SUPPORT TO THE 2006-2011 NIGERIAN ELECTORAL CYCLES
CASE STUDY

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STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION

- NASCENT AND FRAGILE NIGERIAN DEMOCRACY.
- ISSUES AROUND 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS.
- POST 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS DEVELOPMENTS.
- ISSUES AROUND 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS.
- WHERE WE GO FROM HERE?
NASCENT AND FRAGILE DEMOCRACY


- 2007 General Elections only third since civilian transition in 1999.
FLAWED 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS

• Overall assessment of the 2003 electoral process was critical.

Pointed, *inter alia*, to
- delayed funding from the Government of Nigeria and the Donors.
- Insufficient political will to follow a proper timetable, including for flow of Federal funds.
- Inadequate legal framework.
- Flawed voter registration.
FLAWED 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS

• Deficiency in international support:

  - design and delivery,
  
  particularly, absence of formalized and institutionalized arrangement to channel donor funding and coordination.
POST 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS

• July 2003 - INEC assessed conduct of 2003 Elections.

• Nov. 2003 - INEC-CSO forum discussed Agenda for Electoral Reforms.

• 2004 - INEC drew Strategic Plan 2004-07 for:
  - reviewing the Electoral Act of 2002, and
POST 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS

- Donors agreed for an efficiently targeted and coordinated approach.

- July 2005 - EU, DFID, CIDA and UNDP agreed to contribute to Joint Donor Basket Fund (JDBF).


POST 2003 GENERAL ELECTIONS

- May 2006 – After protracted negotiations, JDBF Project to support 2007 Nigerian Elections was signed with limited activities but with electoral cycle approach in mind and intention to stay engaged.


- June 2006 - Project started.
SUPPORT FOR 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS

- Two pronged strategy
  - strengthen INEC’s institutional development and technical ability to conduct elections.
  - enhance civil society engagement.
- Drawbacks
  - Project document ambiguous.
  - Technical and advisory assistance to be provided only if requested by INEC.
  - INEC did not utilize support in core areas.
  - Assistance not sought to fill critical and identified gaps.
SUPPORT FOR 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS

- JDBF support amounted to only approx. 5% of the total election budget of around USD 435 ml in a financially independent state.

- Donors had limited leverage to influence decisions.

- National Ownership challenge – ‘we know it all syndrome on one hand and Paris Declaration principles on the other’.
SUPPORT FOR 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS

• INEC could ‘VETO’ selection of experts.

• INEC was reluctant to share full information.

• Ambiguity in the areas of support became issue between the Donors and INEC.

• UNDP walked a tight rope – being the honest broker.
2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS - MINUSES

• Widely flawed according to observation reports and civil society.
• Voters’ register left lot to be desired.
• Major logistic and operational glitches.
• Result collation not transparent.
• INEC considered not neutral.
• Electoral law and procedures not well codified.
2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS - PLUSES

- Schedule for general elections followed.
- Modern technology adopted for voters’ registration.
- New voters’ I-cards facility set up.
- Effort made for electronic transmission of results.
- Media and Judiciary played constructive roles.
- Civil Society Organisations became more vocal.
- Less violent when compared to 2003.
2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS

- **DEMOCRACY SURVIVED** – first transition of civilian power.

- Donors still have ‘foot in the door’.
2007 DONOR SUPPORT - ISSUES

- Donor support on the eve of elections – limited to general elections 2007.
- Delay in bringing experts on board.
- Valuable time lost in clarifying support areas / activities.
- Delay in receiving requests from INEC.
- INEC staff not enthusiastic when support in DEX – mode.
WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER

• Immediately after 2003 Elections - Electoral Cycle approach.

• Early Donor support covering all areas - not focussed toward limited Electoral Management Body (EMB) and Civil Society Organisations interventions alone.

• Long term capacity building of CSOs, political parties, other stakeholders like media, security forces, female politicians.
WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER

- Clear understanding with a willing EMB.
- Donors not micro-managing the project.
- Trust in the managing partner.
- Timely enactment of Electoral Act and codification of electoral procedures.
POST 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS

• Nigerian Government has constituted an Electoral Reforms Panel.
• Sought help for carrying out Electoral Reforms.
• JDBF has agreed to extend the project up to 31 March 2008 for supporting activities aimed at Reforms process.
• EU – mid term evaluation of the project completed.
• Lessons learning exercise over.
HOPE 2011 – WILL WE DO IT RIGHT?

• Adopt Electoral Cycle and multi pronged approach - support not focussed towards EMB alone.
• Donor support continues without any gap realising that failure to engage risks missed opportunity.
• Have a willing partner in the EMB.
• Support various activities for various elections between 2008 -2011.
• Intervene now when sensitivities are less and not on the eve of elections.
HOPE 2011

HOPE IS NEVER LOST

THANK YOU