

A New Dawn in Development Partnership in Jigawa State

In May 2014, a meeting of all Development Partners in Jigawa State was convened by the Budget & Economic Planning Directorate – the Government Agency saddled with the statutory responsibility of coordinating the activities of Development Partners in the State. Even though BEPD has previously discretely performed this function dealing with the individual Development Partners, the initiative is to take donor coordination to higher levels ensuring effective coordination and collaboration between Partners and the State Government on the one hand; and between the Partners themselves on the other hand. A major outcome of the May 2014 is the birth of Jigawa State Development Partners Forum. A by-product of the Forum is debut of Development Partnership News Letter that would serve as one of the rallying points for continuous interface between all the Partners.

As far back as 2007, the National Planning Commission of Nigeria has published a small document titled the Official Development Assistance (ODA) Policy of Nigeria. The principles of the ODA demands for a deliberate policy to coordinate the activities of Development Partners at both the Federal and State levels ensuring that development support “**creates multiplier effects on the domestic economy**” and is integrated “**into the medium and long-term national (and state) development frameworks.**” In the same vein, the Paris declaration of March 2005 has reiterated the principles of effective donor coordination and alignment of development support with recipient countries. In particular, the key principles of the Paris Declaration is to ensure that:

- There is significant **alignment** between programmes supported by Development Partners and national and sub-national development strategies, institutions and procedures;

The Principles under the Paris Declaration of 2005:

1. Ownership: Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies and strategies, and coordinate development actions.
2. Alignment: Donors base their overall support on partner countries’ national development strategies, institutions and procedures.
3. Harmonization: Donors’ actions are more harmonized, transparent and collectively effective.
4. Managing for results: Donors and partners manage and implement aid in a way that focuses on the desired results and uses information to improve decision-making.
5. Mutual accountability: Donors and partners are accountable for development results.

- The overall actions of Development Partners are **harmonized, transparent and collectively effective**;
- Both Governments and Development Partners manage and implement development support in a way that focuses on the desired results and uses information to improve decision-making, that is **management for results**;
- There is **mutual accountability** between the Government and its Development Partners;

The principles provide the overall focus of donor coordination. Effective Aid Management and Donor Coordination is indeed very critical in

promoting a consolidated approach to the management of human and materials resources among Development Partners and with State and Local Government Resources to achieve more effective and efficient outcomes; it promotes more effective allocation of scarce resources brought to the table by both development partners and the state ensuring strategic prioritization in the process. Other objectives set to be achieved through a coordinated approach development support include:

1. Realignment of donor resource and harmonization of donor policies and procedures to achieve common development objectives;
2. Ensures establishment of a single interface and forum for Government – Development Partners relationships;
3. Promoting Government programme ownership and sustainability by ensuring sufficient State inputs into programme design and implementation; and
4. Cross-Fertilization and sharing of knowledge, information, data, and experiences as well challenges faced by partners.

Also in line with the demands of the Jigawa State Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF), it would be necessary to develop a framework that provides opportunities for effective coordination and collaboration between development partners in the state. This is against the backdrop of the fact that a number of the existing programmes currently being supported by Development Partners share common objectives and operate within common sectors and thematic areas;

It was thus in line with the principle of the Nigeria's ODA and to take concretize the potential benefits of effective Donor Coordination and Aid Management that BEPD convene the March 2014 Meeting leading to the birth of the "**Jigawa State Development Partners Forum**".

A very significant fallout of establishing the Forum is the current move by BEPD to set-up a Development Partner Coordination Unit in its Planning Department with clearly defined functional structure and assigned desk officers.

The Unit, which would in future become a full-fledged **Development Support and Donor Coordination Department** would anchor the **Oversight Functions** of BEPD with regards to Aid Management and Donor coordination while also serving s the Secretariat of Forum and discharging other functions with regards to **Processes** and **Documentations**. Some of the specific functions being considered would include among others:

-
1. Managing the State's responsibilities in relation to aid delivery and donor support programmes

2. Establishing and maintaining a comprehensive data bank on development partners and programmes in the state.
 3. Ensuring that development partner programmes are properly coordinated, monitored and aligned with State Government priorities
 4. Promoting the State for donor partners' support.
 5. Providing economic analyses and advice to State Government on appropriateness of donor partner loans and grants in collaboration with the Debt management Committee of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning.
 6. Budgeting for and managing counterpart funds.
-