

## UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME- ANGOLA BACK TO OFFICE REPORT

Date: 09/03/2015

<b>I. GENERAL:</b>		
a)	Mission date(s):	February 24-26, 2015
b)	Country Office/Unit:	Angola/Governance/PLG/AJS Quarterly Monitoring Visit
c)	Project name:	PLG-Participation and Local Governance
d)	Mission member:	Sirajo Seidi (PLG Project Specialist)
d)	Description of Mission TOR:	The aim of the mission was to build relationships and establish first contacts with AJS staff and monitor progress against agreed results for the first quarter of the grant (November 2014 to January 2015).

### **II. DESCRIPTION OF MISSION ACHIEVEMENTS/TASKS COMPLETED:**

The purpose of this specific mission was to:

- i. Establish initial contacts with AJS staff and partners and familiarize myself with the context where the project is implemented;
- ii. Monitor progress against an agreed work plan for the first quarter of project implementation;
- iii. Agree on a work plan for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (February, March and April 2015)
- iv. Provide support and supervision as required

### **III. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF OUTCOMES AND FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:**

- I. AJS has recruited a knowledgeable and skilled project team of three staff under the supervision of the executive coordinator. The team prepared a visit programme that enabled a comprehensive review of the context and contact with the key stakeholders to examine progress and constraints to implementation. The project is operating in the municipalities of Lobito, Catumbela, Baia Farta and Benguela.
- II. Notable progress has been achieved in the first three months of project implementation, namely: a) six live radio programmes were broadcast live in Benguela based radio “Morena Comercial” with the overarching theme “**the role of youth in local public decision making**”. The six radio programmes were able to engage local officials’ for youth and academics with the wider radio audience in both Benguela and Lobito to discuss the theme and to generate a phone-in dialogue with a general audiences on the role of youth in local governance. This programme has become a regular weekly space where youth and local officials participate to discuss on issues of concern to all stakeholders (including the school fees as barriers to accessing education, the prohibition of motorbikes into central Lobito); b) A total of three monthly “*Tardes de Placo Aberto*”(Afternoon open meetings) meetings were held this quarter in the project municipalities(two in Lobito and one in Catumbela municipalities) under the theme “**Role of youth in the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law**. These meetings brought together 98 participants involving municipal youth council, youth associations, university students, religious and cultural groups and municipal authorities. AJS institutionalized a second space of dialogue between local authorities and youth. UNDP attended the last one in Lobito, it was of high quality with a good rate of participation and interaction; c) A workshop under the title “Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT’s) and Citizenship” involving 24 participants from provincial youth council, political parties, students and schools was held in Catumbela. Social media outlets; d) the

project activities have benefited from very good media coverage extensive to UNDP, including several news articles in ANGOP (Angola Press), Jornal de Angola and several radio spots on the AJS activities; e) AJS is planning to carry out a study in partnership with Open Society Foundation of Southern Africa (OSISA), to examine the perception and positioning of youth in relation to national development plan and national youth strategy. The study postulates that youth participation in these key documents is very limited, not to say non-existent.

- III. Notwithstanding the notable progress and the creative ways of engaging local authorities and youth in Benguela province, AJS still faces formidable challenges in working with local authorities in local governance issues in the province. First, hostility and barriers for successful NGOs to become CACS's members remain high. AJS, despite its legal status and being an active youth NGO, has been denied CACS membership in both Catumbela and Lobito municipalities where it has operated since its inception; Secondly, despite several attempts to obtain information on publicly funded municipal projects in 2015, local authorities are not forthcoming to provide and share municipal projects information with AJS. Third, despite the confidence developed with the Lobito municipal authorities, they remain suspicious of CSOs work in local governance issues.
- IV. We recommend to AJS the following: a) Develop some sympathy municipalities in the face of the recent budget cuts; b) Take advantage of the GOA information portal [<http://www.governo.gov.ao/>] containing the revised 2015 municipal budgets by municipality and projects; c) AJS needs to pitch to the provincial authorities as well, where there seems to be more openness to higher than municipalities
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