



UN to support Nigerian women to achieve 35 per cent affirmative action

As the April 2011 General Elections draw nearer and Nigeria strives to implement the 35 percent Affirmative Action provided for in the National Gender Policy, the United

the number of women in appointive and elective positions come 2011, and to raise the issues of Persons with Disabilities high on national agenda.

The Fund is aimed at providing aspiring women



politicians some financial support towards their political campaigns irrespective of the Political Parties which they belong.

Speaking during the visit, the Minister of

The Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Iyom Josephine Anenih (L) and the Country Programme Manager of United Nations Women, Dr. Grace Ongile during the latter's visit to the Minister in her office on Wednesday, 9th March 2011 in Abuja

Nations System Nigeria says it will be backing this aspiration under its donor-basket support programme.

This was revealed by the Country Programme Manager of United Nations Women, Dr. Grace Ongile who led a delegation on a courtesy visit to the Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Iyom Josephine Anenih on Wednesday in Abuja.

The 35 percent Affirmative Action which has the blessing of the President Goodluck Jonathan Administration seeks to increase

Women Affairs and Social Development, Iyom Anenih appreciated the capacity building programmes being provided for women politicians in the country by the UN System, pointing out however, that

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there is the need to support them with funds to enable them win elections.

According to the Minister, different countries have their unique experiences especially in terms of politics, noting that the Nigerian experience is based on how much a candidate spends to win an election.

She therefore appealed to the UN System to review its intervention and

support programmes in Nigeria to enable the inclusion of more women not only in elective and appointive positions but also in other empowerment programmes.

“We are set to launch the fund on the 24th of this month, even as we await the full registration of the Trust Fund by the Corporate Affairs

Commission and members of the Board of Trustees are appointed,” the Minister stated.

In a related development, the Minister while receiving the UNFPA Resident Representative in Nigeria, Dr. Agathe Lawson lamented the non passage of the CEDAW bill which she said has been in the National Assembly even during the previous sessions.

She noted on the need to change the name of the bill as well as review its content to ensure its



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acceptability and easy passage by the legislature.

Earlier, Dr. Lawson commended the staff of the Ministry for driving the women empowerment machinery competently saying that the Ministry is has a crop of high level trained professionals and committed staff who have been doing very well in the quest to mainstream gender in the system.

UNFPA's major activities to mark the centenary celebration of the 2011 IWD include development and publication of feature articles on national newspapers; television talk show appearances of the UNFPA representative, Honorable Minister for Women Affairs and Deputy Director Action Aid.

Also, T-shirts and Faz caps with messages advocating for access to education for girls and young women were produced and distributed among for sensitization walk and the rally/float. In addition, UNFPA will provide materials for a planned exhibition focusing on women and young girls planned for the 22nd of March 2011.



UNDP signs Cost-sharing agreement with the Foundation For Partnership Initiative In The Niger Delta

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has signed a cost-sharing agreement with the Foundation for Partnership Initiative in the Niger Delta (PIND).

Under the agreement, which was signed at the UN House in Abuja on February 10, PIND will contribute to the UNDP the sum of \$200,000 – to fund the engagement of two consultants who would be involved in the design of the Niger Delta National Development Framework (Social and Public Sector Investment

development to the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

He said that with the joint efforts of development partners and the Nigerian government authorities, the project getting off the ground soon would be a sign of hope for the people of the Niger Delta area.

In his remarks, Mr. Flemming said he was very excited at the opportunity that the PIND Foundation has been given to collaborate with the UNDP and other partners in contributing to the development of the Niger



Mr. Daouda Toure and Mr. Dennis Flemming sign the MoU.

Programme).

UNDP Resident Representative and UN System’s Resident Coordinator in Nigeria, Mr. Daouda Toure, signed on behalf of the UNDP, while the Project Director of PIND, Mr. Dennis Flemming, signed on behalf of the PIND Foundation.

In his remarks at the signature ceremony, Mr. Toure said the UNDP was delighted to be involved in the project – as part of the overall collaborative efforts of the UN Systems to bring lasting peace and sustainable

Delta region of Nigeria. He was hopeful that the project would start soon – and looks forward to more opportunities to collaborate with the UNDP and other partners in the areas of its mandate.

Senior UNDP officials who witnessed the signature ceremony included Mrs. Ade Mamonyane Lekoetje (the UNDP Country Director) and Dr. Charles Achodo (Consultant). From the PIND Foundation were Mr. Sam Daibo (Deputy Project Director), Ms. Bobe Eitokpa (Capacity Building Officer) and Ms. Chi-Chi Nnoham-Onyejekwe (Communications Officer).



Japan, UNICEF to boost immunization of children and pregnant women in Nigeria

The Lagos State Ministry of Health and the National Primary Health Care Development Agency today commissioned five vaccine cold stores as part of the national cold chain rehabilitation plan financed by the Japanese Government and executed by UNICEF for storage of vaccines at State and Local Government levels.

further explained.

The Government of Japan has been one of the major donors through UNICEF of Nigeria's polio eradication and immunization programme since 2000. Last December, Japan donated N1.5 billion for the procurement of polio vaccines, cold chain equipment, Long Lasting Insecticide Nets and child



Mr. Toshitsugu Uesawa, Ambassador of Japan to Nigeria; Dr. Suomi Sakai, Unicef Country Representative cutting the tape at the Oshodi cold room with Mrs. Sara Beysolow Nyanti, Unicef's Assistant Representative and Chief of B-Field Office and Dr. Oladimeji Olayinka representing Dr. Muhammad Ali Pate, ED/CEO National Primary Health Care development Agency on the background

The cold stores located in both the Lagos State Ministry of Health Ikeja and the National Primary Health Care Delivery Agency South West Zonal Cold Store Oshodi costs N34.5 Million, is 40 cubic meters per unit with a capacity to store vaccines for the immunization of 3 million children under the age of one as well as 1.65 million pregnant women in the entire south west states of Lagos, Ekiti, Ondo, Ogun, Oyo and Ondo.

“Our capacity to store and effectively distribute vaccines to the nooks and crannies of the country has been greatly enhanced by this gesture” said Dr. Oladimeji Olayinka representing Dr. Muhammad Ali Pate, Executive Director/CEO National Primary Health Care development Agency. “This will in turn increase and improve access to vaccines by more vulnerable groups leading to the overall goal of attaining massive reduction in the number of unnecessary deaths from vaccine preventable diseases” he

survival supplies that will be used during Child Health weeks.

“We must not forget that the lofty goal of attaining the MDG's is yet to be achieved despite the progress made in certain areas” said, H.E. Mr Toshitsugu Uesawa, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Nigeria. “The people of Japan is always grateful to partner with the Nigerian people to overcome most of these challenges the health sector encounters in Nigeria”

One of the key areas where UNICEF provides assistance to the Government of Nigeria for immunization program is vaccine security and cold chain improvement. UNICEF Country Representative, Dr. Suomi Sakai, thanked the government and people of Japan for their “significant investments towards providing adequate cold chain equipment to health facilities throughout the country. This has impacted positively on routine immunization results in Nigeria.”

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Stakeholders Parley on Community Radio and Development

The Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) Project in collaboration with the Nigeria Community Radio Coalition (NCRC) held a two-day conference on the theme, Building Community Radio for Democracy and Development from 8-9 March, 2011.

The conference was declared open by Honourable Minister of Information and Communication, Mr. Labaran Maku.

(CBOs,) Academia, Universities Radio Managers, local and international media groups including the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC).

Other international development agencies represented at the conference included DGD International Partners; and UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and UN Women.

Speaking at the event, Nigeria's Minister of Information and Communication, Mr.



Hon. Minister for Information and Communication, Mr. Labaran Maku addressing the Conference

Over 87 participants were in attendance including representatives of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC); the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the National Orientation Agency (NOA), traditional rulers, community-based organizations

Labaran Maku; noted that “community radio is desirable in Nigeria to empower our diverse communities to be active participants in the development process and for the preservation of societal values”.

In his welcome remarks, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, Mr. Daouda Toure stated that “a nation such as Nigeria needs to recognise the potential of community radio for enhancing the democratic process. New approaches to development emphasise that people have greater control over their own lives through

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Stakeholders Parley on Community Radio and Development

active participation in planning, deciding and executing activities that affect their socio-cultural and economic development”.

Despite following President Goodluck Jonathan delegation of authority to the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) in October, 2010 for the licensing of community radio stations in Nigeria, no license has been granted to any community radio station in Nigeria. The conference was therefore a major push to re-energise the advocacy for the speedy licensing of community radio stations in Nigeria.

The Conference had presentations from experts and advocates in plenary and break-out sessions with vibrant discussions by participants. The sessions addressed: 1) role of community radio in enlarging citizen access to information for participation in the democratic process; 2) Ownership, management and sustainability of community radio stations and: 3) free and open software for Community radio broadcasting and convergence with telecommunications companies and internet service providers.

In a communiqué released after the two day conference, participants recommended that the National Broadcasting Commission should take urgent steps to actualize President Goodluck Jonathan's pronouncement in October 2011 by publicizing the guidelines for the licensing of community radio stations and the commencement of the issuing of licenses for community radio stations in Nigeria.

The conference also called on community leaders and members of the communities to ensure that political parties seeking their votes in the 2011 elections as well as other subsequent elections are challenged to make a commitment to supporting the emergence

and sustenance of community radio stations and that where there is an interest in establishing community radios, the leaders of those communities should ensure that the process is participatory.

In addition, communities seeking to establish community radios in Nigeria do not need to re-invent the wheel. They can learn from the experiences of communities in other countries around the world, including regarding issues of management, funding and sustainability, programming, capacity-building, and other matters.

The Democratic Governance for



■ Participants at the Conference listen with rapt attention.

Development (DGD) project is a joint initiative from UNDP, the European Union (EU), the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). This project aims at being a driving force in consolidating and embedding democracy in Nigeria over the coming five years. In the forthcoming elections context, and in view of improving the electoral process, the DGD project currently focuses on providing technical and financial support to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the National Assembly, the Judiciary, political parties, civil society organizations and the media.



UNESCO marks International Mother Language Day

UNESCO marked the International Mother Language Day on the 21st February 2011, the theme of which concerns the use of information and communication technologies for safeguarding and promoting languages and linguistic diversity. The Abuja office of UNESCO used the opportunity to call attention to the array of disappearing languages in

discussions and debate from the audience. In the end everyone agreed on the need to beef up the policy statement on the language diversity and enforce it. It was also agreed that a more comprehensive study involving primary data be conducted across the country to ascertain the endangered languages and see to the development of orthographies for



■ From left to right , Senator Omar Hambadga, Member, Senate committee on education, Reverend Father Zacharia, Christian Association of Nigeria, Abdulqadir Abiola Apaokagi, NASFAT, Mr Dennis okoro, Retired Director, FME, Mr Joseph Ngu, Director & Country Representative, UNESCO, Professor Rashid Aderinoye, Deputy Executive Secretary, UBEC at the Roundtable to launch the Global Monitoring Report (GMR) in Abuja

Nigeria the trend of which ought to be addressed by concerned policy makers. To achieve this purpose, the office commissioned a study on the status of implementation of the mother tongue policy in the country's education system as stipulated by the national policy on education. This study was conducted using a representative sample of schools around the six geo-political zones. The study report was presented on the International Mother Language Day.

Participants included representatives of the Honourable Minister for Education, the National Institute of Languages (NINLAN), International Development Partners (IDPs), UNFPA, civil society groups, teachers students and the media. The study generated serious

the ones that do not have.

Two secondary schools participated and presented drama sketches that demonstrated the need for children to be taught their mother tongues. Participants also acceded to a communiqué that collectively called for a national language policy and the recognition and positive utilisation of the multilingual nature of the Nigerian society and the need to effectively track the implementation of the National Policy on Education (NPE) which stipulates that children be taught in their mother tongues in the first four years of schooling.

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UN Women to Provide Targeted Support for Women Candidates in the April General Election

Abuja Nigeria: "Our concerted efforts resulted in an increase in awareness around the issues of women's participation in politics and governance. And for the first time in the annals of this great country, the number of women who aspired to elective positions was unprecedented". The Honourable Minister of

event was organized under the auspices of Democratic Governance for Development (DGD) programme UN Women is implementing with support from the EU, DFID, CIDA and UNDP.

From statistics given by the UN Women Programme Officer on Governance, Mrs. Maureen Lance Onyeiwu, on the current number of women in

electives offices in the country, it was observed that to achieve the 35 per cent quota for each of the available elective positions as recommended by the National Gender Policy the country should have 13 women governors, 13 deputy governors, 38 women senators, 126 women House of Representatives, and 346 women at the state Houses of Assembly. According to her, "the figure available currently is a far cry from what is required".

Meanwhile UN Women is intensifying efforts at ensuring that the

successful women candidates from the just-concluded primaries are adequately supported for optimal performance in the April polls.

The event was declared open by the UNRC Mr. Daouda Toure. Also present at the event were the UNDP Governance Team Advisor Ms. Genevieve-Anne Dehoux, Representatives of UN Agencies, Donor Partners, and

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■ Honourable Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, Iyom Josephine Anenih presenting an assessment of the primaries

Women Affairs and Social Development Iyom Josephine Anenih made this known in her opening remarks at the Post-Primaries Evaluation of Women's Participation in 2011 General Elections. The event was organised by the UN Women Nigeria Office in collaboration with Gender Affirmative Action (GAA-IBP) on Tuesday 25 January 2011 at the UN House Abuja.

The evaluation workshop was to discuss the performance of women in the political parties' primaries and to chart a way forward for better performance towards the upcoming elections. The



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Representatives of Political Parties, civil society organizations and the media.

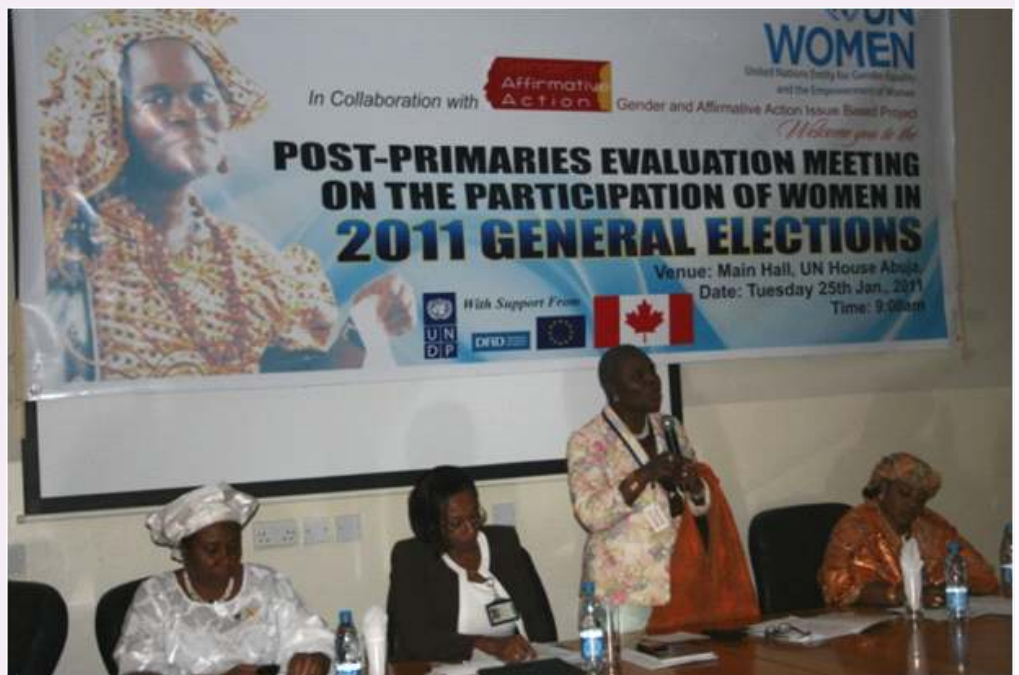
Contributions from all the representatives of the political parties present corroborated insights provided by a high-level panel of discussants: that until the structural barriers that constitute formidable challenges for women's access to political empowerment in Nigeria were adequately and sufficiently addressed, the numbers of women in elective positions would inevitably remain marginal and insignificant.

Some of these structural barriers were identified as the total absence of constitutional and/or legal support for gender equality in Nigeria's political space, male patronage and Godfatherism, weak internal democracy within all political parties, the excessive use and influence of money in politics and the widespread poor perception of women as leaders.

Strategies proffered for improved performance of women in the April elections and beyond were categorised into immediate, short to medium term strategies. The workshop ended with important resolutions on essential actions.



The UN Women Programme Officer on Governance, Mrs. Maureen Lance Onyeiwu responding to questions from participants



From L-R: Honourable Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development Iyom Josephine Anenih, Officer in Charge UN Women in Nigeria Mrs. Adekemi Ndieli, Presidential Flag bearer of United National Party for development (UNPD) Chief Mrs. Ebiti Ndok, and the ANPP Woman Leader Hajiya Ramatu Tijani

