PROJECT FACTS

Nigeria: Assessment of Good Urban Governance

Total budget
- GAP: USD 425,000
- UNDP Nigeria: USD 60,000
- UN-HABITAT: USD 5,000
- States/Local Governments: USD 238,921

Project period: 2008-2011
Location: 18 Local Government Areas
Implementing partner: National Bureau of Statistics

Youth Leaders participating at the FGDs held in Abuja (AMAC)

Background

Decentralization efforts in Nigeria have not yet yielded the desired results due to a variety of factors, such as encroachment of state governments on responsibilities of Local Government Areas (LGAs); absence of autonomy (fiscal, administrative and political); capacity constraints; and non-participation of stakeholders in local governance.

Launched in 2009 as a joint effort by the UNDP and UN-HABITAT offices in Nigeria, with support from UNDP's Global Programme on Governance Assessments, this initiative was aimed at developing a customized framework for assessing the quality of urban governance in Nigerian cities. The ultimate objective was to initiate an evidence-based dialogue on priority areas for intervention to improve the quality of local/urban governance across the country.

The project was set up within a national institution – the National Bureau of Statistics – to ensure that it is eventually mainstreamed in the existing governmental system. Key partners are actively engaged in the process through the National Technical Committee, which includes representatives of the National Planning Commission, the Federal Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Development, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), some local NGOs and the Association of Local Governments in Nigeria (ALGON).

Methodology

The assessment is pathbreaking in a number of ways. In terms of content, this is the first home-grown attempt to assess the quality of local/urban governance in Nigeria.

In terms of methodology, it combines household surveys conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics, focus group discussions (held separately for groups of women, traditional leaders, youth and CSOs) and collation of administrative data in a creative manner to yield well-rounded results. The participatory process which led to the design of the methodology has enabled civil society organizations to voice their views and opinions on governance issues and how best to measure them. The buy-in of LGAs and state governments, demonstrated through their financial and in-kind contributions to the exercise, and the ownership of the activity by the National Bureau of Statistics, have been other innovative achievements of the project.

Figure1: 'GUG' (Good Urban Governance) Assessment Framework at a Glance

GUG principle	Indicators
EEFECTIVENESS	Vision Statement for LG; Service delivery; Mechanism for grievance redress; Solidarity, Resource mobilization; LG Capacity
EQUITY	Pro-poor policies / programmes; Incentives to support informal sectors; Citizen's charter; Gender equity (% of women in decision-making/women elected); Access to education; Conflict resolution
SECURITY	Effective policing, Rate of crime; Environmental Security measures; Tenure security; Conflict resolution

ACCOUNTABILITY	Free flow of information; Mechanism for performance measure; Adoption of due process; Independent audit; Code of Conduct; Citizens' demand for accountability
PARTICIPATION	Civic engagement and consensus building involvement of women, youth, traditional rulers, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs in decision-making; % of voters in the last election as against total; No. of registered NGOs; Partnership building (existence of legislation on PPP; No. of ongoing PP projects)

The NBS, the UNDP/UN-HABITAT team and a set of experienced local consultants led the entire process. The consolidation of the results from all sources and preparation of a report on each LGA was the responsibility of consultants engaged. At the local level, some cities have established multi-stakeholder committees to support data collection and to take part in the reflection on the results. The major stages of project implementation are shown in Figure 2. All these stages have been completed and the national report of the pilot GUG assessment was presented at a National Stakeholder Validation Workshop in May 2011.

Sustainability

A series of steps will need to be taken in order to effectively roll out and mainstream the GUG assessment methodology in Nigeria. First, a full technical review of the assessment framework – including indicator selection, data collection methods, weightings for the computation of the GUG Index, etc. – is currently underway. In addition, a brainstorming paper has been drafted jointly by the Global Programme on Governance Assessments and UNDP Nigeria to position this initiative squarely within the broader decentralization/local governance agenda of UNDP in Nigeria.

Systematizing, mainstreaming and rolling out the process of collection and analysis of local governance data for the entire country will need significant resource commitment on part of the Government and the NBS, with possible support from other development partners. An advocacy paper for securing political and donor support for the next phase is to be developed by the end of the year.

To build an understanding of the relevance of governance assessments to a variety of stakeholders, and to create broad-based support for the GUG initiative, a three-pronged approach is envisioned:

a. *Upstream* – Engage with high-level stakeholders such as the Minister of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, as well as his counterparts in the different states. There is a need for local, state and national political leaders and officials to better understand the value of governance data for policymaking.

b. *Downstream* – Initiate an advocacy programme for citizens by engaging with leading civil society organizations, as well as the media, to build up a demand for governance assessments from the bottom-up.

c. *Media* – The media can supplement the dissemination of findings through publishing local vignettes or human interest stories that highlight everyday governance problems faced by citizens. A senior journalist could also be invited to join the National Technical Committee.

Figure 2: Main stages of the project

Finalisation of indicators
Identification of city focal points
Establishment of city Steering Committees

Establishment of national and city level GIRCs to review indicators and collect data on regular basis

Training of focal points, data collection and analysis teams

Collation of city level reports
Presentation of city and national comparative report

Data collection and analysis
Validation by city Steering Committees

Development of city level GUG reports
Presentation to local stakeholders and media