

Slow Progress for Economic Reform Bills

Three bills on which the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo intends to anchor some of its economic reform program as it approaches its terminal date of May 29, 2007 are making the slow route through the Nigerian National Assembly.

The bills Fiscal Responsibility Bill, the Public Procurement Bill and the Nigerian Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative Bill are undergoing several stages in the National Assembly legislative Process.

The Fiscal Responsibility bill aims to clarify the role of the executive and the legislature in the budgetary process and sets out transparency requirements, sanctions for noncompliance and guidelines for budgetary practices. Deliberations are ongoing on this bill in the National Assembly. A public hearing was held September 27-28 to critically analyse the bill.

The Nigeria Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative bill (NEITI) is the Nigerian subset of the global Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) aimed at following due process and achieving transparency in payments by Extractive Industries /companies to governments and government linked entities; and in the revenues received and reported by those governments and entities.

This bill which has already been passed in the House of Representatives is still pending in the Senate. The Senate Committee on Establishment and Public Services is currently considering the NEITI Bill.

Some of the recommendations of the draft NEITI bill include a general provision requiring all Federal, State or Local Governments and extractive industry companies covered under the NEITI to proactively publish all information pertaining to all payments made or received, including duties, taxes, royalties, dividend, bonuses, penalties, levies etc.

The disclosure of such information is important because it allows citizens oversight into the NEITI process.

Cont'd on page 5



The Senate President
Senator Ken Nnamani



The Speaker House of Representatives
Hon. Aminu Bello Masari

Official Launch of SNAP

On Thursday April 27th 2006, NDI launched its legislative program - Strengthening the National Assembly Programs (SNAP), at the foyer of the National Assembly.

Participants included members of the diplomatic community, international organizations, Distinguished Senators, Honorable members, legislative staff, civil society leaders, the Media and the NDI team.

The objective of the launch was to inform the public, members of the National Assembly, the diplomatic community and the media of the existence of NDI's pro-poor legislative strengthening program (SNAP). As well as highlighting international interest in and support for the Nigerian National Assembly in its effort to be more responsive on pro-poor legislative reforms that would contribute to systemic social, economic and political development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the National Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS).

With support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) the National Democratic Institute is initiating a program to help develop sustainable capacity in the Nigerian National Assembly so that the body is better able to play a constructive role in addressing poverty and inequality. This includes the development of relationships between the National Assembly and stakeholders in civil society and between the National Assembly and the executive branch.

Cont'd on Page 6



Hon Farouk Lawan speaking at the Launch

SNAP WORKSHOP ON THE NEITI BILL

The SNAP team held an MDG participatory methodology workshop in Owerri, Imo State from the 4th - 6th September 2006, to mobilize Civil Society Organizations for effective and systemic pro-poor reform intervention in Nigeria.

The workshop analyzed the NEITI bill to ensure that this bill assist in poverty reduction efforts through disaggregated disclosure of information, transparency/ good governance, capacity building, civil society engagement, appropriate sanctions and annual audits.

This workshop had in attendance over twenty five active civil society groups, representative of the NEITI Secretariat, the sponsors of the Bill (the Executive), Members and staff of the National Assembly.

Stan Rerri of the NEITI Secretariat in his paper "Overview of the NEITI Bill" set out to review the Nigerian Extractive Sector, Advocacy. Key issues in the bill and more importantly its relevance to poverty reduction. Auwalu Ibrahim of CISEAC stated that: "Poverty is an Institutional condition caused by unequal distribution of common wealth", in his paper titled "NEITI Bill & its Implication on Poverty Reduction". Joe Alejele of the Central Bank of Nigeria took the discussion to a more topical dimension when he spoke on "NEITI & Sectoral (CBN) Contributions to Poverty Reduction". He spoke on CBN's intervention towards poverty reduction and credit alternatives. "The Legislative Impact and Challenges of the NEITI Bill" presented by Senator Lee Macha, Chairman, Senate Committee on Upstream Petroleum Resources, analyzed the lapses in the scope of the bill which may lead to ineffectiveness in its implementation. To ensure effective advocacy, one will need to look at the social problem, policy: determination and implementation. These points were made by Honorable Asoluka in "Strategies for Issue Based Advocacy Campaign". Finally, Dr. Otiye Igbuzor emphasized the role of CSOs in the NEITI Bill in ensuring effective implementation through due process, accountability and transparency.

The group session produced a critique of the bill which will be passed on to the Senate for consideration and/or adoption. Some of the issues identified in the bill include: (a) Increased oversight of the National Assembly on the Executive; (b) That biannual audits be made available to the National Assembly; (c) the need for more inclusive CSO relations in the implementation of the bill; etc.



Chief Chris Asoluka making a presentation during the NEITI bill workshop in Owerri



Stan Rerri of NEITI Secretariat & Joe Alejele of CBN at the NEITI bill workshop in Owerri



Cross Section of IRG Delegates

IRG STUDY MISSION

The Institute for Representative Government (IRG), in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI), sponsored a study mission to Washington, D.C., Houston and Austin Texas for Members of the Nigerian National Assembly in June 18 - 28, 2006. The participants commended the study mission as one of the best Study Missions to be embarked on by the Nigerian lawmakers as it gave them the opportunity to examine comparative technique for engaging in effective oversight of budgets with focus on the transparency of extractive industries revenue. During their time in Washington and Texas, participants met with Members and staff of the US Congress and the Texas Legislature, and with representatives from the State Department, the National Security Council, the International Finance Institutions, and the Policy Community. IRG was funded by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in the US Department of State. The Senior Program Manager SNAP, Clement Nwankwo led and

facilitated the delegation on the study mission. The mission focused on institutional development issues in light of legislative and democratic reforms in Nigeria. There was an emphasis on legislative staffing structures and how the legislature can be effectively organized to support Members in performing their roles. It was an opportunity for the lawmakers to meet with their counterparts in the US Congress, key staff members of the Congress and prominent experts on legislative development.

Cont'd on page 4

National Assembly Capacity Building on Pro-Poor Oversight

NDI's SNAP started implementation of its activities by embarking on a series of orientation workshops to build the capacity of select members and Committee staff of the National Assembly to carry out oversight responsibilities on pro-poor issues. SNAP has also trained Civil Society Organizations on building their capacity to interface and cooperate with the National Assembly process as monitoring of pro-poor efforts in the legislature.

From the 4th to 7th of May 2006, NDI held a policy Dialogue on the use of legislative tools to achieve pro-poor reforms in Nigeria. The event was held at Adriel Hotel, Kaduna. It brought together select committee Members of the National Assembly, Committee Secretaries and Staff, select Civil Society groups and the media to develop strategies that will strengthen the capacity of the National Assembly to fulfill legislative and representative responsibilities with emphasis to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS).

The Dialogue Objectives were to develop the expertise on issues affecting pro-poor policy, develop strategies that will strengthen their capacity to fulfill their legislative and representative responsibilities with particular reference to MDGs and NEEDS. This was followed by another policy dialogue held from May 29 to June 1, 2006 at the City Lodge Hotel, Jos for select



Participants at the CSO workshop in Lagos

Staff of committees of the National Assembly whose work were identified within the context of developing their capacities and expertise on issues affecting pro-poor Policies, Budget tracking and identifying the synergy of the pro-poor documents were discussed. The Dialogue had in attendance, Secretaries and Legislative staff of key Committees of the National Assembly, Civil Society Organizations and the Media. Effective Strategies for Effective Pro-poor Reforms for Civil Society Organization held from 5th June - 8th June 2006 in Lagos, identified Civil Society Organizations who were involved in capacity building of the National Assembly to develop effective strategies for pro-poor reforms.

The purpose of the workshop was to create an understanding of the two documents in terms of Development and Landmarks in the Implementation of NEEDS & MDGs. The Importance of Committees CSO Relationship in the Budget Process



Dr Ishiaku Mohammed of MDG office making a presentation in Jos

Building Capacity to Monitor NEEDS & MDGs Expenditure in the Budget Maximizing CSO Input into the Budget Process in the Context of NEEDS & MDGs. The goal of CSO and Committee relationship building is to achieve the promotion of achievable Pro-Poor policies through implementation and monitoring as well as effective partnership with legislators in terms of achieving the Pro-Poor reforms.

These policy dialogues have enriched not just the Members of the National Assembly, staff of the National Assembly and the Executive but created greater ties between the National Assembly and Civil Society Organizations involved in building the capacity of the National Assembly in promoting effective pro-poor reforms.

PRO-POOR REFORMS OUTCOME DOCUMENTS

Three of the recently held SNAP Pro-poor workshops aimed to build on the capacity of National legislators, legislative staff, Civil Society Organizations and activists to impact on pro-poor reform delivery, in light of the MDGs/NEEDS documents. The recommendations are contained in the SNAP outcome documents.



For more information and analysis, the full document is available at the NDI Nigeria office.

IRG STUDY MISSION Cont'd

The delegation also made visits to the Congressional Budget Office in Washington DC and the Center for Budget Policy in Texas. In her letter to NDI after the study tour, Senate Committee Chair on Education and leader of the Nigerian National Assembly Team, Senator Joy Emodi stated that: "the Study Mission provided participants an opportunity to evaluate mechanisms for engaging in effective oversight of the Budget, with particular focus on Transparency of extractive industries revenue was of tremendous benefit to them. She further stated that she is absolutely positive that participants were greatly enriched by presentations and interactions and the objectives of the program were truly achieved."



Nigeria Participants at IRG Study Mission

IRG Delegates

Senator Joy Emodi - *Chairman, Committee on Education*

Senator Abubakar Maikafi - *Chairman, Committee on Finance*

Hon. Temi Harriman - *Member, Petroleum Committee*

Hon. Abike Dabiri - *Chairman, Committee on Media & Publicity*

Hon. Saudatu Sani - *Chairman, Committee on Women & Youth Development*

Hon. Collins Abayomi - *Chairman, Committee on National Planning*

Hon. Farouk Lawan - *Chairman, Committee on Appropriations*

Hon. Usman Bugaje - *Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs*

Hon. Alaba Lad-Ojomo - *Chairman, Committee on Legislative Research & Budget Office*

Mr. Niyi Ajiboye - *Acting Clerk, House of Representatives*

NABRO UPDATE

The NDI NABRO (National Assembly Budget & Research Office) Program has in the past few months concentrated efforts towards the actualization of a budget office in the National Assembly. However within the year, more progress towards the establishment of NABRO has been made than in all the preceding years.

At the beginning of the year, and with NDI's engagement with the National Assembly, the legislature made a historic allocation of N265m towards the establishment of NABRO.

NDI consultants, Hon. Bob Holmes, a legislator from Georgia, and Hon. Chris Asoluka, a former member of the Nigerian National Assembly to assist NDI following up on achieving the NABRO creation effort.

After several meetings with key committee Chairs of both houses, a bill to establish the NABRO is going through final process in both houses. NDI was able to make key recommendations on strengthening the bill. The NABRO Bill sailed through 1st and 2nd reading in record time.

In the next few months, NDI plans to assist the National Assembly in the actualization of NABRO through meetings with relevant stakeholders to ensure passage of the NABRO Bill, assistance with the effective set up of the NABRO Office, recruitment process, Study Tours for NABRO pilot staff, NABRO Website, promoting effective collaboration with CSOs, media and the National Assembly.

Joint Public Hearing of National Assembly on Fiscal Responsibility Bill (FRB)

On September 27 and 28, 2006, the Joint National Assembly Committee on the Fiscal Responsibility Bill, chaired by Senator Udoma Udo Udoma, held a public hearing on the Fiscal Responsibility Bill in the National Assembly Complex.

This Bill purports to set up a framework on the basis of which the fiscal policies of the Federal, State and Local Government can be coordinated to enhance better management of the economy. The bill is an important part of the NEEDS document. Upon receipt of the Bill, some members of the National Assembly undertook study visits to countries such as Brazil & South Africa to understand how the Bill operates in those countries.

In his opening remarks, the Senate President, Ken Nnamani stated that, "The National Assembly is determined to enact the best Fiscal Responsibility Law for Nigeria and this is derived from their commitment to provide credible and effective legislative mechanism to enable the executive perform its statutory responsibility.



*Senator Udoma Udo Udoma
Chairman, Joint Committee
Fiscal Responsibility Bill*



The National Assembly Complex Foyer

The public hearing was also attended by the Honorable Speaker of the House of Representatives as well as other members of the National Assembly. The Executive sponsors of the bill were in attendance so also agencies, Civil Society Organizations, the Revenue Mobilization, Allocation & Fiscal Commission, all 36 States of the federation and all state Accountant Generals were represented, Nigerian Bar Association, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Nigeria Economic Society (NES), Private organizations and individuals, Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC), and National Association of Nigerian Students

While applauding the Fiscal Responsibility bill, the groups noted that though the bill is needed in Nigeria, it lacks yet some credibility which could most likely impede its passage.

The National Assembly Joint Committee and other Members present thanked all participants for their recommendations and inputs into the Fiscal Responsibility bill. The National Assembly welcomed the bill and desires to pass it swiftly, but the bill needs to be repackaged as the draft Fiscal Responsibility bill is technically inadequate. The Chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee promised to take the recommendations into account.

Slow Progress for Economic Reform Bills Cont'd

how their resources are being utilized and the manner in which payments are made, invested and spent.

The Public Procurement bill seeks to provide for the establishment of the National Council on Public Procurement; the Bureau of Public Procurement as the regulatory authority responsible for the monitoring of public procurement, harmonizing existing

Government policies and practices by regulating, setting standards and developing the legal framework and professional capacity for public procurement in Nigeria. The bill will also regulate the procurement of goods and services in the public sector to enhance economy and efficiency in the utilization of public funds

Currently the public procurement bill is undergoing consideration in the House having passed the Committee stage; while in the Senate, the bill has gone past second reading and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Establishment and Public Services for further action

Official Launch of SNAP Cont'd

SNAP will increase the capacity of select legislative committees to foster, implement and oversee pro-poor reform within their respective issue areas

The Senate President, Ken Nnamani in his speech said, "I embrace the idea of SNAP because it is in accord with the vision of the legislature I articulated when I became Senate President in April 2005. It is a vision of a research-oriented and development focused law making and a vision of legislature receiving technical support from civil society groups and other stakeholders it also accords with the paradigm shift in global understanding of public administration."

Hon. Farouk Lawan (Chair Committee on Appropriation) thanked NDI for its immense contributions to Nigeria particularly the National Assembly. He applauded NDI for its legislative strengthening program (SNAP) of which he was delighted that his Committee was among those SNAP would be working with.

Comments were made by other members of the National Assembly who were enthusiastic about the SNAP program and looked forward to participate in its various activities. Alex Stevens of DFID commented on the official take off of SNAP and looked forward to the upcoming activities of the legislative strengthening programs in the National Assembly on pro poor issues



Cross Section of Guest at the Launch

"The MDGs are indeed relevant to Nigeria and do matter not only to us but to Africa. This is because every fourth African is a Nigerian and the poor Human Development Index (HDI) of Nigeria makes the achievement of the MDGs a compelling and urgent reality, said Amina J Ibrahim, Senior Special Assistant to the President on the MDGs represented by Dr Ibrahim Dauda. "Nigerians response to these poor indices has been enunciated in the NEEDS, which is our home grown Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)." The SNAP launch was organized by NDI with grant support from DFID in association with USAID concentrated on the need to strengthen the National Assembly programs on pro-poor issues with emphasis on the NEEDS and MDGs documents.

The Senate President was represented by the Chief of Staff to the Senate President: Dr. Salihu Bello. The Speaker was represented by Hon. Farouk Lawan (Chair Committee on Appropriation) while the Clerk of the National assembly was represented by the Clerk of the Senate: Alhaji Umaru Sani. Also represented was the Presidency Special Adviser, Dr. Ibrahim Dauda. Alex Stevens was the representative of DFID at the launch. Comments were also made by Hon. Lad Ojomo & Hon. Abdul Oroh.



NDI Country Director in a discussion with Graham Gass and Alex Stevens (DFID)



A cross section of guests at the Launch

SNAP Targeted Committees

- Education
- Health
- Agriculture
- Women & Youth Devt.
- Finance
- Appropriation
- National Planning
- Poverty Alleviation

Role of Parliamentarians in the Protection and Development of the Almajiri Child

May 2006, the House of Representatives Committee on Women and Youth Development organized an African Regional Conference in Kaduna on the role of parliamentarians in the protection and development of the Almajiri child. Almajiris are young child beggars put into the streets by their teachers or even parents to beg for their own living. They are mostly found in the Northern region of Nigeria.

The aim of the conference was to bring together Parliamentarians, experts in Islamic and Western Education in Human Rights Law and practice, health and development analysts and other key government agencies, personnel and development partners from various African countries. The conference discussed the

The wider migratory implications related to child trafficking, child health, child abuse, labour and economic exploitation of the Almajiri child.

According to the Conference organizers, the aims include making policy oriented recommendations that will guide parliamentarians, policy makers and implementers in ensuring effective promotion and protection of the rights of this vulnerable group of children.

To devise strategic program of actions to be undertaken by duty-bearers in participating countries in order to tackle the human rights challenges pose by the manipulative and discriminative environment in which the Almajiri child survives.



To draw up strategies for implementation in addressing the Traditional.

Quranic School Education system for the total development of the child.

In her speech Hon. Saudatu Sani, Chair House Committee on Women Affairs and Youth Development in her welcome address stated that, "It is unacceptable that in Africa, when the world is focusing on the MDGs and NEPAD that the African child aged 4 to 18 years can be so neglected and so abused.

We must find out where we have gone wrong as a society. The first goal of the MDGs aims at reducing poverty by 2015. How can we then realize this goal, if our children are still begging?" Nigeria and other African countries will not achieve the MDGs goals until strategic action is initiated towards transforming and developing the Almajiri into responsible members of the society, this she referred to as the pro-poor project. The conference was declared open by the state governor, Ahmed Makarfi and Minister of Women Affairs Mrs. Inna Ciroma.

NDI New Country Director

The SNAP Team

Clement Nwankwo;
Senior Program Manager
Amina Ozonevo
Mikang Longjan
Chizobam Iwuoha

In January 2006, Dr. Keith Jennings assumed duties as the Country Director for the National Democratic Institute in Nigeria. Dr. Keith Jennings has over 20 years experience promoting democracy and human rights in politically complex environment. He oversees the implementation of NDI's programs in

Nigeria in collaboration with senior program managers and other staff in the Abuja office. He builds and maintains relationships with key partners from political parties, the legislature, and other branches of government, civil society, donors, and the international community. Dr. Keith Jennings worked as the President, African



American Human Rights Foundation, Atlanta Georgia, Chief of party, NDI The Philippines, Southern Regional Coordinata, The Center of Community Change, Washington DC, director of Asian Civil Society and Chief of Party, NDI Jakarta, Indonesia, director of Citizen participation Program, NDI Washington DC. He was the Chief of Party for NDI in Mozambique, Liberia, Zambia and Sr. Advisor for Africa, Latin America and Caribbean Programs, NDI Washington DC, and Chief of party. He holds a PhD and M.A., Political Science, from Clark Atlanta University, Georgia, and a B.A in public administration from Fisk University.

Upcoming Activities

SNAP

- ❖ Workshop for targeted pro-poor committee secretaries of the National Assembly on the NEEDS/MGDS budget review; October 29-31 (Kaduna)
- ❖ 1st PAC Inaugural Meeting: Formation & Development of the Program Advisory Committee (PAC); (Abuja)
- ❖ Establishment of CSO liaison office in the National Assembly.
- ❖ IT Technical Assistance to improve targeted Committees' & senior legislative staff use of IT to promote pro-poor reforms.
- ❖ MDGs/NEEDS Youth Campaign (Lagos) October 19-21
- ❖ DFID: Output to Purpose Review. (Abuja) November 6-7
- ❖ NDI & Education Senate Committee National Assembly Stakeholders forum on improved education delivery towards achieving the MDGs/ NEEDS goals (2015); (Abuja) November 7-8
- ❖ National Conference on Human Rights (Abuja) December 8-9

ELECTIONS

- ❖ Town Hall Meetings: Building Confidence in Election Process (Various geo. political zones); October
- ❖ Voter Registration Monitoring: October 25 - November 30
- ❖ Monitoring of Step Down Trainings: October 30 - November 4
- ❖ Civil Society Organization Pre-Election Conference: November 15-18

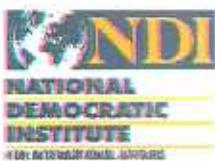
LEGISLATIVE STRENGTHENING

- ❖ Distribution of House Committee Code of Conduct: October

NABRO

- ❖ Consultative Meetings, Publication and Dissemination of NABRO Report
- ❖ Work with National Assembly to determine NABRO housing, equipment needs, preplanning workshops, recruitment of staff and training and an interim budget.
- ❖ Work with National Assembly to finalize NABRO legislation
- ❖ Assist National Assembly in conducting effective public hearings
- ❖ Training at Congressional Budget Office
- ❖ Finalize job descriptions for NABRO staff and assist in recruitment process
- ❖ Sign MOU with National Assembly on NABRO
- ❖ Conduct orientation and start developing staff handbook

For More Information on NDI's programs and publications, please visit our website at www.ndi.org



18 Buchanan Crescent
Off Aminu Kano Crescent
Wuse 11, Abuja.
Tel: 234(9)4132761-2,766
www.ndi.org



The NDI Strengthening the National Assembly Program (SNAP) is implemented with grant support from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and administered by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).