



GLOBAL WORKFORCE IN TRANSITION (GWIT)
EDUCATION FOR JOBS (JobsED)

Niger River Delta
Youth Education and Employment
Potential Initiatives

For USAID Nigeria

September 2005

EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT CENTER, INC. (EDC)

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SECTION I: SUMMARY

USAID Nigeria identified unemployment as the single biggest challenge to the future development of Nigeria. The problem is particularly acute for the youth population, who see no future in the traditional agricultural livelihoods, and who increasingly flock to the towns and cities in search of jobs that either do not exist or for which they lack qualifications. Large numbers of unemployed youth contribute to unrest and violence, with the Niger Delta and major urban centers being focal points for mass discontent.

The average per capita income in Nigeria is very low, formal employment is scarce, and the system of basic education does not prepare young people for the job market. Of the estimated 100,000 graduates from Nigerian universities each year, only 10 percent are expected to find employment in the formal sector. Unemployment appears to vary according to age and education level and is highest among 15-24 year olds, and secondary school leavers. Unemployment is a particularly serious issue in the large towns of southern Nigeria, where urban youth experience an unemployment rate of 40 percent or more, and 30 percent of secondary school age youth are not in school. The bottom line is that Nigeria needs to prepare young people for working careers, and to expand private sector opportunities for employment.

USAID Nigeria requested a Workforce Development Team from the Global Workforce in Transitions IQC mechanism implemented by Education Development Center (EDC) to collaborate with the Mission and other stakeholders to outline opportunities and design parameters of a major new Global Development Alliance (GDA) to address youth education, training and employment issues on a large scale, particularly in the Niger Delta.

The Mission requested the Team take a “fresh look” at the youth education, training and employment problems in the Niger Delta, with the purpose of thinking through with the Mission’s possibilities for a number of new, larger, long and short term intervention opportunities.

A review of pertinent USAID documents and an extensive internet search, interviews with Mission personnel from all SO teams, government, NGOs, industry and donor agencies were utilised to gain a better perspective of youth education and employment development need. Interviews were conducted in both Abuja and Port Harcourt, where seventeen donor, NGO and governmental agencies were visited. Two days were spent in Port Harcourt and an interim debriefing and brainstorming session was held with USAID Nigeria personnel. The Team had the opportunity to attend the monthly donors’ education sector coordination meeting, which led to follow-up meetings. An exit debriefing PowerPoint presentation was made to USAID Nigeria personnel on September 8, 2005.

This document highlights the main findings and recommendations of the EDC team. Section II – Background - describes the social situation in the Niger Delta and highlights some of the promising workforce and job creation approaches and projects in that region, such as the sustainable development projects of the NGO Pro Natura, the community education projects administered by the EU-financed MPP3 project, and the NDDC youth cooperative transportation project. Section III - Development Approaches - focuses on potential interventions that USAID

might consider sponsoring to strengthen workforce in the Niger Delta Region: self-help community development funds, a public awareness campaign to develop greater awareness of job and career opportunities in the region, macro-economic measures that promote jobs through export development and import substitution policies and programs, infrastructure improvement projects, the provision of venture capital and training for small and medium sized businesses, and advocacy efforts towards government to ease the availability of credit and micro-financing. Section III also contains recommendations for improving the relevance and quality of existing workforce education and training activities in the region.

Section IV reviews USAID/Nigeria's comparative advantage in workforce development, and emphasizes the use of the GDA mechanism to bring together key stakeholders and leverage a multi-stakeholder pool of program resources. Section V - Next Steps - recommends what the Mission might next do to advance its workforce development agenda: support a design team to develop a workforce GDA proposal; conduct an inventory of existing workforce education and training programs in the Niger Delta; and conduct an evaluation of the Mission-funded workforce projects managed by OICI and IFESH. Should the Mission wish to do so, it can buy-into the GWIT IQC to carry out any of these next steps.

Context for Nigerian Mission Focus on Workforce Development for the Niger Delta

“Peace has eluded the Niger-Delta region not necessarily because there have not been any developmental efforts by the oil companies, but most of these projects are cosmetic in nature. They lack qualities capable of transforming the lives of the people whose states yield the huge wealth that sustains the companies and the entire Nigerian economy.

The Niger-Delta region which today is the fountain-head of the nation's wealth, alternatively, the goose that lays the golden egg, has become a nightmare. The people of the region have suffered gross neglect and deprivation over the years despite the region's monumental contribution to the economic prosperity of Nigeria. Consequently, there is wide-spread poverty, lack of social and economic infrastructure and a high rate of unemployment and crime. This, in turn, has bred a frustrated population, ethnic polarization and anti-establishment hostility and agitation. Their patience has run out and they are therefore anxious to see quick results. Important physical infrastructure needs to be developed to tackle the enormous problems in the areas of transport and social welfare. The degraded environment needs urgent remedy so that the region can move forward. ...”¹

¹ Why is Niger-Delta region still a forest? By Gab Ejuwa, The Vanguard, Friday, September 2, 2005

SECTION II: BACKGROUND

The social situation in the Delta region

The overall social situation in the Delta States is difficult - the people are angry, corruption is rampant and crime is high. This is the oil producing region that accounts for about 13% (2001) of the GDP and a large majority of budgetary resources. Other than oil, there is very little industry. Traditional farming and fishing have often been abandoned due to low incomes, environmental degradation, or aging farmers and youth unwilling to work the land. Due to being a river coastal delta of tributaries and inlets, transportation is difficult, resulting in the extensive isolation of villages. There is also a history of “buy-offs” by oil companies attempting to placate villages with money. This has led to the development of a disrespect by villagers for greedy village chiefs, a “cargo-cult” attitude, and a reluctance for hard work, and has often created skirmishes between villages of “haves” and “have-nots.”

The majority of the population is under the age of 18, with youth unemployment exceeding 40%; highest in the 15-24 year olds, and 30% among secondary school age youth who are not in school. Prospects for employment are dim, and there is a broad sense of economic disenfranchisement.

There is a broad sense among its peoples that the region is not receiving its share of the “national cake,” especially given that their land is providing so much of the nation’s resources. Furthermore, oil exploitation has seriously degraded and polluted the region’s lands and waters, making farming and, especially, fishing increasingly difficult.

There is much frustration among youth in the Delta Region who have lost respect for their elders, especially the case in the “host communities.” This suggests a breakdown in the traditional mechanisms of social order. Such a situation could have dire consequences for social peace and order in the region. According to the DHS household survey, the South-South Region, which includes the Delta States, has the lowest level of children’s food consumption of all Regions.

Education, training and workforce development

According to the DHS household survey, the educational indicators for South-South Region are the highest in the nation: highest primary, secondary school and higher completion rates. It also has the highest attendance ratios in the country for primary and very high for secondary.

However, the South-South Region also has the highest level of primary school absenteeism and low quality of education. At the same time, there is a disconnect between education/training and employment. Few of the graduates of vocational training centers and polytechnic institutes find employment, and employers seem to prefer university graduates ahead of those from the polytechnics. Due to the employment market, however, few university graduates get employment either.

Activities and approaches intended to improve the situation

There is a multiplicity of initiatives and organizations concerned with similar problems: government agencies devoted to poverty alleviation and employment creation, NDE (National Directorate for Employment), NEPEP (National Poverty Eradication Program), NDDC (Niger Delta Development Commission) and a host of donor-funded activities, often working through

NGOs and CBOs (Community Based Organizations). Each has its programs and projects, yet there is little monitoring and evaluation, with conflicting reports on results. Many of the organizations point to the need for skills acquisition, but existing programs provide poor employment results.

There are reports that oil countries have “thrown money at the problems.” This has only made matters worse, and has created a greater disconnect between the acts of work and monetary gain.

Employment opportunities in micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are seen by many as the most effective route to sustainable employment creation. In order to facilitate access to capital, banks must set aside 10% of after tax profits for an SME investment fund. There is a large pent-up demand for financial services, especially credit, however the SMEs don't have the capacity to write proposals, and the concept of venture capital is new to the bankers. This is made difficult, as regulations require 100% collateral. Banks lack adequate risk management capabilities. As a result, only 9 of the 32 billion Naira set aside have been invested.

There is a general sense that top-down, supply-driven initiatives that are perceived to come from external parties (donors, even government) are not respected and do not succeed. Ownership by, and empowerment of, the youth (especially graduates of skill acquisition programs) are key.

Noteworthy, On-Going Activities:

1. *Pro-Natura and the Akassa Program* (www.pronatura-nigeria.org). Pro-Natura International (Nigeria) is the Nigerian branch of an international NGO whose objective is to create peace in the Niger Delta by extending sustainable, participatory, community-led, multi-sector, multiple stakeholder-supported developments, while piloting an innovative framework for effective partnering and collaboration amongst key stakeholders in the Region. To accomplish this, Pro-Natura works with local communities, civil society actors, private sector firms, donors and government. Partnerships with the oil companies, external donors and the communities are the key. The overall objective is to build trust and confidence in order to enable the emergence of responsible new leaders.
2. *MPP3* is an EU micro-projects program (www.mpp3.org) that provides resources for local development projects. Communities submit their projects that focus largely on education and health interventions. Project size can vary from 100,000 to 3.2 million Naira, and for an average length of 4-5 months. Projects are community-driven, with NGOs/CBOs doing the implementation. Draft projects are submitted to MPP3, which retains and finances approximately 66% of them. At present, about 25 NGO are deemed to have sufficient capacity. By and large, the NGOs behave well, but 5 have been blacklisted due to poor management practices. There is now a network of development NGOs that have worked with this program. Evaluations indicate that almost 100% of the education projects are successful, and that 25% of water projects are not.
3. *NDDC's mass transport scheme* leases buses to youth cooperatives that operate them and reimburse NDDC, after which the bus belongs to the cooperative. There is no systematic monitoring of reimbursement rates, and anecdotal evidence varies widely. According to the “man-in-the-street,” this scheme is working and is a good business opportunity.

It is important to note that these programs are of a holistic nature in that they include resource investment, training, and various forms of technical assistance (generally by NGOs), and they are community-driven and run. Systematic monitoring and evaluation are often lacking.

SECTION III: DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES

Any intervention needs to be approached not only by facilitating local - grass roots - community planning and implementation, but also at national and regional levels, creating an enabling or encouraging atmosphere and infrastructure conducive to economic development. There is a chronic need to stimulate local economic development. Advocacy and capacity building are desirable to encourage enabling regulatory reform directed toward fulfilling national and regional economic development plans that can enable local and individual economic development opportunities. From a macro level, all interventions should be aligned with the Niger Delta Master Plan. New markets and business/livelihood opportunities need to be identified. Access to capital, to new technologies, equipment, products, ventures and services needs to be readily available. Infrastructure improvements (electricity, water, sanitation, transportation, etc.) must be encouraged.

Local development efforts must have “qualities capable of transforming the lives of the people.”² That is, local initiatives need to be perceived to be more than “cosmetic” in nature, and cannot be seen as “imposed” on or “thrown at” the constituents. Most important, communities and youth should be empowered to determine their needs and take “ownership” in terms of the original ideas and implementation, a facilitation role identifying and developing awareness of new opportunities, and facilitating access. The World Bank concludes that unemployment in the Delta must be approached from two levels: encouraging and assisting community-based initiatives and supporting larger infrastructure projects beneficial to enabling economic development such as roads, bridges, jetties, storage facilities, and water transport. This approach for supporting community based initiatives as the only effective way to implement programs was reiterated in all interviews with CBOs and NGOs.

A. “Self-Help” Community Development Fund(s)

Interviews and literature suggest strongly that the only way to get communities and youth to participate effectively is by listening to their requests and providing them with what they want. Project successes occur when the communities and youth take ownership of a project its product. There is a need to *empower* the communities and youth groups to help determine and present what they want and take ownership for the ensuing initiatives. Most communities and youth lack awareness of opportunities, thus a need exists to help develop awareness of more opportunities and provide capacity building. The key to good community and youth animation is to seek sustainability and transparency, and to ensure they are the initiators and decision makers. There is a need to develop confidence (sense of empowerment) through successes which will drive a desire for more initiatives.

From a USAID administrative point of view, dealing with a plethora of community initiated project requests is expensive and time-consuming, suggesting it is best left to a clearinghouse function provided by NGOs and CBOs. One solution is to support development of NGO/CBO

² Gab Ejuwa: “Why is Niger-Delta Region Still a Forest?” *Vanguard*, Friday, September 2, 2005.

trust funds (foundations), which will have the element of sustainability from endowment revenues and leave the project decision process closer to the communities and youth groups. An excellent model can be observed in the Gatsby Trust, operating in Uganda. It is based with the Gatsby Foundation in the U.K., but has a CBO for local management. Pro-Natura and the Ogoni Nation MOSOP CBOs in Port Harcourt are well on the way developing trust funds with oil company support. They could be assisted. Other trusts could be encouraged, or USAID may wish to set up a captive NGO (subsidiary) to generate a large “wholesaler” fund to support others. USAID could initiate or support existing/planned self-help development trust funds that are rooted in the Delta communities. It is a great opportunity to utilize the GDA funding mechanism. Fund management can be above the level of the individual communities and separate community funding initiatives - as if a wholesale provider - managed by a responsible NGO, preferably with international roots and good high level responsible community interface experience. USAID could assist in GDAs for the endowment fund and provide non-endowment funds for start up.

Underlying principles of a bottom-up & demand-driven fund approach:

- Resources are available for viable projects submitted to “fund”
- Projects come from beneficiaries (youth, groups, communities)
- There may be NGO/CBO involvement for technical assistance
- Clear rules for eligibility, selection, management & accountability
- Competition: not all applications approved
- Follow-up & follow-through: monitoring & evaluation
- Opportunity for GDA partnerships, with corporate and NGO donors funding endowment and USAID funding the non-endowment portion.

An option for USAID may be to assist in creating one (or more) large “wholesale” fund(s) with a large GDA endowment from which it could support what could become many CBO funds. USAID assistance could be in the form of capacity building and some short term grants to help start the entity.

There is an initiative being organized by the World Bank to bring interested parties from all levels of government, major donors, NGOs/CBOs and industry to consider the establishment of a large trust foundation for the Delta that would support “bottom-up” community directed development. The World Bank is funding a TA to assist the feasibility and development of this approach.³

The Fund Approach as a mechanism for a bottom-up demand driven strategy

A “fund” is a mechanism that provides a methodology and an administrative/management capability to respond to proposals. Rather than providing preconceived answers to ill-defined problems, a fund provides an incentive for communities other relevant groups to apply for resources (financial and skill) to realize projects of their own making. This insures the development of local knowledge and ownership - two factors that have been lacking in previous development efforts in this region.

³ Key contact at the World Bank is Paul Francis

The underlying principles of such funds are:

- Provides resources for viable projects
- Project proposals come from the beneficiaries (youth, groups, communities, etc.)
- NGOs/CBOs are involved for technical assistance (project preparation & management)
- Clear rules for eligibility, selection, management and accountability
- Competition: transparent selection process and not all applications are approved
- Follow-up & follow-through are necessary, and monitoring and evaluation for good management and accountability are essential.

Possible funding sources are:

- 100% USAID support
- USAID and private sector involvement through the GDA approach
- USAID with other donors such as the World Bank who are in the process of developing three foundations (one per geographic zone in the Delta Region) to finance CDD activities as well as needed infrastructure. This foundation would operate much like an endowment to ensure sustainability.
- It will be necessary to decide whether the fund would be whole or part endowment. Would it be structured as a disbursing fund and/or a more sustainable foundation/trust fund?

Such a fund requires clear and transparent procedures that will ensure fairness, quality and accountability. The procedures include: eligibility, criteria for selection, management and accountability, and the governance structure of the fund.

Eligibility is a two dimensional matter: who (organization, group, community) is eligible to do what (project, activity). Eligible organizations should be community based, where the community could include youth groups, community or regional organizations, and/or NGOs/CBOs. It may also be useful to consider “wholesalers” that are local, close to communities and have the know-how (e.g., Pro-Natura, MPP3, NGOs, etc.).

In this context, it is important to consider the issue of communities that don’t have the capacity to prepare, manage and monitor their projects. For this, intermediary organizations such as NGOs could provide technical assistance (this is the way MPP3 operates).

When it comes to the eligibility of projects to be financed, a holistic approach should be favoured. A holistic approach involves projects that combine productive/service activities, relevant training, and managerial and implementation capabilities (that could come from within and/or from without).

Examples of appropriate projects would include:

- Economic, employment-generating activities (e.g., provision of resources in cash or kind to MSMEs with relevant skill training)
- Skill training with follow-through empowerment capabilities.

Selection criteria for projects submitted to the fund should be based on clear factors that cover all aspects of project eligibility and selection. The criteria should indicate how to appraise projects submitted to the fund, such as the potential effectiveness of projects to create sustainable employment; the extent to which projects are demand-driven with broad support; implementation of the proposed projects; monitoring and management capabilities; prospects for replicability; and the commitment and leadership of those who submit and propose to implement the projects. Other points for consideration include the role of intermediaries and accountability. Contracts with beneficiaries should be based on a partnering model instead of the more common engineering model (process, rather than input-output).

Fund management issues would have to be worked out at the design stage. In any case, it will be necessary to ensure that communities and the employment sector play a predominant role in all instances and structures of the fund's structure. It will also be important to keep in mind that accountability will be an imperative, and that monitoring and evaluation capabilities will be needed in order to identify approaches that are particularly effective and could be applied elsewhere.

It would be prudent to ensure a hedge against inflation in investment of the endowment. One solution would be to permit a trust to keep most trust endowment funds offshore in hard currency (LIBOR market) investments and only interest/revenue earned brought into the country. (See Gatsby Trust U.K. and Uganda for an effective model.)

B. Public Awareness in Support of “Community Self Help” Approach

Mass media is a powerful tool which could help shift attitudes and can contribute to conflict resolution, community and self empowerment. Mass media could be employed to help address the need for role models, channel anger and dissatisfaction away from violence, encourage positive goal setting, show a way to self-confidence and empowerment, and develop a broader awareness of economic and career opportunities and new ways of doing things. Above all, mass media could help overcome the oil “cargo cult” mentality and assist in motivating youth toward positive goal setting, a strong work ethic and self-empowerment.

Challenges:

- Need for good role models;
- Need to channel anger/miss assistance away from violence;
- Need for youth/communities to set goals;
- Need to show a way to self confidence and empowerment (success);
- Need to learn more about economic opportunities and new ways of doing things;
- Need to learn more about great variety of career opportunities and potential incomes;
- Must overcome oil “cargo cult” mentality to motivate youth toward strong work ethic and self-empowerment.

Opportunities:

Some opportunities have been observed. There has been some success on a minor scale in Port Harcourt utilizing a youth talent show with prizes such as one year of assistance to produce an

album or develop a play. South Africa has successfully utilized a television soap opera for HIV/AIDS awareness and it is likely a similar approach could be taken in Nigeria for role modeling, conflict resolution, health, entrepreneurship and goal setting. There is an immediate opportunity to support a fairly high profile Nigerian actress currently working with Delta youth who has success in conflict resolution, empowerment and attitudinal change. She has good ideas for a TV talent show and a “Youth Facing the People” program similar to the Oprah Winfrey formula – although this may be a little too provocative for the situation in the Delta. The total cost of developing a 6-episode pilot in Nigeria for any of the above would be in the range of \$12,000 to \$15,000.

Radio is a good medium for the Niger Delta due to the remote nature of many villages. Soaps and talent shows may be effective. A radio agriculture course could be effective if it had a way to attract participants. Perhaps a lesson can be taken from the Open University of India where an agriculture improvement course via radio for rural farmers was expected to draw 400 participants but drew one hundred times that when a lottery gave away ten oxen. Prizes attract. Another excellent way to attract participation is to have role models showing excellent incomes.

A sound strategy is to stimulate the production of TV and radio programs, talent shows or contests to present role models and facilitate social empowerment for Delta youth. Prizes may include talent training, production/distribution assistance and cash. Focus should be on programs that highlight new businesses, agriculture opportunities, successful micro entrepreneurs, training programs for the informal sector, or shows such as “Youth Facing the People,” a conflict resolution and awareness program.

Potential Implementation Partners include:

- Hilda Dukoubo (Prominent actress and youth worker who has a small CBO and high profile among youth in Port Harcourt. She came up with idea for “Youth Face the People” and the Youth Talent Show. She has tested the talent show with good success.) Good background in TV /play production, BUT suggest farm projects out to different producers/acting teams.
- IFESH
- Regional / national TV/Radio Studios
- CBO / NGOs

Potential Private Sector (GDA) Partners:

- Coca-Cola for sponsorship and prizes
- Pepsi for sponsorship and prizes
- Oprah Winfrey (foundation or Harpo Productions) for both financial and technical support
- Kaiser Foundation
- Cargill
- CAT
- Auto/motorcycle companies
- Famous American personalities
- IFESH

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Ability to get local corporate sponsors
- Ratings
- Volume of participants attracted
- Sustainability through local sponsors
- Sociological impact

Cross-Cutting Potential:

Education/Health, MSME Economic Development, Conflict Resolution and the Environment

C. Economic Development Stimulation

Potential intervention:

- Import substitution
- Export market development
- Infrastructure improvement
- SME and MSME support
- Structural reform advocacy

There is economic stagnation in the Delta. Although the oil and gas industry is booming, there is no local benefit or stimulus to the economy, yet there is a “cargo cult” expectation that oil benefits will appear. There is a “catch 22” situation with the need for infrastructure development to help encourage local economic development which should/could be from the government’s oil revenues and an oil industry suffering from community dissension from the lack of large visible infrastructure development. Regardless, there is a need to stimulate a stagnant economy as the only way to make new employment and self-employment. Two economic stimulation opportunities, import substitution and exports, seem to have great potential if based mainly on new agriculture (including aquaculture) and agro value-added production. However, this is predicated on extending market outreach deeper into the country for import substitution and creating exports.

1. Import Substitution

Import substitution, as USAID Nigeria has rightly identified, is a solid opportunity in striving to replace food imports and should continue to be a high priority area. But close attention has to be given to developing willingness on the part of youth to enter agriculture/aquaculture, there when efforts show profitability, and in extension of market outreach beyond the Delta. Although currently averse to subsistence farming, youth hold the key to technology transfer, being ready to seek and accept new crops giving attractive incomes. There is danger of distributors making the major profits in the marketing chain at the expense of the farmers, thus some intervention/planning to ensure competitiveness in distribution, fair profitability to farmers and greater market outreach is strongly recommended.

Challenges:

- Delta people are insular and traditional, but youth could be co-opted
- Delta agricultural lands are under-utilized
- Need to introduce new technologies/employment opportunities and market outreach
- Many previous interventions did not follow through with new market development/outreach
- Land tenure problems can preclude youth initiative
- Transportation structure is poor
- Electricity/water/sanitation structure is primitive
- Need to seek interventions with mass employment/self employment potential
- Potential inefficient costs of production
- Agricultural training suffers from fallback to old ways.

Opportunities:

- Nigeria food imports very high – lots of room for import substitution
- Many high value new agribusiness opportunities (but difficult to identify and transfer, develop value-added manufacturing and marketing)
- Solar power for rural electrification.

Potential Assistance:

USAID Nigeria has some excellent initiatives to introduce new crops such as rice, fish farming and an anti-malarial herb. There is a need for a mechanism to identify and stimulate potential import substitution and to introduce new high value export crops. This must include transference of technology, and follow through with post-harvest preservation/expanded market distribution, value added initiatives and quality assurance.

By identifying and introducing more import substitution opportunities, we may obtain private sector support for their development (identification of opportunity and targeting GDA potential partners who have expertise and potential commercial interest). Examples: Neem, fruit leather, D'Lemonine, Seabuckthorn, auredic herbs such as Ginko, flowers for export, fish farming (e.g.: Tilapia, shrimp, jumbo prawns and catfish) and value-added fish processing.

Develop a local mechanism for identification and transfer of new opportunities for innovative agriculture and agribusiness. Policy support must support the whole value chain (such as fish ponds as well as market outreach). Ensure all links are covered (technical support, training, access to farmland, harvest and post harvest preservation technology, QA/grading, logistics and marketing outreach). Encourage technology transfer from the R&D of universities and industry institutes into practical application (especially agribusiness new crops/value-added and export potential items).

Support study tours to USA for key industry leaders to learn first hand new opportunities, i.e. catfish, Tilapia, d'Lemonine, fruit leather, fish value-added, controlled atmosphere storage, etc. Support programs to encourage youth farmers and to adopt new techniques and crops

GDA Opportunities:

- Shell Solar for community demanded rural solar electrification program (similar to their project in Sri Lanka). Although should be a commercial stand-alone venture, need to invite/assist Shell Solar to enter. Solar projects for schools.
- Infrastructure projects to support economic development in the Delta (roads, bridges, electricity pools, harbours, microwave/broadband, irrigation/drainage canals, water quality, sewage, etc.). Tie to requirement to employ local youth and performance bonus scheme.
- Equipment leasing fund/demo pilot corporation (turn over to employee ownership when viable).
- Factoring fund and corporation demo/pilot (turn over to employee ownership when viable).
- Demo/pilot mortgage company (turn over to employee ownership when viable).
- Community venture capital entities.
- Help enable youth ownership of agricultural land.

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Agriculture NGOs
- Delta community animation NGOs and CBOs
- Winroc and similar agriculture NGOs
- Agriculture research centers
- Shell Energy Solar
- Rural Development Bank
- NDE
- Agriculture bank(s) and co-ops

Potential GDA Partners:

- Shell Energy
- Winroc and similar others
- W.R. Grace
- LaFarge Cement
- Cargill Grain
- CAT
- John Deere
- Agricultural research centers

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Number of new crops and value added products introduced
- Value of new crops and value-added products introduced
- Numbers of people employed and self-employed in the implementation chain (including distribution and marketing)
- Value of contribution to household incomes
- Value of social empowerment of youth, women and minorities.

Cross-cutting potential:

Agriculture, MSME/Economic Development, Environmental, Civil Society/Conflict Resolution, and Education/Health.

2. Export Development

Export development may seem remote to some but there may well be some good, high value profitable agriculture opportunities (such as air freight flowers to Amsterdam flower auction and tilapia IQF filets for the EU, America and Asia - even chicken feet to China). One cannot ignore the potential of some industries (e.g.: IQF fish filets) to be labour intensive, leading to many post harvest jobs. Immediate (albeit maybe short term) opportunities exist where youth teams could participate (e.g.: scrap autos for export). There is potential for targeted GDAs with international companies interested in securing new sources of supply – such as Cargills current interest in redeveloping coca production in Nigeria.

Encouraging and enabling existing manufacturers and producers to export has potential for additional employment and revenue, which can be reinvested, especially in light of current overtures for a free trade bi-lateral with America. The Export Promotion Council has recently reorganized. They have a good web site and seem well motivated. They are seeking and could benefit from capacity building assistance. Training manufacturers to export has proven to be highly effective, and results can be tangibly measured.

Challenges:

- Need for improved/consistent quality
- Need for/awareness of WTO/USA/EU rules/regulations – especially phytosanitary
- Need to train personnel in export market development, quality assurance, export finance and documentation
- Need to identify and approach new markets and target international GDA partners
- Need to provide access to working capital for exports.

Opportunities:

- Agri-business in Delta Region with traditional and new crops and value added;
- Aqua-culture in Delta Region;
- Improved market outreach;
- Direct air routes to key European markets

Potential Assistance:

1. Targeted GDAs (identify opportunity then seek USA GDA partners) for introduction, capacity structure and export market development of new agri-business crops and value-added products. (e.g.: Tilapia⁴, Jumbo Prawns, Crayfish, d'Lemonine, Neem⁵, Seabuckthorn, auredic herbs (such as Ginko Bilbao), etc.

⁴ The European and North American markets have a significant shortage of whitefish filets.

2. Develop a local mechanism for identification of new opportunities (such as a GDA funded seat for innovative agriculture and agribusiness), and transference of technology to the grassroots, such as agricultural based community college or agro-technology school with GDA funding for new technologies
3. Encourage technology transfer from R&D of universities and industry institutes into practical application (especially agribusiness new crops/value-added and export potential items)
4. Sponsor study tours to USA for key industry leaders to learn first hand new opportunities (catfish, Tilapia, d'Lemonine, fruit leather, fish value-added, controlled atmosphere storage etc)
5. Develop export capacity by assisting:
 - a) Identification and Training of executives of export-ready manufacturers/producers for quality assurance and how to develop export markets (Canada has an excellent model)
 - b) Strategic GDA partnerships for export Joint ventures (e.g. W.R. Grace for Neem, Tyson foods for Tilapia filets, Netherlands flower wholesalers for export flowers)
 - c) Training for export documentation/logistics and sales personnel for export markets
 - d) Coordinate with US Embassy trade development initiatives such as: GDA support for USA firms for supplier sourcing potential and JV development; sponsored trade missions to/from USA; GDA feasibility studies after MOUs signed; Implementation subsidy; travel to USA support for JV partners to learn USA techniques/processes, etc.
 - e) Advocacy to improve export financing mechanisms; Perhaps export credit guarantee fund or production factoring based on confirmed irrevocable, timed letter of credit.
 - f) Support export working capital guarantee
 - g) Support and encourage quality assurance training and awareness (ISO, USA, EU and WTO phytosanitary and other compliance measures
 - h) Support USA based campaign to attract potential trade and investment.
6. Support mechanism to seek partnerships with air carriers to identify and target JVs utilizing air cargo (e.g.: flowers to Amsterdam market, fresh jumbo prawns and tilapia fillets to Europe)
7. Support export promotion targeting other countries (e.g.: iron ore and scrap steel to China) by opportunity identification and introductions
8. Support/develop program “How to Export to the USA” for compliance issues and market development.
9. Awareness program on quality development for export market development.
10. Encourage commercial forestry (exotic wood plantations)
11. Stimulate a scrap car/steel recycling industry exporting scrap steel to China/India/Japan/Taiwan/Korea due shortage. Create micro ventures with youth for scrap pick up. Also aluminium, cardboard, computer recycling export potential.

⁵ NEEM is a tree that grows in tropical dry soil. Products from leaves, bark and sap have been in use as medicines, soaps and insect repellents for over 6,000 years. It is gaining recognition and demand is high – with renderings sold by the gram. India had kept this a secret for years but the USA (W.R. Grace) is now actively involved developing plantations and patenting media. See NEEM Institute on the Internet for current economics of production.

12. Stimulate plastic recycling with reform machines (made in USA) turning scrap plastic into lumber.

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Local Chambers of Commerce and Employers
- National Directorate for Employment
- Regional development authorities
- Agri-business NGOs
- Specific industry associations
- Exporters association
- Export development bank (sic)
- Cargill (coca)
- Tyson and other fish producers (tilapia IQF)
- PRISIMS
- US Embassy Trade Department
- National Chambers of Commerce and employers
- Netherlands flower wholesalers (see Uganda for example)
- NDE

Potential GDA Partners:

- Local banks with Letter of Credit correspondent designations
- Diverse Chambers of Commerce in USA
- Potential targeted large USA/EU/Asia importers (e.g., Tilapia white fish filets in high demand in EU/Asia/USA; tropical flowers for Amsterdam auction; D'lemonine oil commodity market)
- Winroc and other agriculture NGOs
- USA universities and specialist institutes with the expertise
- USA importers/potential importers
- Cargill (coca)
- Tyson (tilapia IQF)
- LaFarge Cement

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Value of exports
- Number of new crops and value added products introduced
- Value of new crops and value added products introduced
- Numbers of people employed and self-employed in the implementation chain (including distribution and marketing)
- Value of contribution to household incomes
- Value of social empowerment of youth, women and minorities.

Cross-cutting potential:

Agriculture, MSME/Economic Development, Environmental, Civil Society/Conflict Resolution, and Education/Health.

3. Infrastructure Improvement

Infrastructure improvement in the forms of roads, reactivated rail lines, electrification and improved electricity reliability, improved telecommunications, jetties, bridges etc. and reduced police harassment on the highways would help. It is understood many bilateral initiatives are underway in this area.

4. MSME Support and New Business Opportunities

MSME support exists in a variety of forms – some successful and many not. It has been proven there must be a “holistic” approach taken ensuring not only requisite trade/venture and management skills but also mentoring, finance and facilitation to start and run a venture. The weakest link in the chain is financing mechanisms. There is also a need to get training service providers to take more responsibility for developing successful ventures. Donors should set higher performance goals for the training service providers. NDDC has demonstrated success in youth-based ventures such as mini busses and lessons could be learned from their ability to gather groups of 10 youth to form companies and NDDC’s banking relations.

Regrettably, the shortage of new venture ideas tends to create saturation of existing opportunities (e.g.: buses, phone cards) – thus the need to find and introduce new venture opportunities. One example, tested by USAID Nigeria in another area, may be the introduction of solar electrification systems. It has proven to be successful in rural India and Sri Lanka. The solar division of Shell has a good track record bringing electrification to thousands of homes in Sri Lanka and could be a potential GDA partner. There seems to be good potential for “generic franchising” - such as the Crane shoemaking success story in Uganda.⁶ Perhaps many opportunities could be gleaned from a review of informal sector intervention history in other countries, such as Uganda.

Challenges:

- Repressive banking system – no regard for “soft equity”
- Venture capital market not developed
- Factoring not developed
- Leasing not developed
- Mortgaging not developed
- Micro-finance great shortage

Opportunities:

⁶ Apprentices learn the craft of shoemaking and earn the right to use the Crane logo and label once quality is approved. They are financed and mentored to set up in approved locations. Materials are supplied by the franchisor.

- “Extremely large” latent demand for venture and working capital, which could lead to large economic expansion.

Potential Assistance:

- Capacity building/training initiatives to develop an aggressive venture capital market both public and private
- Encourage/support more micro credit organizations
- Capacity building/training initiatives for leasing, mortgaging, factoring
- Support banks wholesaling to micro lending organizations
- Strengthening the credit union movement
- Capacity building/training/support for financing of export work capital supported by confirmed, irrevocable, timed letters of credit (including a credit guarantee scheme)
- More stimulus for MSME credit schemes
- Target programs to special groups (e.g.: returning offshore oil workers with bankroll, prisoners, women, isolated youth, etc.)
- Support the GTZ Young Professional Consultants training program for community development
- Improve quality of private skills trainers dealing with youth skills development. Perhaps a train the trainer program to high USA standards in all basic trades?

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Export Development Bank
- NDE
- Rural Development Bank
- All banks
- GTZ

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Economic growth
- Increased loans to micro and small-medium enterprises (MSMEs)

Cross-cutting potential:

Agriculture, MSME/Economic Development, Environmental, Civil Society/Conflict Resolution, Education/Health

5. Advocacy

Structural reform advocacy, such as the undertakings of the PRISIMS project, is fundamental to enabling faster economic development. There seems to be opportunity to pilot some structures to demonstrate effective models such as a mortgaging, leasing, and factoring.

Challenges:

- Repressive banking system – no regard for “soft equity”

- Lack of capital market development, factoring, leasing, mortgaging
- Micro finance - great shortage
- 2% Training levy not significantly contributing to increased quality or relevance
- 10% Bank profits levy for venture capital under utilized

Opportunities:

- “Extremely large” latent demand for venture and working capital which would/could lead to large economic expansion
- Potential or educational tele-centers

Potential Assistance:

- Continue/increase advocacy re soft lending, mortgage and capital markets reform
- Advocacy for private sector factoring
- Advocacy for more government-guaranteed working capital for export sales (if secured by confirmed, irrevocable, timed letter of credit)
- Advocacy to allow offshore guarantees for local bank lending for working capital
- Advocacy to create CCA system allowing companies/banks to deduct CCA from income (needed to encourage leasing) – possibly even transfer between related entities
- Advocacy to encourage international banks to establish (especially for corporate sector finance)
- Advocacy to convert existing stock market to better encourage/enable use for IPOs and as exit option for venture capital investors
- Advocacy to encourage government loan from WB/ADB for educational telecenters
- Advocacy to encourage/support export market development initiatives
- Advocacy to permit trade dispute resolution (and enforcement) by international arbitration centers of world trade centers
- Advocacy to encourage better quality roads in the Delta
- Advocacy to encourage privatization of the electrical parastatels and encourage new private providers
- Advocacy to encourage better irrigation canals/system in Delta for rice, fish farming and other agriculture
- More privatization advocacy.

Potential Implementation Partners:

- African Institute for Good Corporate Governance (sic.)
- Chambers of Commerce and Industry
- Banking industry
- Professional accounting associations/institutes;
- Internationally linked large professional accounting firms
- National Open University (Contact: Dr. Olu Jagede, President)
- National exporters’ association

Potential GDA Partners:

- African Institute for Good Corporate Governance (sic.)
- World Bank

- African Development Bank
- WTO
- EU
- International professional accounting associations/institutes
- Stock Exchange (NASDAQ, TSE etc.).
- Commonwealth of Learning
- Organization of International Trade Centers

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Enabling environment resulting in increased employment self employment, economic growth and capital markets

Cross-cutting potential:

Agriculture, MSME/Economic Development, Environmental, Civil Society/Conflict Resolution, Education/Health

D. Training for Employment and Economic Development

Public sector education is suspect. Inaccessibility harms Delta children both in quality of and access to education. Mismatch of training, the poor economy and lack of relevance have led to very low employment of graduates. A “why bother” attitude has emerged among the un- and under- educated youth who see no future and no pay-offs from a good education. Quality of training is seldom up to the standards of larger and international employers. There is a need to improve relevance, quality and access. GTZ reports private sector skills trainers are very poor in quality. The National Board for Technical Education is renewing curricula, but it is a slow process – especially with retraining teachers. Many people have described corruption in entrance, grade and degree granting at the public universities.⁷

In general, avoid dealing with public institutions due to corruption of grading, and slow pace of change. However, there is always merit in scholarships/bursaries to American institutions in hope that the recipients will return to Nigeria and some will become leading academics. In encouraging improvement in relevance and quality, first target international employers and support private sector high quality employer demand-driven training – especially with USA trainer/institutional partnerships. Laterally, some good public institutions (their management) could be identified and encouraged. There is one GDA opportunity that overrides the comments and should be TOP Priority – it seems possible to develop a large GDA with Microsoft for site licenses and computer donations for the country covering both public and better private educators.

Relevance means employer approved curricula and student work experience coupled with theory through school-employer partnerships (it is greatly lacking in the public system). It should be encouraged and rewarded. The private education sector could be most flexible to respond, especially if there is profit in providing high quality skills training.

⁷ “Editorial: The Quality of Our Graduates,” *The Guardian*, Sunday, August 21, 2005.

1. Improving Educational Relevance

Challenges:

- Generally low quality of voc / tech graduates in the Delta
- Generally low quality of university graduates in Delta due grade and degree corruption in public institutions
- General lack of practicality and relevance – little employer input
- Lack of basic skills in sciences and lack of science and technology spaces in public universities creates imbalance of grads in “soft” degrees when demand is for science and engineering grads
- Delta people perceive good jobs go to grads from other regions
- Low employment rate (10%) of grads
- Students do not want to take vocational/technical paths.
- Inability to identify a variety of career or self employment opportunities
- The rabble-rousers tend not to be well educated, have no goals and poor self-image.

Opportunities:

- Need for more oil and gas industry workers due world shortage of labor, increasing numbers Nigerian oil producers and new projects (e.g.: LNG)
- Need for training and certification to high international standards
- Need for training to introduce new technologies
- Movement to blend polytechnics with degree programs
- Private sector tertiary education now encouraged
- Some “role model” training institutions exist (e.g.: Petroleum Institute, Juan Bosco)
- Many communities want/like to designate training needs and designate youth for the training
- NITDA has a software licence from Microsoft – thus precedence for other schools

Potential Assistance:

- KEYSTONE: Encourage dual training and blending school training with on-the-job application (called co-op Ed in USA, Sandwich in U.K.) also called work experience component – can also apply to “academic paths” such as chemistry, English. Ensure employer/NGO participation
- Program and training to encourage confidence building and goal setting in youth (IFESH off to a good start could expand into public speaking, creativity contests/exercises, talent contests, theatre arts as well as career counselling)
- As isolation and lack of identification of opportunities/careers is problematic, and because there are better training institutions in Lagos and some other regions, suggest targeting rising youth leaders in Delta with a scholarship/bursary program placing them outside the Delta as they may import ideas on return
- Consider concept of private/NGO comprehensive community college in partnership with USA consortium of community colleges and/or universities (U. Model, employer poly, Agriculture College?) including remedial education prior to career program placement or

higher education. (See also following section on potential for a community college model).

- USAID scholarship/fellowship to USA program
- Expand and co-sponsor Junior Achievement and/or equivalent
- Support positive leadership development and self confidence through diverse programs ranging from public speaking to “outward bound” and group based creativity contests
- Learn from Durham U. in U.K. regarding entrepreneurship inculcation, and support creativity and project success exercises from elementary level up
- Encourage “experiential” learning activities related to creativity, skills development, leadership and business
- Co-sponsor USA school linkages stressing high international standards and mobility of grads
- Invite/assist USA private voc/tech trade schools to set up in Nigeria to supply workers demanded by multinationals and large local corporations
- Aggressive, targeted GDA program to entice USA private institutions to start up, link/assist/JV in Nigeria
- Program and training to fund school-work partnerships
- Program and training to initiate school-work placement officers
- Program and training on how to establish active Program Advisory Committees
- Program and training to encourage employer driven training on demand – relate to advocacy program for better/visible use of the 2% training tax such as: ear-marking to specific institutions, deduction for employer in-kind and hard costs of on-job-training in school-work partnerships
- Co-sponsor awareness program on careers and income potential of good trade skills
- Capacity building training of counsellors program re student career planning
- Co-sponsor (honest) ISO certification for private trade schools
- Co-sponsorship and GDA for USA joint ventures and industry-owned private trade schools

Self Employment:

- Relevance also means self-employment, which requires entrepreneurship training, confidence building, financing, mentoring and experience.
- Continue to co-sponsor holistic programs directly, leading to MSME with trade skills set (requires SB training how to start, mentoring, opportunity identification, business planning, finance, and on-going consulting and network development). Done now BUT demand/bonus higher performance standards such as 75% start own venture. Create competition among implementers.
- Co-sponsor MSME train trainers programs – such as ILO MYOB and SYOB⁸ – create industry of franchised MSME trainers and fee-based training schools (as done successfully in Uganda).
- Continue to co-sponsor traineeships with follow-through to empowerment financing and assisting MSME starts.

⁸ Over 20 years in development, the ILO has evolved a successful pair of MSME training programs: Start Your Own Business (SYOB) and Manage Your Own Business (MYOB)

- Sponsor holistic programs utilizing informal apprenticeships rewarding both master and apprentice (see World Bank / Uganda Govt. pilot initiatives for rural and urban informal apprenticeships – likely this pilot is being run by GTZ).

Potential Implementation Partners:

- ILO for MYOB, SYOB
- Private sector interested in developing private schools
- Existing private schools including parochial schools
- For career planning and scholarships – diverse NGOs and CBOs
- NDE
- GTZ

Potential GDA Partners:

- Junior Achievement of America
- USA private trade schools, voc/tech institutions, colleges and universities.
- USA industry associations (e.g., oil and gas producers)
- Oil industry
- Microsoft
- Cisco Systems
- For career planning, approach USA career planning training materials producers for GDAs (for sample list, contact: gwitter@vip.net)
- For scholarships to USA, partner via GDA with select universities and institutions – especially those with established partnership MOUs with higher quality Delta institutions.
- Hewlett Packard

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Target employment rates (suggest emulate China: 80% minimum with training on demand)
- MSME start and survival rates and numbers employed there from (suggest 70% start after selection process, target 2.5 jobs per start)
- Number of schools covered in Microsoft license and computer supplementation (caution: this could be huge)
- Scholarships numbers and tracking of student performance and post grad placement.

Cross-cutting potential:

Agriculture, MSME/Economic Development, Environmental, Civil Society/Conflict Resolution, Education/Health

2. Improving Educational Quality and Access

Challenges:

- Lack of relevance in curricula and graduates

- Large number of un- and under- educated in the Delta. Oil “cargo cult” and no employment contributing to “why bother attitude”
- Many Delta public schools exist in name only and many others lack any materials, equipment, etc.
- High proportion of riverine children un- and under- educated
- IT training and access deficient or non-existent in most areas
- Remoteness and lack of transport systems
- Teacher quality in public system is poor
- Orphan problem due AIDS/HIV?
- High youth incarceration and recidivism
- Education is perceived as not “cool” to the gang peers
- 2nd chance adult basic education not developed
- Teacher quality in public system is poor
- Public voc/tech under curricula revision to modernize with employer led competency-based curricula but process is slow (half-way in curricula) and great need to train teachers in new curricula and standards.

Opportunities:

- Need for more oil and gas industry workers due world shortage of labor, increasing numbers Nigerian oil producers and new projects (e.g.: LNG)
- Need for training and certification to high international standards
- American public interested to support education materials, etc.
- USA tertiary education system – private, public and parochial – interested in overseas projects and partnerships
- ICT in high demand.
- World Bank engaged in meeting on capacity training for CBOs proposed for October 5, 2005
- Telecommunications centers for teaching in remote schools quite possible, yet under developed
- Remote electrification via solar power feasible
- Public vocational and polytechnic schools have trouble recruiting students – hard skills sector operating under capacity. Curricula in modernization process.
- Employers recognize quality – potential for ISO and internationally certified training institutions with high-level curricula and training methodologies.

Potential Assistance:

- **TOP PRIORITY: GDA with Microsoft** for low cost site licenses for school IT software and GDA-partnered donations of computers (both public and private schools). Ensure fund auxiliary, wiring, internet access, electricity and security for computer labs. Train in revenue generation to sustain equipment, services and materials.
- “Adopt a school program”: Use GDA process to stimulate USA community service sector (Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, etc.) to adopt Delta schools to provide materials (books, supplies, containers fitted as libraries, equipment, repair/construction visits, etc.). E.g.

GDA to match perceived value of club efforts to cover transportation and container costs, materials costs, etc. Learn from Kiwanis “library in a container” project⁹

- As above: community based initiatives fund(s)
- Encourage/assist institutional twining between USA institutions and Delta institutions
- Support quality in education improvement initiatives
- Reward system for private educational institutions that have high placement rate, employer partnerships, school-work programs, etc.
- Training program on how to develop effective school-employer partnerships and school-work programs
- Co-sponsor science fair movement
- Encourage science teaching in schools (mobile labs, materials, teacher training)
- Encourage “second chance” institutions for under-educated youth
- Support informal system with a GDA for equipment for masters and bonus system in lieu of paying for student training; equipment and MSME training and start assistance for community sponsored trainees (see World Bank model in Uganda); support mobility program for apprenticeship training in non home venue for placement back in home community or another community in need of the skills (financing of set up and training)
- Support “generic franchising” such as the CRANE shoe maker initiative in Uganda
- GDA fund and aggressive targeting for purchase of USA high quality instructional materials
- GDA fund to assist new private VET schools with USA partnerships (bonus system as well for high employability targets)
- All assistance to educational institutions to be tied to high performance demands and performance bonus system
- Support programs for orphan education such as scholarships and bursaries
- GDA support for NGO/CBO programs if community sponsored
- GDA support program targeting distance education for students and teacher development
- Community based initiatives fund(s)
- Co-sponsor loans through a GDA for equipping private training institutions if demand-driven and sponsored by employers
- Co-opt oil industry telecommunications systems for distance learning (GDA to utilize their microwave and broad band) in the Delta

⁹ **Example: Kiwanis “Library in a Container Project”**

One North American Kiwanis club has started a project to send books to Africa. In North America, there is a surplus of used books and magazines (e.g.: National Geographic), which are a problem even for second-hand and thrift stores, but can serve a purpose in the poorer African countries. The pilot project collects books and magazines, seeking texts, children’s books, Geographic’s, etc. – preferably not too old. A used cargo container is obtained and slightly modified with windows and some desks and shelves. It is then loaded with the materials and shipped out.

There is GDA potential if USAID were to match “in-kind” effort of labor and materials of the service clubs with funds to pay for the used container, shipping and customs clearance. Local clubs in Niger Delta could partner with the North American clubs. The local clubs are community based and could win community interest to equip the schools.

- Priority to assist ICT training in all schools (GDA partnership with Microsoft and Cisco TOP priority)
- Support concept of rural telecommunications centers ala examples in India and Sri Lanka
- Support mobile (truck and boat) skills training initiatives (e.g.: mobile compute labs, chemistry labs, welding labs, etc.)
- Support NGO/CBO initiatives to train Delta youth convicts and parolees with marketable skills
- Encourage ISO for private schools with internationally benchmarked curricula
- Improve training and quality of curricula of vocational skills trainers – especially for training in USA sponsored projects. Train the trainers programs suggested.

Potential Implementation Partners:

- Delta community-based NGOs and CBOs
- National Open University (Contact: Dr. Olu Jagede, President)
- GTZ for informal apprenticeship
- Parochial organizations
- Service clubs of Nigeria and similar clubs in America
- Elyon Reform & Charity Organization (Niven A.O. Momoh Lawyer nivenmomoth@hotmail.com Abuja + (0) 967 13113 or Mobile + (0) 802 5445344)
- NDE for “generic franchising” and also NGOs/CBOs
- NDE for self-employment/empowerment linkage

Potential GDA Partners:

- IBM
- Microsoft for Microsoft site licence – all schools – NBTE, UC
- Local broadband suppliers
- USA based Microwave companies with equipment in the delta
- Oil industry
- USA Training materials providers
- Service clubs of America
- Parochial groups and NGOs in America
- Commonwealth of Learning (re telecommunications rural distance learning centers)
- Foundations
- NGOs
- Oil industry
- Coca-Cola / Pepsi
- CRANE CBO Uganda
- Cisco Systems
- Hewlett Packard

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Number of Delta public schools improved and continuing supplementation
- Number of tele-centers established and number achieving sustainability through sale of access services

- Numbers assisted
- Pass / employment / self employment rates and performance incentives claimed

Cross-cutting potential:

Agriculture, MSME/Economic Development, Environmental, Civil Society/Conflict Resolution, Education/Health

3. Concept and Considerations for Comprehensive Community Colleges

Will a Community College Model work in Nigeria?

Due to the disarray of the public sector education system, not only are graduates from tertiary institutions suspect due to corruption, lack of relevance and lack of access to equipment such as computers and science labs, but also quality of basic and secondary education is lacking and many youth drop out. Employers complain about the continuously declining quality of graduates from public tertiary institutions.

There may be opportunity for tertiary institutions that are industry-driven and employer-led not only demanding higher standards, but also greater relevance through blending work experience components with theory. Such an institution would likely offer not only regular student programs leading toward appropriate designations (preferably internationally accredited and recognized), but also serve as a venue for continuing workforce education. Such an institution could also provide continuing education for the community at large in response to identified training needs. There may also be an opportunity to import high international standards, thus giving the graduates mobility and acceptance by international employers and to prepare students for graduate programs abroad.

Models that may work in the Nigerian milieu (provided they are in the private / NGO sector):

- 1) The Polytechnic (such as the Petroleum Institute) with laddering from vocational levels to professional diploma and degree levels;
- 2) The “Intercept Institution” preferably with both career/technical and academic streams to at least AA (two year diploma) level for advancement to a parent institution in the USA, or exactly duplicating the curricula and quality of the parent institution. The institution could serve as a screening instrument for advancement of students to senior years abroad. One model of this is the “university college,” offering bachelor level degrees (closely articulated to the parent institution) and scholarships abroad.
- 3) The Agricultural College designed to take the role of “local economic development catalyst.”

Successful models tend to:

- 1) Have international accreditation assured by a resident international dean(s) and examination set and/or approved by the parent institution
- 2) Have a mix of local and international faculty
- 3) Skim available local faculty by paying well, and encouraging and demanding excellence and currency
- 4) Charge high fees (but provide for scholarships and bursaries for bright poor)
- 5) Require community and industry involvement and work experience components
- 6) Be very well equipped
- 7) Link closely with employers
- 8) Tolerate no corruption
- 9) A registrar / records system ultimately based at the parent institution in the USA.

Community College Planning:

In planning community colleges, the goals of improving relevance and community and employer participation, and the ability for the institutions to identify and respond to emerging training needs must be paramount. The training delivery mandate for community colleges should focus on creating flexibility in delivery of effective and relevant quality training when, where and as needed. This would include not only those with their O and A levels who will not continue on to university, but also provide a second chance for those without it.

Flexibility in delivery is essential. Delivery should include the ability—through cost-recovery programming—to identify and satisfy community training needs, providing continuing adult education and training on-demand for employers. The community college model is unique, not only in its flexibility and responsiveness, but also in its effectiveness. Relevance of programming should be emphasized and measured by the employability (wage and self) of graduates from regular programs and by the demand for continuing education programs.

Ideally, regular students on both academic transfer and technical/vocational programs should have mandatory periods of supervised work experience in order to apply their training and learn to be effective employees. This usually comes in the forms of student labs where goods and services are provided to the public (e.g.: auto repair, bakery, health clinics, refrigeration repair, restaurant, hotel), possibly productivity centers where students are employed after school hours, and work placement (OJT) with employers. This adds relevance to all training. Work placement should include university transfer students (e.g.: chemists, biologists, journalists, etc.) to experience application of the studies.

Functions:

Ideally, a comprehensive community college will:

- Have community/employer involvement in direction of the institution and the delivery of courses
- Have career counselling and career training
- Provide a second chance utilizing accelerated adult education methodologies to acquire literacy and baccalaureate equivalency
- Provide preparatory training to enter a trade or technology training program
- Provide opportunity to take academic or technical pathways for an AA degree or for credit transfer to universities nationally and internationally

- Include a trade/technology module, course, certificate (1 yr) or diploma (2 yr) training to employer specifications and benchmarked to high national/international quality standards (for graduate mobility)
- Have opportunity to access programs on a part-time or full-time basis in various time frames
- Have program access and advanced placement through skills assessment of prior learning if informally acquired
- Provide competency-based training (employer directed) with open entry and exit and “credit banking” toward designations
- Provide practical work experience in student labs and on the job with employers while training (in many instances with students paid for on-the-job-training by the employer)
- Provide continuing education for formal and informal learning
- Provide workforce development training for employers and NGOs (training-on-demand)
- Have the ability to quickly identify and respond both to community and employer training needs on a cost-recovery basis
- Experience sustainability of demand-driven programs through proof of high employment justifying base budget funding or attracting students on cost-recovery programs
- Have an effective quality control system (benchmarking) and employer-recognized standards (and reputation) reflecting high quality and relevance of graduates¹⁰
- *Have a mandate and opportunity to identify and transfer new technologies to the local community.*

The Comprehensive University College Model of Community Colleges

For Nigeria, the demand for a degree is strong. Students tend to seek out degree path programs over vocational/technical programs. Some of this is due to lack of grounding in sciences, but much to do with a social stigma against vocational training. One model of community colleges is the “Comprehensive University College,” which offers a variety of programs from vocational to career/technical and degree programs. Great effort is given to establishing “laddering” to allow students to proceed from vocational to career/technical to degree. In addition, counselling and placement services are strong, and remedial education is provided to quickly bring needed background “academics” (“college prep”) up to a level where the student will survive in their chosen programs.

Regrettably, the public institutions have a reputation for corruption – thus an opportunity for a private institution, corruption free, delivering honestly high quality education and training with relevance.

The Agricultural College designed to take the role of “local economic development catalyst”

This would be a voc / tech institution, likely with certificates, diplomas and bachelor level degrees. It should be heavily supported to seek out new agriculture/aquaculture and agro business opportunities, have applied research, provide technological support and transfer training to introduce new crops. It should have connections to finance mechanisms to help those trained implement the new initiatives. Revenues could be generated.

¹⁰ There is a trend for institutions to seek ISO 9002 certification, as it is recognized by employers as conformance to high international standards.

Enabling Mechanisms:

Enabling mechanisms must be in place to give the Community College the freedom to operate.

They include:

- Mandate to identify and quickly respond to community training needs
- Mandate requiring employer participation and advisory roles in all training directed toward employment generation
- Permission/enabling mechanisms to solicit and encourage donations to advance the institution and its programs
- Mandate to identify and introduce new technologies which will help advance economic development of individuals and the community
- Management by a local governing board dominated by employers and key members of civil society who have the mandate to govern and encourage revenue generation for sustainability.
- Ability to retain revenues generated for the good of the institution, employees and students
- Ability to seek and encourage employer, NGO and community participation in financing the institution, developing and delivering programming.
- Incentives – especially tax incentives - to attract and retain effective partnerships.

Tax Incentives in Nigeria:

As there is unhappiness among employers over the perceived lack of effectiveness of the 2% tax for training, there is opportunity to attract employer participation in the community colleges if they may be allowed a “right of offset” for:

- Directing all or part of their 2% surcharge to a specific institution and program(s)
- Allowing the wages paid to college students on a work experience component of a training program to be considered as contribution toward the tax
- Directing all or part of their 2% tax obligation to training their own workers at an approved educational institution
- Allowing “carry forward” (and maybe backward) of training costs in excess of the annual 2% tax level, as deduction against other taxation periods
- Recognizing adjudicated “in kind” valuation as tax contribution, such as donations of equipment, instructional time (including reasonable costs of supervision of students on the job), billable time of personnel engaged in program advisory assistance and training of institutional instructors
- Enabling legislation to allow the community college to solicit donations which are tax deductible to the donors
- Enabling legislation to allow community colleges separate bank accounts for revenue generation and to manage trust accounts for scholarships and capital works
- Possible tax exemptions for campus revenue generating ventures.

Training and Support are Needed To:

- Engender a pro-active (community and employer) responsiveness to market the institution as socially responsible and an important link in community economic and self-

empowerment. Develop effective leadership to lead and manage a dynamic institution mandated to identify and satisfy a variety of community and employer training and academic needs.

- Generate revenues for the institution from fees, donations, and ancillary revenue opportunities. Operate a fee-based continuing education and training on demand function(s) and ensure program relevance.
- Develop partnerships to advance the institution and students
- Employ trade/technical/professional practitioners as instructors
- Work effectively with governing boards of directors
- Accept higher standards for training and employment of graduates.

Key Considerations in the Planning Process:

1. Advocacy is often needed to ensure that:
 - a. If dealing with public institutions, the institutions be allowed to hold their “own bank accounts” and retain revenues without a “claw back” or claw back offset to central authority
 - b. If dealing with public institutions, the institutions have a decentralized mandate, whereby base programs may be funded by central authority but the institution will be encouraged and assisted to develop cost-recovery programming to locally identified training needs by both continuing education and contract training for employers, NGOs, etc.
 - c. The institutions have a local governing board accountable for the management of the institutions. The board should be required to reflect civil society and employer interests in proportion to the planned focus of the institution.
 - d. The institutions have local Program Advisory Committees (PACs) comprising employers for each program, which leads directly to on job training placements and employment of graduates. The PACs must be given authority to determine curricula and standards.
 - e. Work placement (preferably where students will earn a wage) be mandatory for all base budget technical and vocational training programs and desirable for all academic programs
 - f. A diminishing seed fund to hire and train cost-recovery continuing education and training on demand marketers and programmers is established
 - g. A revolving seed fund to advance funds to design and market cost recovery programs is established
 - h. Insure there is funding for positions of career/placement counsellors
 - i. There is funding for positions of on-the-job placement coordinators
 - j. There is funding for marketing and public relations coordinator (optional)
 - k. There are tax incentives are in place to encourage employers to pay students during on-job placements
 - l. Cost-recovery is defined as including adequate allowance for overheads including amortization of program development costs
 - m. Student practice labs are open to serve the public on a cost-recovery basis

- n. Production centers are developed – often in private/NGO partnerships - to provide paid work experience for students
- o. Facilities can be rented or utilized in cost-recovery fashion
- p. Technical practitioners may be employed as instructors on part-time or full-time basis (provided they can be trained to instruct)
- q. Teachers are required and assisted to maintain currency. Funding and mandate for continuing education must be an on-going requirement of faculty to ensure currency in their field.

2. Community Support and Cross-Cutting Alliances

As funding may depend on the USAID desire to reflect cross-cutting themes, the funding proposal should reflect synergy and contribution to the planning process across many SOW areas. The project can be justified as contributing to local governance, conflict mitigation, health, MSME development, utilization of the GDA mechanism to encourage funding leverage and employer/NGO partnerships, support for and encouragement of self-employment, and the introduction and utilization of “green” environmentally beneficial technologies and awareness. Programs offered will often overlap and complement interests in other SOWs.

3. GDA Leverage

The Community College model is ideal to attract GDA partnerships and qualify for USAID leverage. For example, Microsoft, CISCO and local broadband providers should be willing to be active participants. Each technical program will hold the potential for partnerships with employers and suppliers (e.g.: automotive programs usually supported by the major auto companies, and tourism programs usually supported by the larger hotels and destination tourism operators). Cross cutting synergy could attract participants from agro-industry, environment, MSME NGOs and chambers of commerce and industry. Introduction of new technologies can incorporate GDA partnerships.¹¹

4. Entrepreneurship

Colleges must also be proactive in self-employment generation through:

- Inculcation of business skills with vocational/technical career training where the opportunity exists to be self-employed
- Experience as an effective employee in a practical business setting (student lab)
- Experience as a supervisor in a practical business setting (student lab)
- Presenting awareness of self-employment pros and cons
- Introduction of creativity and how to develop business opportunities with the skills being learned
- Partnering with NGOs/CBOs to train and assist graduates to finance, start and run their own ventures
- Introducing new self-employment opportunities and provide technical skills and support for the new ventures

¹¹ Example: Neem trees have been planted for erosion control but they also have significant commercial potential for domestic and export use of leaves, sap and seeds for medicines, animal feed and insect repellants. W.R. Grace of the USA is a major importer of neem oil and powder.

5. NGOs and CBOs

Partnership with NGOs and CBOs is ideal to provide introduction to new technologies and social initiatives, finance, community direction and ownership and ongoing support for new enterprises and social initiatives.

Potential GDA Community College Opportunities:

Partnerships with private sector for:

- Equipment, materials and software
- School-work on job training paid employment cycles
- Training of teachers
- Workforce upgrade training
- Training on demand
- Curricula and competencies specifications and standards
- Revenue generation activities of the institution
- Introduction of new technologies and concepts

Community College Partnership with NGOs / CBOs for:

- Entrepreneurship development and MSME support, training and finance
- Introduction and transference of new technologies
- Community development services
- Introduction of social programs and training for disseminators

Examples of Potential Cross-cutting Synergies:

- Agriculture sector enterprises may be encouraged to identify and invite agro-industry international firms to support training and technology transference for new crops, post harvest quality preservation and processing and provide potential export markets (e.g. NEEM, Tilapia filets, Seabuckthorn, Ginko Bilboa and other high value auredic crops).
- Training of public health and community development workers
- Entrepreneurship training

E. Projects Inventory and Effectiveness Benchmarking

Similar to Bangladesh (and many other countries), there is a plethora of projects in Nigeria and a history of attempted interventions. The Niger Delta is no exception. It would help to have an inventory of past and current projects—preferably with ratings for the performance of and lessons learned from past interventions.

Challenge:

The need for an inventory of existing and past initiatives to avoid duplication and past mistakes is a challenge.

Assistance:

- Commission inventory and effectiveness benchmarking of delta programs.
- Support annual award / recognition contest for successful interventions.

Potential GDA Partners:

- Oil industry
- Other donors

Targets of Monitoring and Evaluation:

- Completion within TORs
- Comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the report

SECTION IV: USAID’S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE, CORE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

USAID Nigeria mission staff have considerable expertise and experience. The mission has some excellent projects under its aegis, such as PRISMS and IFESH, which demonstrate coordination with other donors and a willingness to be innovative.

USAID Nigeria is tasked to focus on the Niger Delta and potential resources that could be brought to bear on the youth employment issue. Perhaps the strongest potential mechanism USAID has is the GDA. Good relationships have been established with major oil companies. These companies are participating in funding through the GDA mechanism, and seem willing to do more. This creates one danger - the focus of GDA funding could be only with the oil companies – thereby ignoring opportunities to seek out other GDA alliances. There is good potential to identify a market / training / education opportunity, then seek out GDA funding by targeting potential partners who would have expertise and a vested interest to help establish markets for new ventures – an example may be Cargill for coca exports, Coca-Cola for talent shows or Microsoft for education software licences.

There is potential to help Nigeria expand exports by partnering with the US Embassy Trade division to help improve export capacity and to assist in developing exports to America.

Perhaps less recognized, USAID has the people of America behind it and can call on the public for assistance or GDA partnership. For example, the ability of USA based service clubs such as Lions, Kiwanis, Kinsmen, and Rotary suggests they can be effective media to share USAID initiatives. Recently, Kiwanis completed a world-wide iodine deficiency program (IDD). Lions collect used eye glasses for Africa. There is a latent opportunity to align with service clubs – especially those with branches in Nigeria. The concept of “libraries in a box” for rural schools based on the twinning of North American and Nigerian service clubs (as elaborated previously) may be a challenge for the Mission and may stimulate similar ideas.

In the Niger Delta, one major weakness USAID may fall into is being tarred with the stigma of “Big Oil” – thus it is perhaps best to go through intermediaries such as NGOs and CBOs and partner with other donors and strive for a relatively low profile.

SECTION V: NEXT STEPS

The GWIT Team recommends that USAID/Nigeria consider the next steps in the development of a Mission supported workforce activity:

A. Design a GDA Proposal

The Mission should support a design team to assist with the development of a workforce GDA proposal to support education and training of indigenous workforce in the oil and/or agribusiness industries. The scope of work for the design would include the following:

- Meet with stakeholders in the private sector and government to assess their commitment and level of resources
- Assess alternative mechanisms for the delivery of relevant, quality education and training services
- Assess current knowledge and skills base of existing workforce in relation to industry labor needs
- Develop a draft GDA proposal
- Convene meeting of USAID and other stakeholders to review, refine, and approve the proposal.

B. Conduct an Inventory of Existing Workforce Education and Training Programs in the Niger Delta

Such an inventory would provide benchmark information on the capabilities of existing workforce education and training providers, and it would assess the ability of current providers to deliver relevant, quality, cost effective training. The inventory could serve as a means of developing an organizational capacity-building project targeted at strengthening the ability of current providers.

C. Conduct an Evaluation of Mission Funded Projects Managed by OICI and IFESH

This evaluation was deleted from the scope of work of the GWIT team due to time and resource constraints. However, we recommend that the Mission move forward with this effort. OICI and IFESH represent the largest current investments in workforce education and training projects by USAID/Nigeria. The Mission should draw upon lessons learned from these two efforts to inform its future activities.

Persons Met

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