

The Nigeria Governors' Forum:

A vital stakeholder in national affairs

About the Nigeria Governors' Forum

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) is a non-partisan association that brings together the elected governors of the country's 36 states to promote unity, good governance, better understanding and cooperation among the states, as well as a healthy and beneficial relationship between the states and other tiers of government. The NGF was inspired by the United States-based National Democratic Institute and the Canada-based Forum of Federations, and is modelled on the American National Governors' Association. It was established in 1999 following a multi-party conference of all the 36 democratically elected state governors.

The NGF is now in its second decade. Recently, the NGF has undergone far-reaching restructuring and reorientation to redefine the role it seeks to play in the development of Nigeria. The Forum is now viewed by a range of development partners, government ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), and other organisations as a vital stakeholder in national affairs. In that context, the NGF is becoming a force in promoting and supporting good governance.

OUR GOAL

The goal of the NGF is to contribute to progress in Nigeria by implementing pro-poor policies, programmes and projects that will bring about genuine development in the states. The NGF sets out to achieve this goal by:

- Delivering evidence-based policy inputs to promote greater understanding, coherence and improvements in governance at all levels
- Enhancing inter-governmental relations and collaboration between the arms of government
- Helping to resolve disputes quickly, effectively and amicably
- Improving policy implementation at all levels by commissioning high-quality research and institutionalising evidence-based policy making.

www.nggovernorsforum.org

**NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM**



HOW WE WORK

By discussing

The NGF is a meeting ground where governors can discuss issues of mutual interest and national and state concern, share experiences, techniques and good practice and, where appropriate, reach agreement. The 'voice' of the Forum presents the views and standpoints of the NGF and governors in discussions with Federal Government, and other institutions and organisations, both national and international.

By linking

The NGF links state governors and governmental and non-governmental institutions on matters affecting governance and service delivery.

By working together

The NGF provides a vehicle for states to work together on areas of joint or mutual interest, and to support the development and implementation of coordinated solutions.

By influencing

The NGF plays a significant and influential role in resolving disputes at national, state and local government levels.

By peer reviewing

The NGF develops and implements peer reviews at state level in order to encourage efficient and effective service delivery, improved governance and enhanced development performance.

**NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM**



INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

A key objective of the Forum is to promote inclusive development. This is why the NGF addresses a broad range of policy areas which contribute to comprehensive development. These areas include agriculture, economics, education, governance, health, knowledge management, legal frameworks, public finance and security. In the health sector, for example, the NGF is involved in key activities such as the national polio eradication campaign (in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation), routine immunisation and the establishment of state primary health care development agencies. The State Peer Review Mechanism (SPRM) is an innovative approach to accelerating these kinds of inclusive developments in Nigerian states.

State Peer Review Mechanism (SPRM)

The SPRM is modelled on the African Peer Review Mechanism developed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). SPRM helps states share ideas and experiences on good governance and development, and benchmark their performance against defined performance indicators. To date, two states, Anambra and Ekiti, have completed State Peer Reviews. The reviews have helped these states to identify areas of development that are going well and to flag areas needing attention. Accomplishing these first two reviews is a notable achievement that will galvanise sharing of best practice, promote good governance and improve service delivery across states – all important aspects of inclusive development.

Knowledge sharing and communication

The NGF recognises that knowledge management and communication are also vital in its efforts to contribute to inclusive development in Nigeria. The NGF stresses knowledge management in particular, to ensure that we learn from all our activities, and share lessons among all stakeholders efficiently and effectively. The Forum has set up a Knowledge Management (KM) unit to develop a policy hub and resource centre to carry knowledge sharing and communication forward.

THE HUB

The NGF's online knowledge platform – the Hub – links all governors' offices and key stakeholders in each state via the internet. Authorised users can:

- Search a document database holding SPRM reports, state publications and budgets, and other relevant documents
- Track the status of any bills and laws at federal and state levels, and search by, for example, laws, current laws and archived laws
- Consult a shared calendar that displays NGF-related events and helps in the scheduling of events and meetings.

SHARE FAIRS

The KM unit in the NGF Secretariat works with states to organise knowledge 'share fairs' to promote knowledge management and sharing throughout the country. In 2012 share fairs were held in Enugu and Abuja.

OUR INITIATIVES

As a committed stakeholder in national affairs, the NGF actively participates in national initiatives such as the proposed National Addressing System by the Federal Ministry of Communication Technology, the Joint Annual Review of the National Strategic Health Plan, the Polio Eradication Initiative, the International Monetary Fund Article IV Consultation, World Bank Development Policy Operations and the United Nations consultation on the post-2015 development agenda – the successor to the Millennium Development Goals.

Eradicating polio

The Polio Eradication Initiative has had some setbacks but, by the end of 2012, the rate of transmission had fallen. The NGF takes steps to ensure that the scourge of polio is eradicated. The Forum engages federal agencies in the fight and supports state primary health care agencies in improving routine immunisation.

Aligning strategy and analysing policy

The Policy Advisory Unit in the NGF promotes strategic alignment between national and state policies in priority areas. The unit supports states in domesticating policies and in developing state institutions to carry out policies. This involves engaging and partnering with a range of development partners, agencies and MDAs. The NGF plays an important role in coordinating interactions between all these partners and the states. The NGF works with partners to help them shape programmes in a way that aligns with and reflects the priorities and policies of the states.

Economic Advisory Unit

Development goes hand in hand with economic growth. The NGF set up an Economic Advisory Unit in the Secretariat expressly to provide governors with advice on national and state economic policy. The Unit supplies economic and other technical analyses, data and knowledge tailored to the needs of states. Research commissioned by the unit provides input to evidence-based policy making at the state level.

Federal (National Assembly) Liaison Office

The Federal Liaison Office serves to nurture the relationships between states and the Federal Government. The office monitors developments in the National Assembly so that bills, such as the Minimum Wage Bill, which could negatively impact states and stretch their resources, can be identified early and steps taken to address issues of concern to states.

NGF Secretariat

The NGF Secretariat manages the day-to-day affairs of the NGF and provides technical support. Through the Secretariat, the NGF identifies priority issues, generates key information through research and policy analysis, and facilitates capacity building and peer learning for political office holders and high ranking public officials at the state level.

Through the Secretariat, the NGF develops strategic relations with international development organisations, non-governmental organisations, key ministries, departments and agencies of the Federal Government and the legislature.

www.nggovernorsforum.org

THE DIFFERENCE WE EXPECT TO MAKE

The NGF hopes that by performing to a high standard, and by producing concrete results, we will influence others working in the same or complementary areas. This, we anticipate, will lead to positive developmental outcomes. The NGF expects to make a difference in the following areas:

- **Policy.** The NGF expects to make a difference to policies by providing well-informed policy inputs that lead to greater understanding, coherence and improvements in governance at all levels. Our policy inputs will also enhance inter-governmental relations, lead to well-informed governance and improve standards of service delivery.
- **Collaboration.** The NGF expects to foster greater collaboration between arms of government.
- **Coordination.** The NGF expects that efficient and effective coordination of policies across states will improve service delivery.
- **Conflict resolution.** The NGF expects to help resolve disputes quickly and arrive at solutions acceptable to all parties.
- **Performance.** The NGF expects to improve governance, service delivery and development performance.
- **Governors.** By providing high-quality support, the NGF expects governors to be able to manage their states more effectively, improve governance in their states, and improve their own image and that of governors in general.

OUR PRIORITIES

Leadership, management and operational skills

- Develop cabinet capacity
- Develop operational systems
- Manage relationships and time
- Foster accountability and anti-corruption
- Develop communication and feedback mechanisms

Economic issues

- Improve fiscal responsibility across states
- Build the confidence of taxpayers and educate taxpayers
- Develop a system of unique taxpayer identification numbers
- Improve economic and financial management institutions at state level
- Improve the business environment in states
- Develop alternative sources of internally generated revenue

Health

- Review and harmonise infant and maternal health programmes across states
- Improve immunisation against infectious diseases
- Design and implement a malaria eradication programme
- Improve health financing across states
- Improve standardisation of health care facilities

Infrastructure

- Develop an appropriate model for project financing and sustainability
- Develop project management and controls
- Develop a regulatory framework for public–private partnership
- Develop project audits

Education

- Provide appropriate learning environments
- Ensure teacher quality
- Provide educational resources
- Provide appropriate learning environment
- Tailor curricula to specific needs of states
- Promote technology-driven instruction

Water

- Commission scoping studies on water sources and distribution
- Develop water policies, regulations and standards

Contact details

The Secretariat

Nigeria Governors' Forum

1, Deng Xiaoping Street, Off AIT Junction,
Asokoro Extension, Abuja

Tel: +234 (0)9 8703926, 8703927, 8703928

Email: info@nggovernorsforum.org

THE FUTURE

The NGF has significantly increased the level of cooperation between states, and has strengthened relations between the states and the Federal Government. This is manifested during the monthly meetings of the National Executive Committee and interactions on many key national issues. Regional alliances, which mirror the Forum, are becoming more and more effective in discussing ways to overcome shared development challenges. In dealing with common problems, the NGF has become a respected platform of collaboration, irrespective of party differences and state economic strengths.

The challenge now is for the NGF to build on these foundations and to continue to serve Nigerians in their drive for inclusive development. The NGF Strategic Plan 2010–2012 set directions for the first three years of the decade. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC), conducted a review of the implementation of this plan. The next Strategic Plan 2013–2015 is based on the lessons learned.

The ups and downs in the global economy will continue to affect development in Nigeria. To minimise negative impacts and capitalise on positive impacts the NGF will persist in its efforts to share revenue, diversify the economic base away from oil and increase the focus on other sources of internally generated revenue as crucial areas in the future welfare of states.