



European Commission United Nations Development Programme International IDEA

***Joint Training on
Effective Electoral Assistance***

DAY 1

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Case Study

Support to Nigerian Electoral

Cycle 2006-2011

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Background to the adoption of the electoral cycle approach

- Improved relationship between Nigeria and the EC post 1999 with both sides working to promote mutually beneficial relations.
- EC's commitment to a strengthened relation between the EU and Nigeria based on equality, dialogue and shared values of respect for human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance
- Support provided to Nigerian elections 1999(approx Euro 6M); 2003 (Euro 6.4M)- Too Little, Too Late.



Background to the adoption of the electoral cycle approach

- Preparations ahead of the 2007 elections amongst donors on the basis of lessons learned from previous elections + international observers recommendations.
- EC-UNDP Joint Formulation Mission to Nigeria to facilitate negotiations and project design mid 2005.
- Adoption in the Financing Proposal of a holistic approach to an electoral cycle which recognised that the post-electoral period requires as much attention as the pre-electoral period.



The Electoral Cycle Approach

- Signature of FA in July 2006 for the amount of €40M to support the Nigerian Electoral Cycle 2006-2011-pioneer case for the EC.
- €40M contribution to be used to support a two phased elections programme consisting of a pre-election/election phase (August 2006-August 2007 with €20M contribution) and
- A post election /inter election phase (September 2007- 2010 with €20M).



Implementation modality for phase1 (August 2006-August 2007)

- Contribution –specific Agreement between the EC and UNDP within the context of a UNDP managed joint donor basket fund (JDBF)
- Other contributors are UK DFID and Canadian (CIDA) .
- The total basket fund contribution is approximately €24 million with the EC €20M accounting for more than 80% of that amount.



Implementation modality for phase1

- A UNDP project document set out the framework for activities to be supported before, during and immediately after the elections.
- CA had foreseen that implementation will benefit from FAFA and EC Methodological Guide to Electoral Assistance (October 2006)



- The overall aim of the JDBF was to achieve transparent and credible elections that would be recognised in Nigeria and internationally, by supporting the institutional development and technical capacity of the Independent National Election Commission (INEC), and by enhancing the participation of civil society in the electoral process.



JDBF Implementation challenges+ lessons learned

- **General management structure** – the JDBF had a classic two-fold structure with a Steering Committee and a Project Management Unit (PMU).
- INEC was part of the Steering Committee and performed a prominent role as Co-chair alongside UNDP.
- This model gives due recognition to national ownership but depends on the commitment of all partners to parity and co-operation.



JDBF Implementation challenges+ lessons learned

- All interaction with INEC was left to UNDP.
- A separate Donor Sub-committee was created to guide the JDBF's civil society component separately from the Nigerian state institutions.
- This management structure allowed INEC to assume a leadership role in the election assistance process, and to become a key decision-maker in all of its aspects.



JDBF Implementation challenges+ lessons learned

- The distribution of roles and responsibilities also had the effect that the quality of the programme relied heavily on UNDP's capacity to manage it, and on its ability to negotiate partner positions effectively.



Specific implementation challenges+ lessons learned

- **Recruitment and human resources –**
- the selection of international experts was a drawn-out process that resulted in the late mobilisation of appropriate expertise to manage the programme efficiently.



JDBF Implementation challenges...

- **Strategic management** – Decision-making and consensus-building represented major challenges and many compromises had to be made that affected the quality and timeliness of the programme.
- Steering Committee had very limited scope for strategic reviews and programme revisions. Donors felt that they lacked sufficient information on overall programme developments that would have allowed them to identify and address challenges.



JDBF Implementation challenges...

- INEC often took positions diverging from those of the donors, which then had to be negotiated in meetings and by means of UNDP shuttle-diplomacy.
- Donors initially failed to reach joint positions in Steering Committee meetings and had to set up informal pre-co-ordination meetings to ensure a common stand vis-à-vis INEC.



JDBF Implementation challenges...

- In this process, the role played by UNDP to provide co-ordination and serve as the interface between the donors and INEC was perceived very differently by both sides. While INEC commended UNDP for effective relationship-building and communications, donors were more critical.
- It is however acknowledge that UNDP had a difficult course to navigate, having to accommodate the positions of both donors and INEC.
- In this sense, the UNDP is commended for ensuring that there was no rupture during the implementation phase and for keeping open the dialogue with an otherwise difficult election administration body.



JDBF Implementation challenges...

- **Operational management** – The PMU efficiency was hampered by a lack of time, capacity and strategic guidance.
- Monthly meetings held but documents for meetings often came late.
- Late disbursement of grants to CSOs.



JDBF Implementation challenges...

- **Co-ordination and communications** – The JDBF was meant to provide a mechanism for co-ordination with the wider community of donors and election stakeholders and for public information. This worked well.
- **Reporting** – The PMU was tasked to report to the Steering Committee at several instances throughout the programme but there is a perception on the part of donors that reporting had not been entirely satisfactory.



JDBF Implementation challenges...

- **Timeliness** – General agreement by stakeholders that timing and time management have been greatest challenge of the programme with severe impact on its quality
- **Visibility**- Consensus that all donors enjoyed sufficient visibility under the project.



Overall assessment of JDBF

- The mid-term evaluation of EC support to Nigeria's electoral cycle through the JDBF shows that the implementation of project activities is in line with the contents in the UNDP Project Document. However, the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of interventions were constrained by several factors:



Overall assessment of JDBF

- the difficult operational environment in which activities had to be implemented;
- INEC's political stance and management culture;
- delays in the project start date
- establishment of management structures, recruitment of key personnel and take-off of project activities



Overall assessment of JDBF

- The mid-term review makes a strong case for EC sustained investment in the Nigerian electoral process.
- But the poor conduct of the 2007 elections begs for political level decision on the part of EU MS + EC Commission on whether or not to continue with the support.
- Once this decision is made, EC will make a secondary level decision on areas to be supported and the implementation modality under phase 2 drawing from lessons learned under phase 1. Some of the areas have already been identified by the EC mid term evaluation.



Extension of phase 1

- In the meantime the JDBF has been extended beyond its initial end date for the period September 2007 – March 2008 to take advantage of the window of opportunity created for electoral reform under the President Yar'Adua's electoral reform panel.



Conclusion

- It is to be commended that for the first time in Nigeria an entire electoral cycle was the object of the donors' assistance, and all its different steps were incorporated into the project design to respond to needs in a holistic manner.
- The project also provided a good example of how donor coordination can work in the face of an objectively difficult and complex political environment.



Thank you for listening...

