any related programme, and to pursue teaching/research carrier in the university or research institutes. In addition, carrier pathways in the management of socio-economics activities and livelihood of crops and livestock producers are also promoted.

#### 2 – PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME'S SELF EVALUATION APPROACH

The CDA is evaluating this programme with the aim of getting it internationally accredited. This evaluation is based on a dual process: self-evaluation and external evaluation (Hcéres). To conduct the self-evaluation, an internal committee was constituted by the Director of the CDA, Professor Jibrin Mohammed Jibrin, and the external evaluation has been carried out by the Hcéres. The members of the internal committee are:

- Associate Professor Yusuf Garba, project manager of the ACE Impact and chairman of the committee
- Dr Aminu Alhassan Fagge, student welfare officer - ACE management team
- Dr Amina Lawan Mustapha, outreach coordinator - ACE management team
- Dr Mustapha Mohammed Bello
- Associate Professor Murtala Muhammad Badamasi, coordinator training - ACE management team and secretary of the committee

In carrying out the assignment, the committee worked closely with Senior Lecturer Ali Abdullahi, postgraduate programme coordinator of the department of agricultural economics and extension. The self-assessment methodology was based on the Hcéres training evaluation reference system.

## IV. EVALUATION REPORT

### 1 - AIMS OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

The objectives of the MSc Agricultural Economics (Livelihood and Natural Resource Economics) are clearly expressed and closely linked to major local and regional challenges of the dryland ecosystems. Crossing scientific and technical courses, the program enables students to acquire basic knowledge and practical skills of a high level. All the needed information on courses and outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies are available within the postgraduate student handbook.

The main objective of this master is clearly exposed in the departmental postgraduate student handbook. This training provides graduates knowledge in a wide range of dryland areas in order to improve human conditions in such environment. This master degree is designed to train students for both research and socio-economic fields.

The two-year programme combines course work and internship with a dissertation. The postgraduate student handbook accurately describes the objectives of the Master programme, learning outcomes, course content and assessment. The name is well designed to increase visibility and understanding by all stakeholders.

The outcomes in terms of skills are well identified and possible career pathways are suggested to graduates of this programme. Graduated students are for example expected as economic advisors, research consultants or farm managers. This training also expects that graduates will be qualified for PhD in the related fields and can pursue career as teaching/research careers in universities/institutes. Nevertheless, this list of careers is not yet fully confirmed by real graduates: 7 MSc students have graduated since 2015. All other students, enrolled since 2016, have still the MSc student status; it constitutes a real issue for the future of this training.

### 2 – POSITION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

Through the enrollment of socio-economic partners, this training is well positioned in its field and connected with the needs of African countries. Moreover, at local and regional scale there is no direct competition from other masters in the field of livelihood and natural resource economics. Despite the opening displayed, the training programme lacks visibility and attractivity, with few students, mainly from agricultural training obtained in Nigeria.

The contribution of many socio-economic partners are mentioned, supported by agreements. However, it seems that very few of these partners have effective contributions in teaching and internship offer which are effective ways to strengthen the links.

As one part of this training is dedicated to research/dissertation phase, the connection with research is real and students have good interactions with their research supervisors.

In addition, the CDA provides the right framework for the emergence of innovative projects, such as RITEA project, to strengthen links between students, research and industrial partners. This could also promote the visibility of the programme and increase the number of students over the years.

This programme is well positioned and its content is relevant to the country's major issues. It is also unique as CDA is the only African centre focusing on teaching, research and development activities in drylands agriculture.

In addition, this training is open to graduates from various disciplines ranging from agricultural economics, agricultural engineering, dryland agriculture, farm management and other related disciplines. All this should improve the visibility of this master but the expected effects are not yet visible: this programme still attracts few students, mainly from initial training in agriculture, obtained in Nigeria.

All laboratories belonging to the CDA and their facilities are available to students. Moreover, the dissertation part of this degree requires intensive interactions between the candidate and the supervisor, reinforcing the link between researchers and students. In addition, students must attend to seminars given by PhD students. One can just regret that no researcher or socio-economic partner is mentioned to be involved in these seminars.

To ensure relevance of its programme to industry, Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and partnership agreements have been signed with several academic institutions, to develop collaboration activities at local, regional and international scale. However, despite numerous cited partners, only two of them (Sasakawa Africa

Association and WOFAN) are actively involved in this training and provide almost all internships to students. As CDA has made internship in relevant sector a mandatory requirement for all students, this situation should be improved in the future. Moreover, the CDA plans to establish a Regional Innovation, Training and Entrepreneurship Accelerator (RITEA) with students trained in modern intensive agriculture and in bio-resource entrepreneurship. Even if this structure is not yet active, it will provide the emergence of a strong regional research group to reinforce links between academic and industrial partners.

### 3 – STUDY PROGRAMME TEACHING STRUCTURE

The programme is structured in a relevant way to perform the objectives of the MSc, very well described in the student handbook. The link between students and socio-economic partners is achieved through seminars and internships, very useful to choose a specialization.

A large choice of optional courses could also reinforce this progressive specialization. The use of innovative teaching practices is just beginning and their improvement is a major objective of the training team for the next year.

Student supervision is well suited to the current low flow of students; exchanges with teachers are easy and helpful for students. The international academic partners, involved in the training, could also improve their contribution by offering much more opportunities for international student mobility.

The study programme of the MSc livelihood and natural resource economics is composed of two phases: the coursework phase or taught courses, which takes place during the first year, and the research/dissertation phase, during the second year. The taught courses are divided into core courses and elective courses which is supposed to ensure more flexibility to students. In fact, this proposal is reduced to only one optional course during the second semester; it could be improved to allow a real choice to students. Nevertheless, a gradual specialization is well proposed with general teaching courses at the beginning of the training followed by seminars and internship at the end of the second semester.

The teaching units are consistent with the objectives of this training and the courses content, objectives and assessment are very well exposed in the student handbook.

There is no special accommodation for students with special needs or requirements, but as the number of students is quite low, the interaction with teachers is very easy and adaptation of the courses content can be proposed.

CDA offers remarkable links with socio economic partners: notably, the one-day meeting with the industrial/sectoral stakeholders and the CDA members participants, was a significant event. The participants were able to provide input in teaching content, contribution of professionals from industry and internship opportunities.

The objectives and assessment of internships are clearly described in the student handbook. The deputy director outreach and publication and the coordinator outreach provide support service in internship placement, help to identify the right organization and to link student with supervisor.

English language courses for non-native speakers are provided with the possibility to get a certificate useful for further job or studies.

The use of innovative teaching practices is just beginning and recently, the teaching team was trained on the use of modern tools. Moreover, the centre collaborates with the University of Copenhagen to modernize practices. Nevertheless, they are not currently operational as the Covid-19 crisis revealed; the implementation of new teaching tools and methods is then a major objective of the team for the next year, with all the modern infrastructure still available (materials, smart boards, internet connectivity...).

The department postgraduate coordinator who tracks monthly the progress of all post-graduate students, ensures the student monitoring. Individual student support, such as tutoring, is no longer offered. No refresher courses are proposed to students, except concerning English language for non-native speaker. Once again, the current low flow of students does not require a more formalized monitoring and teachers can easily adapt the course content.

The opportunity to shift to another study programme could also be proposed if a student builds a very specific professional project.

All the courses are taught in English (native language) to ensure an international attractiveness and outreach. In fact, the very small number of foreign students (0 to 3 students per year) is not enough to ensure this international context. The long list of international academic partners involved in this training and coming from UK, USA, Denmark, Tunisia, Mali... should pave the way internationally. Nevertheless, no international mobility has been registered and all the internships (except one in five years) took place in Nigeria.

## 4 – PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The study programme is clear and well accessible to all stakeholders; the management team, teachers and socio-economic partners are well known. A contribution of the latter in main courses, in addition to their contributions in offering internship, would be a real added value. All rules of assessment and validation of skills are clearly stated even if no formal tool is used to record skills acquired. Selection and enrollment procedures are clearly described and accessible to students.

In contrast to all well described procedures, the student management of this programme is not effective and the objectives are not achieved. Additional data provided after the visit revealed that only seven students had been graduated since 2015. Moreover, the number of enrolled students has decreased dramatically over the last three years including very few international students. It appears as a major weakness of the programme and the management team must increase the visibility and attractiveness of this training. The low percentage of graduates and the extension of the duration of the training over two years are problematic and injure the programme.

The MSc livelihood and natural resource economics is managed by the department of agricultural economics and extension which has sufficient administrative and teaching resources with 16 permanents teaching staff, 6 technicians and 2 junior staff.

The CDA management is clearly structured with a director and 3 deputy directors in charge of research, training and outreach, distributed in three units: 1. the Training Unit handles all affairs related to admission, and academic issues related to the programme, 2. the Research unit handles student research grants issues and thematic research areas of the centre, and 3. the Outreach unit handles issues related to monitoring and evaluation, internship, publications and outreach activities of the centre.

The list of teachers and the role and responsibilities of each of them are reported in the student handbook, easily accessible to students. All the teachers belong to the academic staff of Bayero University, Kano. The socio-economic partners, involved in research and project supervision, could strengthen their contribution in the courses.

Three examination boards are responsible for postgraduate studies: the departmental postgraduate board, CDA academic board and the board of the postgraduate school. The students are well aware of the composition and role of these examination boards. Methods for knowledge assessment and rules for validation of skills are clearly stated in the student handbook.

To be eligible for award of this training, students must obtain 36 credits divided into 29 credits courses, 6 credits dissertation and 1 credit internship. A minimum score of 50 percent (or C grade) is required for each course. Evaluation of each course is composed of at least 60 percent of examinations and 40 percent of continuous assessments (3 assessments as presentation, test, and fieldwork). In addition, at the end of the second year, candidates must also successfully defend a dissertation based on original research work.

Teaching and practical professional units are well expressed in the student handbook. Nevertheless, the programme does not have a formal skills portfolio to help students record skills acquired. Students can participate to evaluate their programme through online survey.

The university has a code of ethics where anti-fraud, relationship with staff, conduct on the campus are recorded.

The student numbers is monitored each year with the distinction of male, female and also foreign students. The result of this monitoring shows an important decrease of the student number since the last three years with only 5 students enrolled in 2017 and also in 2018, and 8 in 2019, while there were 11 in 2015 and 12 in 2016. In addition, a lack of international attractiveness appears with a surprisingly very low percentage of foreign students with only 4 students (4 males) enrolled during the last five years.

Student recruitment procedures are accessible for postgraduate students and clearly exposed. The prescribed forms, approved by the board of the school of postgraduate studies, facilitate student enrollment.

Additional data provided after the visit reveal that most of students need more than two years to graduate and some of them are still in this training five years after their enrollment. This point of concern was not mentioned in the report nor during the visit. A better student follow-up and a proper analysis by the management team could help to explain this situation and find ways to improve it.

The centre tracks graduate students through social networks and alumni; a formal tracking method should be created.

## V. CONCLUSION

The MSc programme in agricultural economics (livelihood and natural resource economics) has a relevant theme, very well adapted to the local and regional context of dryland ecosystems. This unique training in the regional area benefits of a strong support of the centre for dryland agriculture (CDA), which provides all necessary facilities, administrative staff and material resources. In addition, with a large academic staff of Bayero University, Kano, specialized in the field of training, students are in good conditions to succeed in their studies.

The content is well adapted to the local and regional needs and it aims to provide graduates capable to sustain dryland systems. Selection, registration, courses contents and assessment are well described in the student handbook. Nevertheless, information is only available for postgraduates of the Bayero University, Kano; to improve the external visibility, the CDA website needs to be updated.

This training set up several tools to link research and students in particular through seminars and the dissertation phase. This last part is a real opportunity for student to discover the world of research with specific exchange with their supervisors. In addition, CDA shares all the research facilities with students to help them to develop their own research works.

This training identifies many socio-economics partners both in local and international area; that is a good point and an asset to better link students into the job market. Nevertheless, only two local partners (Sasakawa Africa Association and WOFAN) provide almost all the internships. It can also be regretted that the biggest local firms are absent, which can partly explain the lack of visibility of this training and the low number of students enrolled during the last three years. In the same way, the expected international attractivity is not observed and only few foreign students have been enrolled in this training.

More globally, the recent decrease of student enrollment appears as a weak point of this training. No explanation was given by the management team, except for 2020 with the Covid crisis, which is understandable.

The main objective of this MSc is to provide graduates to be qualified for PhD in agricultural economics, and to pursue teaching/research career. Nevertheless, class of students between 5 to 8 per year is certainly not enough to really support the doctorate. So, an increase in student enrollment is needed. In addition, to achieve this aim, students must be graduated within the two expected years. The extension of the duration of this training over two years is really problematic and injure the programme. So, to better help students, it is necessary to improve the supervision of students and to be more vigilant about the time required to complete the programme. An extended duration over the time given in the student handbook may handicap students to apply for a job.

### STRENGTHS

- Unique training in Nigeria focusing in livelihood and agricultural economics in dryland systems
- Well-structured training programme, with an adequate number of qualified staff
- Facilities of high levels supported by the CDA

### WEAKNESSES

- Low number of students with a clear decrease these last three years
- Duration before graduation exceeding three years
- Lack of local and international attractiveness
- Lack of communication tools as functional website

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Promote the programme and encourage enrollment of students
- Improve the monitoring of students in order to fix temporal objectives and help them to graduate in the expected two years
- Encourage incoming and outgoing international mobility of students
- Develop communication tools for better visibility of the programme by updating the CDA website in particular

## VI. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION



### CENTRE FOR DRYLAND AGRICULTURE BAYERO UNIVERSITY, KANO



Vice-Chancellor: Professor Sagir Adamu Abbas, B.Sc., M.Ed. (BUK), PhD (BUK), FMAN  
Director: Professor Jibrin M. Jibrin, B.Agric., M.Sc., Ph.D (ABU), RSS, FSSN

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29th October 2021

Antoine DEVOUCOUX du BUYSSON  
Responsable de projet / Head of project  
Département Europe et International  
Europe & International Department  
2 rue Albert Einstein - 75013 Paris

Dear Professor du BUYSSON,

#### Re: CDA ACE Evaluation Report (MSc Agricultural Economics – Livelihood and Natural Resource Economics)

Thank you very much for sharing the evaluation report of our MSc programme in Agricultural Economics (Livelihood and Natural Resource Economics). The Centre for Dryland Agriculture (CDA) responds to the comments and recommendations contained in the report as follows:

1. *Promote the programme and encourage enrolment of students. The CDA accepts this recommendation.* The programme will be vigorously promoted through various channels and networks. Funding sources will be sought to provide opportunities and encourage more enrolment into the programme. More effort will be done to promote the programme in the job market and to match graduates with opportunities.
2. *Improve the monitoring of students in order to fix temporal objectives and help them to graduate in the expected two years.* The CDA accepts this recommendation. Already the Centre is consulting with School of Postgraduate Studies (SPS) to institute a more rigorous process for tracking and monitoring student-supervisor progress.
3. *Encourage incoming and outgoing international mobility of students.* The CDA accepts this recommendation; effort will be made to encourage inward and outward international mobility of both students and staff.
4. *Develop communication tools for better visibility of the programme by updating the CDA website.* The CDA accepts this recommendation. The Centre will embark on more rigorous advertisement of the programme locally and regionally. Deliberate effort will be made to strive for gender balance through provision of more incentives that will encourage more students, especially females, to apply and enroll into the programme. The Centre has already started work on improving its website (<http://cda-buk.edu.ng/programmes/>). A communications team has now been constituted with a dedicated content manager for the site.

Yours sincerely



Professor Jibrin M. Jibrin

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE :	African center of excellence
BUK :	Bayero University, Kano
CDA :	Centre for dryland agriculture
GIS :	Geographic information system
Hcéres :	High Council for the evaluation of research and higher education
ICRISAT :	International crops research institute for the semi-arid tropics
IITA :	International institute of tropical agriculture
ISAB :	International scientific advisory board
MSc :	Master of Science
NRM CC :	Natural ressource management and climate change
NUC :	National Universities Commision of Nigeria
PhD :	Doctoral degree
SIAB :	Sectoral/industry advisory board
UK :	United Kingdom
USA :	United States of America
WCA :	West and Central Africa

Europe and International department

## ACCREDITATION DECISION

**MSc Agricultural Economics (Livelihood and Natural Resource Economics)**

Centre for Dryland Agriculture  
Bayero University, Kano

Nigeria

**December 2021**

## SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCERES

HCERES has built its evaluation process based on a set of objectives that higher education institution study programmes must pursue to ensure recognised quality within France and Europe. These objectives are divided up into four fields among which are the accreditation criteria.

As for the "External Evaluation Standards", the accreditation criteria have been specifically designed for foreign programmes. The accreditation criteria were adopted by the Board on June 2016 and are available on the HCERES website ([hceres.fr](http://hceres.fr)).

The accreditation committee, meeting his accreditation decision, has wholly taken into account the final evaluation report of the study programme. This accreditation decision is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The accreditation decision issued by HCERES shall not grant any rights whatsoever, whether in France or abroad. The decision on training programme accreditation confers an accreditation label and does not infer recognition of the accredited qualifications. The HCERES accreditation process therefore has no impact on the qualifications recognition process in France.

# FULFILLMENT OF ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

## FIELD 1: AIMS OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

### Accreditation criterion

The objectives of the study programme with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired are clearly defined and communicated. Students and other stakeholders are aware of outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies.

### Assessment of criterion

The objectives of the training are clearly expressed and closely linked to major local and regional challenges of the dryland ecosystems. Crossing scientific and technical courses, the program enables students to acquire basic knowledge and practical skills of a high level. All the needed information on courses and outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies are available within the postgraduate student handbook.

## FIELD 2: POSITION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

### Accreditation criterion

The study programme has set a comprehensive positioning suited to its objectives and including a clear link with research, scholarly partnerships and/or with the economic and social world, national and/or international partnerships.

### Assessment of criterion

Through the enrollment of socio-economic partners, this training is well positioned in its field and connected with the needs of African countries. Moreover, at local and regional scale there is no direct competition from other masters in the field of livelihood and natural resource economics. Despite the opening displayed, the training programme lacks visibility and attractivity, with few students, mainly from agricultural training obtained in Nigeria.

The contribution of many socio-economic partners are mentioned, supported by agreements. However, it seems that very few of these partners have effective contributions in teaching and internship offer which are effective ways to strengthen the links.

As one part of this training is dedicated to research/dissertation phase, the connection with research is real and students have good interactions with their research supervisors.

In addition, the CDA provides the right framework for the emergence of innovative projects, such as RITEA project, to strengthen links between students, research and industrial partners. This could also promote the visibility of the programme and increase the number of students over the years.

## FIELD 3: STUDY PROGRAMME TEACHING STRUCTURE

### Accreditation criterion

The study programme includes a set of teaching units that are coherent, gradual and adapted to all kind of students. The study programme allows students to acquire additional skills that are useful for employment or further study.

Internships and projects are included in the study programme curriculum. So are Information and Communication Technologies in Education (ICTE) and education innovations. The study programme prepares students for the international environment.

## Assessment of criterion

The programme is structured in a relevant way to perform the objectives of the MSc, very well described in the student handbook. The link between students and socio-economic partners is achieved through seminars and internships, very useful to choose a specialization.

A large choice of optional courses could also reinforce this progressive specialization. The use of innovative teaching practices is just beginning and their improvement is a major objective of the training team for the next year.

Student supervision is well suited to the current low flow of students; exchanges with teachers are easy and helpful for students. The international academic partners, involved in the training, could also improve their contribution by offering much more opportunities for international student mobility.

## FIELD 4: STUDY PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

### Accreditation criterion

The study programme is implemented by a formally identified and operational teaching team including stakeholder and student participation. It is carried out by an educational team which benefits from clear and up-to-date data. Methods for checking knowledge are explicitly stated and communicated to students. Teaching and practical professional units are expressed in terms of skills. Anti-fraud measures have been implemented.

### Assessment of criterion

The study programme is clear and well accessible to all stakeholders; the management team, teachers and socio-economic partners are well known. A contribution of the latter in main courses, in addition to their contributions in offering internship, would be a real added value. All rules of assessment and validation of skills are clearly stated even if no formal tool is used to record skills acquired. Selection and enrollment procedures are clearly described and accessible to students.

In contrast to all well described procedures, the student management of this programme is not effective and the objectives are not achieved. Additional data provided after the visit revealed that only seven students had been graduated since 2015. Moreover, the number of enrolled students has decreased dramatically over the last three years including very few international students. It appears as a major weakness of the programme and the management team must increase the visibility and attractiveness of this training. The low percentage of graduates and the extension of the duration of the training over two years are problematic and injure the programme.

## FINAL DECISION

Considering the accreditation criteria analysis detailed above, the accreditation committee issues the following decision:

### **“Accredited with conditions for three years (December 2021 – December 2024) with report and follow up visit”**

and draws attention to the following points:

- Promote the programme and encourage enrollment of students
- Improve the monitoring of students in order to fix temporal objectives and help them to graduate in the expected two years
- Encourage incoming and outgoing international mobility of students
- Develop communication tools for better visibility of the programme by updating the CDA website in particular

#### **SIGNATURE**

For HCERES,

Thierry Coulhon, President:



Date: Paris, December 17<sup>th</sup> 2021



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