

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE DGD PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

	20 February 2012	11:00 am	Conference Room of the Secretary to the Commission, National Planning Commission, Abuja
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PRESIDING	Ntufam Fidelis Ugbo, Executive Secretary to the NPC – Chair Mr. Daouda Toure, UNDP Resident Representative – Co Chair
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AGENDA	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Opening Remarks<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Daouda Toure, UN Resident Coordinator; Co-Chairman2. Review of the DGD Independent Review Report<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview• Recommendations• Work plan3. Scheduling of Steering Committee Meetings for 2012 and date for next meeting4. AOB
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Rapporteur	Toyin Adewale-Gabriel
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Key Issues Discussed

1. Opening remarks

- The Chair and Co-Chair of the Steering Committee welcomed all members to the Steering Committee meeting and introduced the agenda. A round table introduction of all participants in attendance was made.

2. Review of the DGD Independent Review Report

The report of the DGD Independent Review was presented by Ms. Hadija Miuro, Team Leader of the Independent DGD Strategic Project Review. The Team Leader acknowledged the support by stakeholders to the review process and outlined the objectives, project focus areas/pillars, purpose and scope as well as the methodology of the review. The Team Leader presented the findings, recommendations and lessons learned for Phase 1 of the DGD Project.

Key Findings of the Independent Review:

RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS

The review confirmed the relevance and appropriateness of the project. It showed that it was:

- Well integrated with the 7 Point Agenda to secure the rule of law and Electoral Reform.
- Committed to Human Capital Development with gender as crosscutting theme.
- Linked to the UNDAF Framework to address root causes of poor development.
- Implemented through 6 Pillars and worked with key stakeholders in deepening democracy.
- Responded well to changes in development context- e.g. appointment of INEC Chair, etc

EFFECTIVENESS

The findings revealed that:

- The project made significant progress towards results.
- Most of the successes recorded were in relation to Pillars 3 and 6 - improving the electoral process and women empowerment.
- There were a number of limitations under each pillar, as detailed in the Independent Review

Report.

- There were Project design issues such as the Resource & Results Framework that needed to be reviewed.
- Challenges encountered in Phase 1 implementation included time constraints, delays in UNDP recruitment processes, security, and delays in funds disbursement.

EFFICIENCY OF RESOURCE USE

It was found that:

- Overall financial resource levels were adequate.
- Project resources were used to deliver on expected results.
- Resource allocation to the following pillars were low - Women Empowerment 2.43%, Political Parties 2.22%, National Assembly 5.85%.
- DGD accounting systems were found to be adequate.
- There was no evidence of abuse of resources.
- Overall, partnership relationships were cordial.

EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

The independent Review established that:

- The DGD Project implementation was based on UNDP Programmes, Operations Policies and Procedures.
- The DGD Steering Committee as well as UNDP played their roles effectively.
- There were some concerns from Partners, UNDP and Beneficiaries which are detailed in the full Review report.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN

There were several factors that impacted on the outcomes of women participation in the April 2011 elections including:

- Absence of legally enforceable mechanisms to translate the gender policy provisions establishing a 35% representation of women at the federal and state levels.
- Gender inequality and violence against women, and insufficient internal party democracy.

LESSONS LEARNED

In the course of the project implementation, the following lessons were learned:

- DGD's Electoral Cycle approach is effective.
- The use of the Basket Fund is positively acknowledged by international partners and implementing partners.
- The need for the capacity of Implementing Partners to be built before new approaches are introduced; e.g CSO capacity for the open bidding/contracting approach should have been built before the change from grants to the bids/contracting modality.
- UNDP procedures when not implemented properly cause undue delays and reduce UNDP's competitive advantage.
- Successful implementation requires ample preparation time.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The key recommendations emanating from the DGD Independent Review are attached for reference.

Discussion on the Review Report

Co-Chair

- The Independent Review report indicates that the DGD project met its overall objectives.
- The Steering Committee will continue to focus on guidance and policy direction to project implementation.

The EU

- Welcomed the new DGD Project Director, Mr. Mourtada Deme and promised to provide detailed comments on the draft Independent Review Report by Wednesday, 22 February.
- Explained that Democratic Governance is the centrepiece of EU's engagement with Nigeria and that the DGD project is a top priority to the EU.
- Expressed EU's commitment to support the deepening of democracy in Nigeria and re-affirmed that EU would contribute an additional 20 Million Euros to the Basket Fund.
- Mentioned that the cooperation agreement should be ready within three weeks after the prodoc for the subsequent phase is ready.
- Reaffirmed that as long as there were well defined strategic plans to implement activities to deepen democracy in Nigeria, financing would not be an issue and the EU is committed to provide additional resources for the project to continue and to support the democratic process.
- Pointed out that notwithstanding the importance of Professor Jega's presence at the SC meetings, it is very important to hold the meetings on a regular quarterly basis and for him to send a representative whenever he is unable to attend.
- Recommended that Steering Committee meetings be held on a quarterly basis.
- Requested for clarification on the following issues:
 - a) The review finding that late remittance of funds by some donors to the basket fund delayed implementation of project activities especially in light of the fact that the project did not utilize all EU funds remitted to the project.
 - b) The justification for treating all donors equally regardless of the level of their contributions to the basket fund.
- Stated that the Results Based Management (RBM) framework is central to the operation of the project.
- Requested for the organogram of the project for review following the recommendation for additional new positions.

DFID

- Acknowledged the comparative advantages of the Basket Fund in engaging with INEC, civil society organizations and political parties.
- Confirmed that DFID will continue its bi-lateral engagements in support of democratic governance in Nigeria.
- Explained that the delay of funding from DFID was due to lack of clarity in DGD's work plan and the absence of SMART indicators.
- Stated that for going forward, realistic results that would show value for money is required of DGD.

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- Requested further clarity on how the revised Resources and Results Framework would be done.

CIDA

- Welcomed the report and its findings and expressed the hope that the recommendations would be utilised to recalibrate the project. Detailed comments on the Independent Review Report shall be sent to the project management later.
- Stated that DGD is one of the few avenues to support governance issues in Nigeria and CIDA's resources will go into the Basket Fund.
- Stated that recommendations in the report are general in scope and pointed out that it is important to carefully consider how to reformulate the recommendations in a manner that would not delay project implementation.
- Acknowledged that the Steering Committee is central to policy direction of the project and affirmed the necessity to make the Steering Committee a more functional body.

INEC

- Clarified a statement on page 33 of the report, stating that INEC had previously conducted the monitoring of political parties primaries. INEC explained that DGD support had enabled the Commission to conduct a joint INEC/CSOs monitoring of party primaries for the first time.
- Requested that the report should provide clear recommendations on how to improve access by the PMU to INEC and all relevant stakeholders.
- Indicated that the secondment of PMU staff to the Commission would not be possible.
- Explained that the relationship between the Commission and the PMU is perceived by the Commission as a cooperative process where experience and knowledge are shared on both sides.
- Pointed out the need to streamline the functions and roles of DGD consultants and staff.
- Advocated that the DGD project should retain its flexibility.
- Informed the Steering Committee of the need to bring State Independent Electoral Commissions (SIECS) on board as part of the support under DGD. Reiterated the fact that SIECs are constitutionally independent, and are facing limitations in conducting the State elections which calls for capacity development assistance. INEC explained that some electoral amendments are needed to ensure the independence of SIECs from the state executives. INEC's current active engagements with SIECs have brought about the following developments:
 - INEC and SIECs agreed on mutual collaboration at a retreat held in Enugu. A memorandum of understanding has been signed.
 - INEC is working to harmonise the legal framework for SIECS.
 - INEC is developing Guidelines for Free and Fair Elections in Nigeria that would be advantageous to SIECs.
 - INEC is developing a detailed gender policy for the Commission in relation to the entire electoral process.
- Advocated that any support being considered for SIECs should be within the existing INEC and SIEC collaboration framework.

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Co-Chair

- Clarified that the report highlights issues as seen by the independent reviewers and the recommendations are not cast in stone.
- Underlined that having an agreed Results and Resources framework is a key requirement to UNDP and other development partners.
- Directed that the DGD organogram should be shared with partners and explained that the next step following the Steering Committee would be the project formulation for Phase 2.
- Stated that the DGD Technical Committee should give guidance to the PMU and agree on main deliverables, leaving space for the PMU to work on project activities and implementation.
- Explained that the DGD Technical Committee should hold the PMU accountable for producing results.

- Assured that the project reformulation team will have bilateral discussions with all partners and in doing so, the discussion with INEC will articulate the possible way of accessing SIECs and extending support to them.

DGD

- Explained that the DGD project formulation for phase 2 will be done through a broad-based consultative process involving Government institutions, including INEC, DGD's international partners, civil society and other relevant stakeholders.

- Clarified that issues identified in the review report will be addressed by the project formulation and subsequent project implementation processes.
- Stated that the draft phase 2 project document will be ready by April 15.

The Chair

- Advocated support for the SIECS through the framework of mutual coordination with INEC in light of pending issues as to how development partners should access and partner with SIECs.
- Emphasized that the new project document coming out of the project reformulation process should be cleared by the Technical Committee before coming to the Steering Committee for approval.

Steering Committee

- Agreed that partners could continue to support bi-lateral governance initiatives outside of the Basket. However, information on such initiatives should be shared to enable coordination and avoid duplication.
- Agreed to hold regular quarterly meetings.
- Agreed that partners in the Joint Basket will be considered in relation to their financial contributions.
- Agreed to review the expansion of membership of the Steering Committee following the formulation of DGD phase 2.

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3. Scheduling of Steering Committee Meetings for 2012 and date for next meeting

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be held in April to review the draft DGD Phase 2 project document.

Action Points	Responsible Party (Deadline)
– DGD organogram to be shared	UNDP-DGD
– DGD Phase 2 project document to be ready by April 15	UNDP-DGD

Attendees

Members

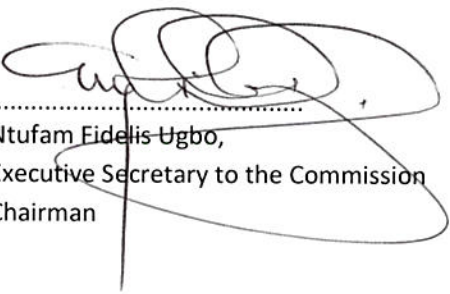
1. Ntufam Fidelis Ugbo, NPC Chair
2. Dr. Daouda Toure, RR, UNDP Co-Chair
3. Mr. David MacRae, Head of EC Delegation
4. Mr. Richard Montgomery, Head of DFID
5. Mr. David Ross, CIDA

In attendance

6. Ms. Ade Mamonyane-Lekoetje, CD, UNDP
7. Mr. Jens-Peter Dyrbak, DFID
8. Mr. Pierre Philippe, EU
9. Mr. Alan Munday, EU
10. Ms. Charlotte Provost, CIDA
11. Prof. Okey Ibeanu, INEC
12. Mr. Abdullahi Usman, INEC

13. Dr. Mourtada Deme, DGD
14. Mr. Basse Akpanyung, NPC
15. Ms. Hadija Miuro, UNDP Review Team
16. Ms. Jessica Ahgu, NPC
17. Ms. Rita Okocha, NPC
18. Ms. Helen Ohuche, NPC
19. Ms. Mintwab Zelelew, DGD
20. Ms. Princess Chiefiero, DGD
21. Ms. Toyin Adewale-Gabriel, DGD

Minutes Approved by:


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Ntufam Fidelis Ugbo,
Executive Secretary to the Commission
Chairman


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Dr. Daouda Toure,
UN Resident Coordinator
Co-Chairman