

Charting *the* Future



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The Governors' Induction Programme

When Dr Saraki assumed leadership of the NGF, he recognised the need for an induction programme for governors, as is the case in most developed countries. The idea was to acquaint them with the prospects and challenges of governance so as to make them better prepared to meet their responsibilities.

The first-ever induction for newly elected and re-elected governors took place in May 2011 and its theme was the “Art of Governance and Experience-Sharing”.

It was attended by 233 participants, comprising newly elected, re-elected governors, some former governors, development partners and several distinguished personalities.



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The event, which was declared open by His Excellency Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, featured presentations from Dr Bukola Saraki, Chairman of the NGF, and goodwill messages from DFD, the World Bank and the United Nations as well as inspirational messages from three elder statesmen: Ambassador (Dr) Maitama Sule, Rev. (Dr) Matthew Kukah and Chief Emeka Anyaoku. It was also attended by a delegation of former governors and chiefs of staff from the US such as Bill Richardson, Governor of New Mexico (2003–2010); Douglas Wilder, Governor of Virginia (1990–1994); Brian Condit, Chief of Staff to Governor Bill Richardson; Cynthia Eisenhower, Chief of Staff to Governor Tom Vilsack of Iowa and William H. Leighty, Chief of Staff to governors Tim Kaine and Mark Warner of Virginia.

After the official opening, there were presentations from the staff of the National Governors Association and various experts. The speakers also shared experiences with former governors on issues that would lead to better governance, accountability and, ultimately, greater dividends for all Nigerians.

The main focus of all the presentations was on how new and returning governors could establish policies, set priorities and manage programmes using the best practices shared by their counterparts. The leaders of various Nigerian institutions, such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, the Millennium Development Goals Office, the Security and Exchange Commission, the Code of Conduct Bureau and the Federal Inland Revenue Service, also made presentations on the economy and key governance issues.

It was a hugely successful event with positive feedback from participants and governors.

The NGF Federal Liaison

The idea behind the 36 states maintaining liaison offices in Abuja in order to facilitate interface between the states and the three arms of government, and specific and specific difficulties that Dr Saraki and his colleagues had to deal with, for instance, the Minimum Wage Bill crisis, which plot if allowed to unfold may have resulted in a permanently strained relationship between states and labour unions. The Fiscal Responsibility and Public Procurement Acts are further examples of pieces of legislation that affect states and that have been contentious because of a gap in the interface between the different stakeholders. It was this gap that prompted the decision to create the NGF Federal Liaison office. The officers of this unit will be responsible for protecting, leveraging and enhancing the necessary relationship between the states and the National Assembly. The newly created Federal Liaison Unit is to assume the responsibilities of but not limited to:

- Arranging and facilitating meetings between relevant officials in the states and at the federal level on areas of mutual cooperation on fundamental issues such as amendments and alteration of the constitution of the Federal Republic;
- Monitoring the annual budget process of the federal government and facilitating opportunities for states' input;
- Facilitating interface between states' Houses of Assembly and the National Assembly; and
- Providing periodic briefings to the principals regarding matters of national interest and their implications coming from the legislature.

The NGF Secretariat as a Policy Hub and Resource Centre

The knowledge-management (KM) initiative was part of a series of engagements initiated by the Secretariat. It was geared towards institutional capacity-building and repositioning the Secretariat as a world-class policy think-tank that renders services to its principals professionally in line with global best practices.

For this purpose, the KM Unit was developed with support from DFD's SPARC programme to drive the KM initiative of the NGF. The Unit manages the knowledge processes of the Forum, integrating KM in major projects and programmes championed by the NGF such as the SPRM. The Unit is responsible for fostering the Secretariat's knowledge-management culture, ensuring that systems are developed and implemented to support internal management and provide effective and efficient knowledge-sharing tools and processes for states as the SPRM is implemented.

To achieve this, KM tools such as governance share fairs were initiated and are being carried out in the six geopolitical zones of the country. These share fairs facilitate peer-learning among states and identify best practices and lessons learned by states. Furthermore, a dedicated and robust content management system has been developed. It serves as a hub for generating, storing and disseminating knowledge across states. Other KM Unit activities include specialized training targeted at capacity-building for key state officials supporting governors and those heading key ministries, departments and agencies.

In line with the KM framework and the vision to develop a standard resource centre with knowledge resources in the area of governance, public policies and democratic rule in Nigeria, the NGF Secretariat is working to develop a library containing diverse knowledge resources in those areas in both print and electronic formats. To this end, the Secretariat has continued to work closely with its partners in order to access and acquire knowledge resources on subnational entities in Nigeria. These partners include the World Bank, the Forum of Federations, SPARC, GIZ, the National Planning Commission, the National Bureau of Statistics, the National Library Commission, the Millennium Development Goals Office, the Debt Management Office, the National Population Commission and the Independent National Electoral Commission.

The NGF Secretariat currently houses many resources not readily available elsewhere in Nigeria, especially information about state policies, activities, programmes and projects.