

Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) Meeting
Regional and National capacities for Counter-Piracy and Response in
the Gulf of Guinea Project
UN House, Abuja, 11 May 2022, 11:30am

1 Introduction

In the pursuit of peace and stability in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) region to boost regional and global trades, the Government of Japan in collaboration with UNDP approved fund to Nigeria in 2021 to address the menace and activities of piracy in the region. The pilot project was implemented by the Martin Luther Agwai International Leadership and Peacekeeping Centre (MLAILPKC), Kaduna, in partnership with the stakeholders in the GoG countries, for a period of 12 months. In continuation of the assistance, the '***Regional and National capacities for Counter-Piracy and Response in the Gulf of Guinea Project***' was approved for funding in 2022 for a period of 12 months. The project seeks to complement regional and national authorities' visions and efforts at ensuring a reduction in the activities of pirates in the GoG. In accordance with the UNDP's corporate requirement, a Local Project Appraisal Committee (LPAC) meeting for the project was held at the UN House on 11th May 2022.

The meeting aimed to critically review and appraise the project document for clarity of objective, measurable and achievable results, suitability of approach and activities, realistic and justifiable budget, appropriateness of implementing partner and management arrangement, and risks and appropriateness of actions and strategy to manage the risks amongst others.

The LPAC meeting was attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Budget and National Planning (MBNP), Nigerian Navy, the Government of Japan, MLAILPKC and UNDP. Attendance is attached as Annex 1.

The meeting was co-chaired by the representatives of MBNP and UNDP, Dr. Sampson Ebimaro, Director in the International Cooperation Department and Mr. Matthew Alao, Team Lead, Governance, Peace and Security (GPS).

2 Proceedings at the meeting

(a) Welcome address and remarks by the stakeholders:

The welcome address was delivered by the UNDP Team Lead, GPS, Mr. Matthew Alao. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed his appreciation to the members for their attendance. He thanked the Embassy of Japan for its continuous strategic partnership with UNDP in support of national development priorities. He enumerated key of the Embassy's assistance to include early recovery and stabilization projects in the northeast, integrated conflict prevention project in the north central and its investments in the peace support operations projects through the National Defense College's Centre for Strategic Research and Studies (NDC/CSRS)

and the Martin Luther Agwai International Leadership and Peacekeeping Centre (MLAILPKC) since 2009. He stressed that the counter piracy project would enrich the MLAILPKC's mandate to effectively run courses on anti-piracy but emphasized the centrality and critical role of the Nigerian Navy (NN) to the successful implementation of the project and impact. He thanked MLAILPKC management for its forthrightness and acceptance to lead project implementation when requested to do so. He acknowledged NN and especially the Chief of Naval Staff for warmly receiving UNDP team the previous week in his office and his pledge of strong partnership for the implementation of the project.

The Representative of MBNP, Dr. Sampson Ebimaro, congratulated MLAILPKC for being a partner to the project and emphasized the imperative to collaborate with other partners to ensure attainment of tangible and sustainable results. He thanked the government of Japan and other partners for their continuous commitment to and partnership with the government of Nigeria.

The Representative of the Embassy of Japan, Lt. Col. Kazuaki Uchiumi, stressed the importance of GoG region to international trades including the Government of Japan's business relationship with Nigeria. *'The funding of the Regional and National Counter-Piracy project is critical to ensure the security and safety of traders and seafarers, increase international trades and contribute to sustainable development in the region'*, he said. He revealed that he had a discussion with the Ambassador and the former Chief of Staff of the Nigerian Navy about the importance of partnering with MLAILPKC to implement the project as an independent institution from any armed forces. He noted that, due to COVID-19 restrictions, a no-cost extension was granted to the pilot project until June 2022. He reiterated the need to inform the Embassy well in advance in case of any challenges in the implementation of the project to enable them to liaise with his Headquarters for approval.

The Representative of the Navy, Rear Admiral Saidu Garba, explained the centrality of the Navy to the issue piracy at sea. He stated that Navy, as the frontliner, has the expertise, resources, and mandate to tackle piracy, as well as, an extensive linkage with other institutions involved in the fight against maritime crimes. He stated that collaboration was key as most maritime crimes occur in international waters. *'The duty of the Nigerian Navy is to protect the territorial integrity of Nigerian waters and to collaborate with other countries in international waters to counter any criminal activity. The Navy continuously strengthens its network for enhanced collaboration and information sharing to effectively counter piracy in the region'*, he said. He noted that NN should have been the implementing partner to the project and called for a review of this as the NN has a neutral institution that would better facilitate the implementation of the project.

The Commandant of MLAILPKC, Maj. Gen. A. J Fagge, expressed his gratitude to all partners. He expressed appreciation to the Government of Japan for her continued funding support and partnership with the Centre. He was delighted at the Navy's

readiness to effectively partner with the Centre for effective implementation of the project to the benefits of all the stakeholders in the region.

b) Presentation of the Project

The UNDP Team Lead, GPS, presented key components of the project which included project overview (title, objective, output, duration and budget); partners (international and national); visibility of Japan and partners; governance structure; and the project contribution to SDGs:

c) Comments and observations by participants

The following key comments/observations were highlighted:

- ***Simulation facility***: it was inquired if the simulation facility would have the same impact/effect as would have been in a practical situation without being at the sea.
- ***Practical training at the sea***: a practical training of participants at the sea to enable them to have a real live experience of what happens at the sea was suggested.
- ***Inappropriate choice of MLAILPKC as the implementing partner***: it was observed that the Navy, having the mandate and expertise in the domain, should have been designated as the implementing partner.

d) Responses to and clarifications on the comments and observations

Responses to the comments and observations were as follow:

- ***Simulation facility***: The commandant MLAILPKC assured that the facility would be able to simulate a real live environment and generate the necessary conditions for practical and effective training of the participants.
- ***MLAILPKC as implementing partner***: The choice was made by the Government of Japan based on her perception that MLAILPKC is a civil and an independent institution from any armed forces. It was equally noted that MLAILPKC management was patriotic enough to accept the responsibility on behalf of the government of Nigeria when approached with the mindset of partnering with relevant institutions especially Navy to deliver on the project. It was stated that NN as the lead technical partner to the project, would in a better position to influence project components and implementation with its full participation.

3 Decisions and Next steps

- It was agreed that the project was appropriate and important for implementation and that it would benefit the peoples and the governments of GoG countries.
- Effective collaboration with NN is crucial to the successful project implementation. It was agreed that all partners including NN would be constructively engaged and effectively participate in the project implementation.
- The project document to be finalized and presented for signature.

- The date for the project launch would be circulated to the stakeholders once the project technical committee agreed. It was noted that the launch would hold late May or early June.
- Visibility of the project partners including the Federal Government of Nigeria would be prioritized during project implementation.

4 Closing Remarks by MBNP

The Representative of MBNP, Dr. Sampson Ebimaro, thanked the Government of Japan, UNDP and other partners, and assured every one of the Ministry's continuous commitments to more partnerships and collaborations for national development.

5 Vote of Thanks by UNDP

The Team Lead thanked everyone for their participation and reiterated that their inputs and concerns were noted and would be treated accordingly. He looked forward to their continuous partnership.

6 Conclusion

The meeting was useful and served as a good beginning for the implementation of the project. NN was able to air its concerns about the project and suitability of the implementing partner for the project. All partners agreed that the project was desirable and pledged their support to its successful implementation.

Dr. Sampson Ebimaro
Director in ICD, MBNP

Mr. Matthew Alao
Team Lead, GPS, UNDP

Maj. Gen. A. J. Fagge
Commandant, MLAILPKC

el.p. 15/7/22
Rear Admiral Saidu S. Garba
Chief of Policy and Plans (NN)