

Diaspora Participation in National Processes and Dialogue

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Outline of Presentation

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3. Coordinating Mechanisms
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Introduction

1. The objective of the decentralisation process is to bring Government to the doorstep of the citizenry.
2. Participation is the cornerstone of the National Development Planning Process
3. Participation as ownership of the development process through engagement of the citizenry with Government institutions to influence policy, planning, financing, monitoring and evaluation of development priorities.
4. Effective dialogue is powered by information, continuity and generation of feedback leading to transparency, management of expectations and mutual trust.

The Decentralized Planning System

1. Act 479 (1994) sets up the NDPC as the Apex Body for Coordinating Development Planning in Ghana
2. Act 480 (1994) is the Planning System Law
3. Civil Service Law (327) – functions of Ministries
 - Ministries – Policy formulation; Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Regional Administration – Harmonization of Plans and Monitoring of District Assemblies
 - District Assemblies – Deliberative, Legislative, Planning, Consultative Functions
 - Sub-District Structures –Town, Area and Zonal Councils

National Development Planning Commission

1. Composition

- Chair, Vice Chair, BOG, MOFEP, GSS, MOTI, regional reps and experts
- Staff – Director General – Divisions : Policy Planning, M/E

2. Mandate

- Advise the President, Parliament on development planning policy and strategy
- Coordinate the development and implementation of national development plans
- Keep under constant review, national development plans in the light of prevailing domestic and international economic, social and political conditions and make recommendations for the revision of existing policies and programmes where necessary

Coordinating Mechanisms

❖ The Planning system is regulated by **Guidelines** or **Legislative** instruments which are issued to **Planning Units** at national, regional and district levels to formulate sector and district development plans, based on the prevailing national development policy agenda.

□ **These Planning Units are:**

- Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Divisions of Ministries Departments and Agencies
- Regional Planning Coordinating Units of Regional Administrations
- District Planning Coordinating Units of District Assemblies



Spaces for Citizen's Participation as Per Guidelines/Convention

1. **Formulation of a National Development Framework**
 - Cross-Sectoral Planning Groups
 - Public Hearings/Consultation (Call for papers/proposals)
2. **Sector (Policy) Formulation/Planning**
 - Stakeholder Consultations
3. **District Level Planning**
 - Appraisal phase
 - Planning Workshops
 - Public Hearing/ Consultations and Feedback sessions
4. ***National, Sector and District Budgeting Processes – (participation constrained)***
5. **Monitoring and Evaluation**
 - National monitoring evaluation groups
 - Regional monitoring and evaluation groups
 - District monitoring and evaluation groups
6. **Development Communication System**
 - Dissemination of development information
 - Promotion of continual dialogue and feedback to planning units

Diaspora Engagement in National Development Processes and Dialogue -I

- Diaspora considered the 11th Region of Ghana
- Critical for Ghana's development by right as citizens and as part of our national resource
- Past engagements have revolved around:
 - MFA&RI for consular and other services
 - Presidential visits and engagements
 - **Consultations around the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy,**
 - **Constitutional review process**
 - Investment Expos
- Results portend great dividends for Diaspora the Country – political and other rights

Diaspora Participation and Dialogue Operationalised

Participation in **What?**

- Policy Formulation, reviews
- Planning?

How?

- NDPC (CSPGs), MDAs – policy processes
- Influencing and promoting continual dialogue around specific policy issues
- Implementation (chosen sectors) – national, regional and district levels

Who?

- NDPC - Ministries Departments and Agencies, District Assemblies
- Private Sector, Research Institutions, Policy Think Tanks, CSOs

When?

- Legislative Instrument to elaborate on planning calendar

Diaspora Participation and Dialogue Operationalised

- ❑ Information is a sine qua non for effective dialogue: Diaspora Project – Link with NDPC website – being upgraded into a one stop shop for planning information – national and sector policies, sector and district plans, Annual Progress Reports (national, sector and district)
- ❑ Right to information Act – potential empowering, managing frustrations and expectations regarding access to information

Challenges

- Lack a coherent institutional mechanism for both engagement and feedback
- Coherent legal framework and representation
- Lack of a coherent Diaspora Policy and a strategic framework for engagement
- Bridging the spatial/digital divide
- Information Asymmetry
- Diaspora's own organisational resources and capacity (on-line platforms will not work for all) – e.g knowledge of the law; investment opportunities etc.
- Coordination of issues given the myriad of sectors and levels of engagement – national, regional, district and sub-district levels

Recommendations

1. Use existing opportunities
 - Formulation of Long and medium-term development policy frameworks
 - Development of Legislative Instrument on for both the NDPC Law and the Planning System Law
 - Development of sector policies – Migration, Social Policy, Child Protection, Nutrition, etc.
2. Develop Diaspora Policy and Engagement strategy
3. Spatial divide calls for strong ICT/on-line platforms – websites with strong public/diaspora interfaces
4. Addressing information asymmetries through the diasporas' own and organisational and communication capacities

Recommendations

5. Diaspora representation on National Development Planning Commission – Dialogue with Chairperson, sub-committees, own sub-committee?
6. Participation in the work of Cross-Sectoral Planning Groups
7. Clear institutional framework and coordination mechanisms
8. Strengthen Sector and District Response – Desks? To facilitate direct and speedy engagement - websites, access to sector policies and plans, and district development plans, engagement calendars
9. Labour Migration Policy and Labour market information systems that is Diaspora sensitive (with integrity) – circular migration and reintegration programmes – Diasporas role
10. E- Governance Project and the Diaspora
11. Track progress and evaluate results – the only true test for accountability !

Recommendations

12. Dialogue with Political Decision-makers is critical – NDPC, cabinet to discuss the Migration Policy (Colloquium will hopefully provide a clear agenda for integration into the Policy as an instrument for engagement with PDMs) even though a specific Diaspora policy is needed to address the needs of the Diaspora in a holistic manner.
13. Clearing House for Innovation Needed! NDPC to spearhead and facilitate sector responses? STI Policy
14. Government Commitment? Limited responses from Government to integrate diasporas into national development strategies; GSGDA – only marginally mentioned as a resource for national development and poverty reduction.

Recommendations

15. NDPC to use the CSPG to provide the platform for national dialogue, policy, institutional and legal coherence, and support mainstreaming of migration, including Diaspora issues into national development planning – national and sector policies, sector and district plans, budgets, M/E

15. Dialogue so far seems to be focused on the economic, political rights/issues – need to focus on the social as well – eg. care drain, trans-national child caring arrangements and need for regulation, portability of social security/pensions, youth in the diaspora etc.

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THANKS