

Strengthening good governance in Africa

With African countries all at different stages along the road to good governance, achieving it across the board poses a challenge, despite support from the African Union and increased demand from the people of the various member states

By John Kufuor,
former president,
Ghana

The issue of good governance is at the heart of developmental and political discourse in Africa. It is perhaps the most essential component in Africa's socioeconomic development and progress. Indeed, the African Union (AU) prescribes the adherence of all 53 of its members to the pursuit of this principle. However, given their uneven historical and developmental backgrounds, the realisation of this goal across the board demands formidable strategising. While many of these states are plodding their way toward establishing good governance, many have yet to cross its threshold.

Good governance refers to state-society relations that are democratic, including respect for human rights and the rule of law. They are developmental and allow for the management of the economy in a way that enables economic growth, structural change and the judicious use of available resources in a sustainable manner; they are socially inclusive, in particular of minorities and ethnic or religious diversity. These relations tend to be captured in constitutional arrangements of the institutions designed to render the transparency and accountability of the rulers and the responsibility of the ruled in the conduct of their civic duties, especially in the exercise of their franchise. Disregard for the provisions of the constitution, which must issue from the acknowledgement of the sovereignty of the citizens, invariably results in the deterioration of state-society relations, which ultimately leads to political instability.

The end of the Cold War and the ensuing spread of information technology unleashed the knowledge revolution, which has had a dramatic impact on governance in Africa. It has heightened global demand for centring respect for basic human rights in governance. In practically all African countries, people insist on exercising their franchise to pick their leaders. But many electoral systems still leave much to be desired.

Today's digital revolution is deepening the cry for freedom and justice, which transcends national boundaries and divisions of race, gender, religion and ethnicity. The current situation in North Africa, with individuals demanding their rights and freedoms, illuminates the extent to which these values have received acceptance in Africa. As Africans become more knowledgeable of their individual rights, they press for more accountable, transparent, inclusive governments. They demand solution-oriented governments to fight poverty, disease, hunger and unemployment.

The establishment of the AU and of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) reflects the awakening on the continent to the need for a transformation of governance. NEPAD's three-pronged

approach, emphasising economic and corporate governance, political governance and peace and security, points to the realisation of good governance among the member states. The strengthening of good governance throughout the continent is already causing impunity, corruption and conflicts to abate. The major fault lines have led to civil unrest and destabilisation, and in the extreme have even caused failed states. NEPAD's commitment to securing good governance as the foundation for accelerated development is attested to by the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), to which more than half of AU members have voluntarily subscribed.

To strengthen good governance further, primacy should be given to the adoption of enlightened constitutions in



“

As Africans become more knowledgeable of their rights, they press for accountable, transparent, inclusive governments

”

the individual states. Constitutions provide the institutional framework and principles for governance. They therefore should serve as the reference point for good governance and institute the benchmarks for assessing the governance of any polity. Democratic constitutions should be based on the sovereignty of the individual. Representative governments should be accountable and transparent, and the individual must also be a responsible citizen. These attributes are best secured through multi-partyism and the separation of powers in governance – the executive, the legislature, the independent judiciary, independent, fair electoral mechanisms and a free-spirited media.

In this context, Barack Obama's assertion that "Africa needs strong institutions, not strong men" is right. However, in the absence of good-quality human resources, quality institutions might not function as desired. Good leadership becomes critical for ensuring the proper staffing and interactivity of the crucial state institutions. The persona of the executive president has, more often than not, been the touchstone for the success or otherwise of governance, especially in the developing world. Such pivotal factors include that individual's respect for constitutionalism and the constitutional institutions, his or her vision and commitment to uplifting the nation, and the proper preparation for the high office in which that individual personifies the state and is also the chief executive officer of the state. Unless astutely and competently harnessed and managed by that person, these factors would lead to the unmaking of good governance.

The policies of the executive must be prioritised in line with human resources and overall capacity development, which determines the provision of education at all levels, affordable health care, enlightened law and order regimes, and infrastructure. Those policies must also create an atmosphere for entrepreneurial development

Surfing the internet at Kigali airport, Rwanda. The knowledge revolution has had a dramatic impact on governance in Africa

“With the right policies and partnerships for modern agriculture, Africa could become the breadbasket for much of the world”

in a diversified economy. NEPAD appreciates the urgency of this situation and thus calls for partnerships for accelerated development of the continent. Therefore it is an act of good governance for leadership to have a solid grasp of geo-politics to set the necessary parameters for interaction with the rest of the world, and also to negotiate effectively with partners.

Africa abounds in natural resources, and the rest of the world – including China, Brazil, Japan, India, the European Union, the US and Russia – is pursuing partnership with it. These resources must be exploited within the ambit of good governance to improve the lot of Africans. Africa has 60 per cent of all the world's unfarmed arable lands. With the right policies and partnerships for modern and commercial agriculture, Africa could become the breadbasket for much of the world, starting with Africa itself. Africa also abounds in major water courses such as the Congo, Nile, Niger, Limpopo and Volta rivers. The Congo River alone may be capable of generating 40,000 megawatts of electricity – enough to supply the whole of the continent, with surplus for export. In addition, there are huge hydrocarbon reserves in most parts of the continent. The mineral wealth of Africa, much of which is industrial and strategic, includes iron, gold, platinum, uranium and bauxite.

Africa's burgeoning population is estimated at one billion, a big enough market to attract investments in all economic sectors – transport, manufacturing, services, agriculture and industry. Geographically, Africa occupies the centre of the continental arrangement of the globe, with the Americas to the west, Asia to the east and Europe directly north. All these assets, which cry for investments, should make strengthening good governance most critical for the continent's states. Doing so will effectively launch the continent into the mainstream of globalisation, help realise the Millennium Development Goals, and more.

Today's global community is characterised by interconnectedness. All parts are affected by events occurring in the others. The spearhead institutions, such as the G8, G20 and the multilateral organisations, should therefore be sensitive to the challenges facing Africa. Their assistance in empowering Africa to overcome these challenges should bring benefits to the entire globe. Therefore, these institutions should incorporate Africa's interests and challenges into all their deliberations, including trade, finance, climate change, and science and technology.

The members of the G8 and G20 should bolster cooperation with the AU and partnerships with African countries that would make for win-win outcomes rather than dependency. For starters, they should assist in establishing independent electoral systems to command universal respect of election results. They should support regional groupings, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Southern African Development Community, to ensure good governance among their member states, which could then become the building blocks for the eventual union of Africa. ♦





The Africa Coast to Europe (ACE) optical fiber submarine that will connect 21 countries from France to South Africa.

- Targeted to be operational in 2012
- Will connect 21 territories, including 18 African countries
- 7 countries in Africa will be served for the first time by a high bandwidth international cable system
- ACE connectivity will be extended to landlocked countries: Mali and Niger
- Will secure and diversify the international broadband traffic routing
- Will provide seamless interconnection with existing high bandwidth cable systems connecting Europe, Asia, North and South America
- Designed to provide 5,12 Tbps, will benefit from state-of-the-art submarine technology

ACE,
*with its large bandwidth
and high quality
transmission technology,
will support the present
and future growth in*

Contacts: Mr. Lamin Camara
Mr. Julien Léger

cable is a 17,000 km long high bandwidth system



telecommunications traffic between Africa and the rest of the world, reduce digital divide and drive economic and social growth.

Tel: +220 9974077 - Email: laminmoici@gamtel.gm
Tel: +33 6 08363647 - Email: julien.leger@orange-ftgroup.com



New opportunities for development: Africa is capable of catching up

After 50 years of disappointments, Africa must find innovative ways of developing quickly. But the path to growth being proposed is rooted in the continent's historic economic policy and underlying doctrines

By Diéry Seck,
director, Centre
for Research on
Political Economy,
Senegal

Over the last half century, Africa has been trailing the rest of the world in economic development and social progress. It has increasingly fallen behind. But this can change for the better. The current debate on the continent's future prospects is clouded by views that may give hope, often with limited substantiating evidence, but without stating how long-term development will be achieved. Here are three such views.

First, it is said that African countries were spared from the severe impact of the financial crisis that swept the world from 2007 to 2009. However, the record on stock market performance and the expansion of domestic credit does not support this claim. Second, most donors maintain that aid to Africa has become better coordinated and more effective, in the spirit of the Paris Declaration, and now leads to more development of the continent. Yet convincing evidence is still lacking in this regard. Finally, many say that in the 21st century, Africa will unleash its potential, making use of its ample natural resources and young population. But how will this be achieved? After more than 50 years of trials and mostly failures, with a few bright spots too short-lived to make a lasting difference, Africa needs to design and implement innovative ways to develop swiftly and sustainably.

Remarkably, the path to economic growth being proposed has its root in the continent's historic economic policy and underlying doctrines. During the first phase, which lasted from independence to the 1980s, African countries trusted their national governments to play the dual role of policymakers and key economic actors.

This led to major domestic and external imbalances that structural adjustment programmes sought to remedy in a second phase, which spanned the 1990s. That phase was marked by the relegation of government to policy functions and its retrenchment from the economic sphere, as well as the promotion of the private sector as an engine of growth. All these reforms were implemented at the national level.

Since 2000, Africa has increasingly embraced a strategy of regional integration and reshaped the notion of sovereignty to accommodate the new powers bestowed on regional economic communities (RECs) and the African Union. The policy actions of these groupings are gradually

extending from the political sphere to include the economic and sectoral spheres. However, the past decade has shown that the mismatch between policy making conducted at the regional level and economic activity led by the private sector and done almost exclusively at the national level is not conducive to economic growth and development.

A new model of the African firm is now being proposed that will bolster wealth creation at the regional level. Africa's state of underdevelopment is often explained by its small and segmented national markets, its limited financial and human capital and its poor political and corporate governance. Profit-seeking concerns could be created under the initiative of the private sector and the auspices of RECs, with which they would be directly registered. These region-wide initiatives would transcend national boundaries and regulations to raise capital within the REC and abroad, seek regional markets especially for large investment projects, and deploy human and financial capital where it is most profitable. Such corporate branches of RECs – that is, CRECs – would benefit from the legal and policy umbrella of the RECs and contribute to economic convergence among the region's countries and between the region and the rest of the world.

While a classical investment consortium could be the basic funding formula, development partners would be invited not to provide aid but to acquire venture capital,

“ A new model of the African firm is now being proposed that will bolster wealth creation at the regional level ”



which can be extended to development finance institutions such as the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation. If necessary, aid could be provided through the bulk purchase of goods or services produced by CRECs for delivery to target populations.

National governments would benefit through local job creation, potential reduction in their balance of payment deficits and increased regional trade. The formulation of public policies and implementation of corporate initiatives at the regional level would facilitate long-term development planning, strengthen coordination of national policies and give RECs more power to negotiate on behalf of their member states. However, a prerequisite of paramount importance would be to enhance their economic policy capacity, which is one of the weakest aspects of regional integration initiatives in Africa.

The model of the CREC firm has indirect advantages that would benefit the overall development effort of African countries. First, it would contribute significantly to the emergence of a single, frictionless, fully integrated, trans-national market for goods, services, capital and labour. Second, given its regional scope, the CREC firm would more easily escape capture by misguided or corrupt national authorities, thereby reducing the incidence of poor governance in the region, especially if the regional judiciary and regulatory framework is strengthened.

Third, the larger size and higher level of expertise that would characterise CREC firms would improve the overall competitiveness of the region's industries and increase

Selling goods at an African market. Africa has been lagging behind in economic development and social progress

its global market share. Fourth, if RECs have a stronger mandate to manage the region's corporate activities, they will be in a better position to negotiate with, and regulate, large international companies as well as to establish and enforce geographically uniform regulation and supervision. This power could include collecting tax revenue on behalf of national treasuries.

Finally, surrender of more economic and corporate powers by member states would lighten their policymaking obligations and help them focus more on social issues, which is sorely lacking considering the historically unfavourable performance of African countries in welfare measurements such as United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Index.

A few caveats are in order. Even with the existence of CRECs, the primary responsibility for economic development rests with national authorities. This new initiative would only be one more instrument to boost growth. National governments would still need to adopt and maintain appropriate fiscal policies and be wholly accountable for their social development, perhaps with the additional revenue that CRECs could potentially provide. Moreover, CRECs would not substitute for national industrial sectors that would still need the attention of national policymakers.

Most likely, at least in the foreseeable future, CREC firms would represent a small fraction of the number of enterprises, albeit among the largest. But CRECs could most certainly provide success stories in a region of the world that needs them more than anywhere else. ♦

Anambra State of Nigeria: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals



Mr Peter Obi,
Governor of Anambra State

1. BACKGROUND: THE STATE, ITS VISION AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1.1 The State and its Chief Executive

Located in the south-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria and home to the Anambra Igbo, who are undoubtedly the most entrepreneurial group of people in sub-Saharan Africa, Anambra State today is under the democratic governance of Mr Peter Obi, who was elected Governor in 2006 and re-elected in 2010 for a second four-year tenure, thus becoming the only Governor of the State ever to serve two terms.

With solid academic preparation at a variety of Ivy League institutions, complemented by vast business/financial experience garnered from positions as chairman and director of a number of quoted companies, Mr Peter Obi came well prepared for the job.

Before becoming Governor, his quest for knowledge had taken him to the University of Nigeria; Lagos Business School Nigeria; Harvard Business School, USA; London School of Economics, UK; Columbia Business School, USA; Kellogg Graduate School of Management, USA; Institute for Management Development, Switzerland etc. Much of his practical business and financial experience came from his positions as former chairman of Fidelity Bank Plc, Future View Securities Ltd and Paymaster Nigeria Ltd, as well as former director of Guardian Express Bank Plc and Chams Nigeria Ltd.

Mr Obi's sure-footedness in the business world has also been enhanced by his membership of a number of reputable professional associations: Fellow, Nigerian Institute of Bankers; Member, Nigerian Economic Summit Group; Commonwealth Business Council; British Institute of Directors etc. Happily married and the father of two teenage children, 49 year-old Governor Obi undoubtedly possesses the academic, professional and social stability for the onerous task of governing Anambra State.

1.2 Our Vision, Our Strategy

The Vision of Anambra State under Peter Obi's administration is to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). From all indications, Anambra State is among the very few sub-national governments in Africa to have adopted the MDGs as their vision in their commitment to the development of their societies. The strategy for achieving this vision is a unique approach, christened Anambra Integrated Development Strategy

(ANIDS), with which all targets of the MDGs are being pursued simultaneously. The beauty of ANIDS lies in its simultaneous development of all sectors.

ANIDS is basically a strategy that allows the State Government to plan carefully, budget properly, implement the plan, monitor the implementation, ensure delivery of the plan and encourage participation and feedback from the communities and stakeholders for whom the various ANIDS projects are being executed.

At the heart of the participatory governance in Anambra State today is the involvement of the people in all stages of the project cycle – from planning and budgeting to implementation. With ANIDS, the State has moved its planning and budgeting from being supply-driven to being demand-driven. This is necessary in order to maximise the benefits from very scarce resources because Anambra, not being an oil-producing state, is a relatively poor state.

Because it is anchored on careful planning and budgeting, ANIDS enables the government to identify budgetary gaps, some of which the state needs to fill with the support of its development partners. Thus, in view of the meagre resources of Anambra State, collaboration with development partners (national & international) is of utmost importance. Unlike the situation in the past, before the Peter Obi administration, when Anambra was a pariah state and a no-go area for international development partners, a number of them are operating in Anambra State today, notably the UNDP, the EU and UNICEF.

2. HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT: STRIVING HARD, ACHIEVING RESULTS

ANIDS is the driving force behind the rapid development that has been taking place in Anambra State over recent years, with landmark achievements in every sector of the economy. Appreciating Anambra's efforts, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Millennium Development Goals (Hajiya Amina Az-Zubair) said, "Anambra State has made remarkable success in the implementation of the MDGs Programme." The following examples will illustrate the efforts and some achievements in a few sectors:

2.1 Fighting Poverty and Hunger

As a pro-poor, grassroots-oriented government, one of the first steps taken by the Peter Obi administration in its fight against poverty was to do a Poverty Mapping of the State to establish its poverty profile. Having thus identified the poorest Local Government Areas (LGAs), the government is making concerted efforts to eradicate extreme poverty in the State, particularly in these poor LGAs. Consequently, Anambra State government has consistently churned out pro-poor policies and programmes as the basis for poverty eradication in the State.

In this regard, the FADAMA III Programme has been a major avenue for providing capital and equipment support to hundreds of rural dwellers engaged in agro-related activities; capital



Governor Obi and three female Commissioners distributing micro-enterprises equipment to women's cooperative groups



Micro-enterprises equipment being distributed to unemployed youths

support has also been given to thousands of the less privileged, particularly women, widows, the physically challenged, as well as caregivers of orphans and vulnerable children to enable them to either expand their trade or start petty trading or small-scale farming. Revolving loans have been made available to hundreds of women's cooperative groups to establish small-scale, agro-based businesses such as poultry farms, fish ponds and pig farms. Sundry equipment (including palm oil processing machines, palm kernel-cracking machines, food-processing machines, soap-making machines and electricity-generating sets to power them) have been distributed to cooperative groups to establish cottage industries.

A variety of skill-acquisition training sessions have been organised for the unemployed (especially the indigent, physically challenged, women and youths) who have been subsequently empowered with micro-enterprises equipment such as computers, generators, hairdryers, sewing machines, shoe-making machines, welding machines, vulcanizing machines, motorcycles, woodwork/carpentry tools, barber's shop tools, ovens, cookers, etc to make them self-reliant through self-employment.

Poverty reduction is also being pursued through massive expansion of rural roads, especially in remote food-producing areas, thus opening up such strategic areas of the state with good access roads. This enables the government to send much-needed agricultural inputs to such remote rural areas; it also enables rural farmers to evacuate food items and other agricultural produce to urban markets for better profits and to feed the people. Today, Anambra State is reputed to have the best network of roads in Nigeria, especially in rural areas.

The creation of jobs, especially for young people, is another major weapon in the fight against poverty. The government's aggressive efforts to create an enabling environment for local and foreign investors are yielding fruits and will create thousands of jobs. The establishment of a neem-based organic fertilizer plant to produce fertilizer will boost the huge capacity of the agricultural sector to generate employment. The ongoing construction of a giant facility in Onitsha by South African Breweries (SABMiller) is expected to create hundreds of jobs. The construction of the 1st and 2nd Business Parks in Onitsha is boosting commercial activities (the 1st has been completed and put to use while work on the 2nd has reached 90 per cent completion). The government is collaborating with Innoson Vehicle Manufacturing Company in Nnewi (the first indigenous vehicle manufacturing outfit in the country) and also revitalising/resuscitating abandoned and comatose industries, including Omor Rice Mill etc. Commending poverty reduction efforts by Anambra State, Dr Magnus Kpakol, Coordinator of National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) said:

"Governor Obi was the first governor to visit my office to discuss how to fight poverty in his state and remains determined and dogged by initiating effective economic empowerment programmes."

2.2 Education

ANIDS achievements in the education sector are truly heart-warming. Before Governor Peter Obi's administration, not one single public secondary school in the state had a properly equipped, functional science laboratory. The scenario was no better in the area of computer literacy: in this age of information technology, computers were virtually unheard of in public schools. Today, the situation has changed dramatically in terms of ICT, science laboratories, electricity, water supply etc, about 150 schools have benefited from the laboratory rehabilitation and equipment programme of the government; more than 120 schools have been supplied with computer sets – each school receives 10 desktops with full accessories; Microsoft Academies have been established in 120 schools, with 50 laptops each; school buses have been provided for more than 100 secondary schools – the first time ever in the history of the state; technical colleges have been renovated and fully equipped; electricity-generating sets and water boreholes have been provided for schools etc.

Unprecedented progress has also been made in the provision of infrastructure in primary and secondary schools. When Peter Obi assumed office as Governor, there was no single public primary school classroom block that was not leaking; none without cracked walls, so much so that many of them constituted death traps to schoolchildren and teachers alike. The situation was the same for secondary schools, where trees were found to have grown in some classrooms! Today, the government's achievements



Governor Obi distributing audio-visual teaching aids to early-care centres/nursery schools, making education interesting from the outset to encourage retention at primary and secondary levels



An example of the new look of primary school classrooms across the state

in all education sub-sectors have been truly astonishing: construction of new classroom blocks and renovation of existing ones in numerous primary and secondary schools across the 21 Local Government Areas of the state (new prototype five-room classroom blocks are simultaneously being provided for all the 177 communities in the state, at three blocks per community); construction and renovation of numerous buildings, including students' hostel complexes. The result has been the creation of a conducive environment for learning at all levels of education.

2.3 Health

Achievements in the health sector have equally been impressive, as our health indicators have continued to improve. Under the Peter Obi administration, there has been remarkable improvement in the provision of infrastructure for primary health centres, general hospitals and tertiary health facilities, as exemplified by the astounding transformation going on at the Teaching Hospital of the State University.

With special focus on maternal, child and reproductive health services, the State Government has given unprecedented support to the improvement of primary healthcare services through the provision of new infrastructure and upgrading of existing



Anambra State University teaching hospital in Awka, which is nearing completion

ones: at least five Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) have been rehabilitated in each of the 21 LGAs and numerous new PHCs and general hospitals constructed across the State; essential drugs, medical equipment, furniture, potable water, electricity-generating sets etc have equally been provided for these health facilities.

Commendable efforts have also been made to build the capacity of existing and incoming health providers: capacity-training for hundreds of doctors, nurses and other health workers; securing accreditation for the state's Schools of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Technology through provision of a multiplicity of infrastructure and facilities including lecture rooms, computer rooms, libraries, IT equipment, audio-visual/teaching aids, furniture, office blocks and equipment, students' hostels etc

A remarkable innovation in the provision of healthcare in Anambra State is government's support to voluntary agency/mission hospitals and training institutions (previous governments had ignored such health facilities, as all attention was focused on government-owned health facilities). Today, the Peter Obi administration has provided facilities to secure accreditation for mission hospitals, giving regular financial support (Grants-in-aid) to such hospitals and mission Schools of Nursing and Midwifery across the state, providing them with logistics support by donating buses and ambulances, supplying them with drugs, and extending a lifesaving hand of friendship and cooperation.

2.4 Environment

Achieving the goal of ensuring environmental sustainability depends on the prevention of loss of environmental resources, provision of sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, drastic reduction of the proportion of urban populations living in slums etc. The Peter Obi Administration has recorded remarkable achievements in this regard and, although a lot still needs to be done, its ongoing efforts and what it plans to do in the next three years, give a clear indication that this Goal 7 of the MDGs is achievable by the state.

The problem of access to safe water and sanitation, which remained intractable before the Peter Obi administration, is now being effectively tackled by the state on its own, as well as in collaboration with its development partners. Some of the results include: provision of hundreds of boreholes all over the state in schools, health facilities and communities generally in both urban and rural areas; scaling up from boreholes to medium and large-scale water schemes, especially through the resuscitation of water projects, most of which were abandoned many years ago (ongoing work at more than 15 major water schemes will, on completion, provide access to safe water for hundreds of thousands of people in various parts of the state); construction of hundreds of toilets (VIP, pour flush, sunplat etc) across



A standard building for the state's general and cottage hospitals



An ongoing Udoka water project in Awka



Completed intervention at Ebenebe gully erosion site

the state, particularly in schools, health facilities and public places; provision of sanitation/clean-up equipment, including payloaders, dumpsters, receptacles, etc; massive clean-up of the three major cities, particularly the commercial city of Onitsha.

To combat environmental degradation and loss of environmental resources, the government is battling the erosion menace in virtually every part of the State (with up to 1,000 active erosion sites across the State, Anambra is one of the worst hit areas in sub-Saharan Africa); a number of flood control measures are also being adopted, including effective design and construction of roads with proper drainage, massive de-silting of drainage systems in urban areas, the opening up of Sacamori and Nwangene creeks in Onitsha to stop the flooding that is threatening to submerge this giant city, identified by UN-Habitat as one of the fastest growing cities in the world.

Concerned about the unplanned and uncoordinated growth of cities all over the developing world, resulting in slums in most major cities, the Peter Obi administration has taken steps to forestall this in Anambra State; with the assistance of UN-Habitat, Anambra became the first state in Nigeria to produce Master/Structure Plans for its three major cities (the Administrative/State Capital, Awka; the commercial city of Onitsha and Nnewi, the industrial hub).

3. CONCLUSION: THE NEED FOR PARTNERSHIP

The Government of Anambra State today is working around the clock to achieve its vision of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. With a clear vision and a well-articulated and innovative strategy to achieve it, Governor Peter Obi and his team are ready to confront the State's numerous development problems. The greatest problem is funding to fill budgetary gaps, in view of the state's poor revenue base.

Consequently, a lot of funding support is required, particularly from international development partners and well-meaning corporate organisations. Secondly, such assistance should be demand-driven by supporting already planned and ongoing projects that meet local needs and ultimately help to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Anambra State has already acquired a reputation for accountability and faithfulness in the use of development partnership funds, as attested to by a good number of heart-warming outcomes of international development partnerships in the state: rated best overall state in the implementation of the EU-WSSR Programme and consequently one of only three states in Nigeria currently benefiting from the EU/UNICEF additional funding for good performance to provide water and sanitation facilities. Anambra is now rated best in the implementation of the World Bank FADAMA III Programme, although it was the last state to join. As a sign of its commitment, the state has been

the first to sign the Programme Implementation Agreement with UNICEF for three consecutive years since 2009. To the delight of UNICEF and other child-friendly groups and individuals, Anambra State pioneered the Children's Town Hall Meeting with the Governor to involve children in the participatory democracy in the State by giving them a voice in governance (the Children's Town Hall Meeting is now an annual event, with the 2010 edition attracting more than 3,000 children who presented close to 300 questions and requests to the Governor as part of the interaction); regularly playing host to very many national and international dignitaries who can now visit the state because of the peace and decency in governance that now reign here.

Indeed, Anambra State has created a conducive environment for investment and development partnership to achieve the MDGs. The need for such partnership is huge and its time is now!



Governor Obi with EU Ambassador David MacRea, commissioning an EU-supported water project

