



... global standards for education partnerships

Promoting Transparency and Accountability through Effective Capacity Development:

*A Case of the Home Grown
School Feeding Programme
in Ogun State*



Background

The home grown school feeding programme (HGSFP) is a component of the national social investment portfolio which was established to improve the health and nutrition status of the pupils in public primary schools across the federation as well as improve economic outcomes for the poor. The programme is designed to provide a nutritious meal per day to pupils in public primary schools across the country with the aim of improving school enrolment, reducing dropout rates, number of out-of-school children, child labour, and ultimately result in better learning outcomes.

The programme offers job opportunities to economically disenfranchised women who are recruited as cooks, and connects local farmers who supply the food items to a ready market. The On Nigeria programme, funded by the MacArthur Foundation, is a collaboration with stakeholders from civil society, donor organisations, government, and academia, with the aim of bolstering the momentum around Nigerian-led efforts to strengthen accountability and reduce corruption. One of the key efforts of the On Nigeria programme is to support the efficient implementation of the HGSFP through actual monitoring and capacity building in Ogun and Kaduna states which will improve accountability and transparency in the public sector.



In 2017, Ogun state welcomed the intervention of four organisations working together as a support group to improve the work done by the state team in monitoring the effective implementation of the programme. The organisations are: Action Health Incorporated, The Education Partnership Centre, Women Consortium of Nigeria, and Centre for Women's Health and Information.

Source: Google

About TEP Centre

The Education Partnership (TEP) Centre is Nigeria's pioneer education partnership organisation, specialising in the design, implementation, support, and evaluation of multi-sectoral partnership programs in the education sector. Its mission is to improve the overall design, implementation, and evaluation of education initiatives through effective, enduring, and scalable partnerships. As a support organisation to the Ogun home grown school feeding programme, TEP Centre uses open collaboration and partnership as a vehicle to deliver sustainable capacity development to the implementers of the programme at state and local government levels, in order to improve accountability and transparency.

The twin concepts of transparency and accountability are elements of good governance which create trust between the government and society. Both are critical for the efficient functioning of a modern economy and for fostering social well-being. In most societies, many powers are delegated to public authorities, who are obligated to provide some assurance to the society that delegated these powers to them. This social contract is based on the trust that the transfer of power is not only effective, but will not be abused (Carstens, 2005). The teeth actors of the home grown school feeding programme i.e. government officials, saddled with the responsibility to monitor and reduce the risk of corruption in the programme, must carry out their work in such a way that the citizens of the state trust that the activities of the government are in their best interest.

Source: Google



Importance of Transparency and Accountability in the Home Grown School Feeding Programme

The home grown school feeding programme is designed to not only benefit children but boost local economy and create more job opportunities across the food supply chain. Around 2,500 local women and 270,000 children benefited directly from the programme. A lack of accountability and transparency will not only short-change the intended beneficiaries; it would mean wasting public resources i.e. considerable financial commitment to the school feeding programme nationwide. The need for an effective monitoring system within the home grown school feeding programme is therefore critical. The technical capacity of the officials saddled with the responsibility to monitor the programme must be continually strengthened in order to effectively monitor the programme's implementation and ensure high quality service delivery.



2,500
Local women



270,000
Children

Why Capacity Development to Improve Accountability and Transparency?

Indeed, the international development community and the developing countries all tend to frequently invoke capacity problems to explain why policies fail to deliver or why development assistance is not leading to positive sustainable outcomes. The lack of good governance in much of the developing world has been shown to have corrosive effects on the development process. Such poor governance has been shown, among other things, to undermine democracy, subvert the rule of law, entrench corruption, scare off foreign investment and foreign aid, and obstruct the implementation of poverty alleviation and development policies. Improving the governance environment in the developing world is therefore a major priority on the development agenda and the capacity to do so must be enhanced (Hope, 2006).

Capacity development is not a stand-alone training intervention but rather a strategically coordinated set of activities aimed at individuals, institutions, and sectors. It is also about strengthening the performance capabilities of individuals, organisations, and societies.

Source: Google



263
Palliatives
Distribution

Source: Google



Our Approach

Since 2017, TEP Centre's approach to improve the capacity of the teeth actors in the home grown school feeding programme encompasses a fine mix of on-site trainings, continuous handholding and learning by doing.

Trainings and workshops

This involves designing and delivering a training curriculum to support the transfer of critical skills. This also incorporates knowledge exchange, participatory and problem solving activities with relevant case studies. This has been used consistently across the local government education districts in the state and the different ministries responsible for one part of the home grown school feeding programme or the other. We have held trainings on monitoring and evaluation for the state implementation team, the education secretaries/officers across the twenty local governments and the state ministry of agriculture teams (Fisheries and Veterinary services). In their own words, the trainings have opened their eyes to areas that have been overlooked in the programme but which are very critical to the success or failure of the HGSFP.

Mentoring/Handholding sessions

Asides the workshops which taught on monitoring and evaluation within the context of their work, TEP Centre developed monitoring tools for protein aggregators in collaboration with the departments of fisheries and veterinary services at the state ministry of agriculture. Mentoring/handholding has been very useful especially as it relates to monitoring of the protein aggregators who are active players within the programme. The team leads not only cascaded their learnings by creating structure to their monitoring efforts, they have also gone on to create training and coaching interventions for their staff members which is an important desired outcome. Our capacity development interventions incorporate site visits, collaborative monitoring visits to schools and aggregator plants to better entrench learning.

Source: Google

Learning by doing

With our technical support, the home grown team is currently putting together a standards manual which details the standards expected for effective implementation of the programme across all the different areas. The documents are explicit and would be made available to all relevant stakeholders. This would also ensure that this knowledge becomes institutional and it would not matter if an official is transferred out of the office. This learning model not only brings the concept to life but it also helps to see the real life context of concepts taught during the workshops. We have had collaborative monitoring visits to schools with the education secretaries across five local governments namely: Ijebu East, Ijebu North East, Ijebu Ode, Odogbolu and Sagamu. We also carried out site visits to fish and meat aggregator plants with the ministry of agriculture teams to do an actual field check/monitoring exercise.

Collaborating in response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

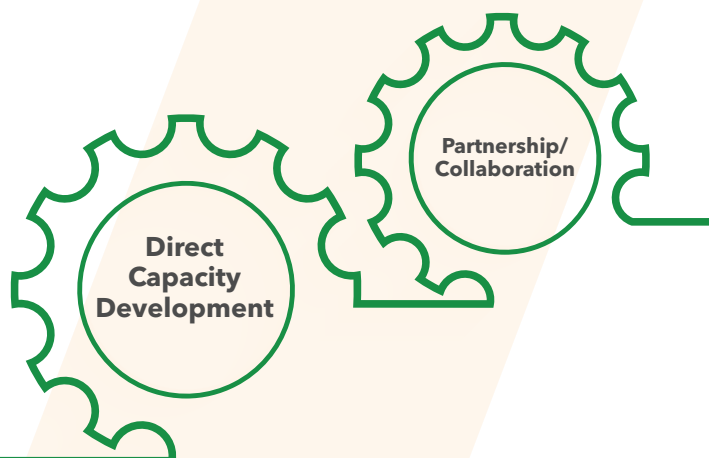
Following the COVID-19 outbreak in Nigeria which led to nation-wide closure of schools, the federal government responded by distributing food palliatives to specific household in states most affected by the pandemic including Ogun state. The food palliatives are distributed through mechanisms of the school feeding programme, so the palliatives get to households with children eligible for the school feeding programme. Consequently, TEP Centre collaborated with the Ogun HGSFP team to establish a safe and efficient process for distributing the palliatives. TEP Centre supported the Ogun HGSFP's safety efforts by printing banners with COVID-19 safety messaging for the 236 palliative distribution centres in Ogun state, as well as procuring personal protective equipment for volunteers and HGSFP team members. TEP Centre also developed a monitoring tool for civil society partners to monitor the Federal government-led food palliatives distribution programme for vulnerable communities in Ogun and Kaduna states.

"We have always monitored but not with intention and with the right tools, TEP Centre has helped us to articulate and put structure to our monitoring efforts" - Mr Ajayi, Director of Fisheries Services Ogun State Ministry of Agriculture.

"The importance of documentation cannot be overemphasized, the work that TEP has done with us have brought this to the fore" - Mr Agoyun, Head of M&E, Ogun Home Grown implementation team.



- Trainings and workshops:
- Mentoring/Handholding sessions:
- Learning by doing



Policy Recommendations

Based on insights gained from supporting the home grown school feeding programme in Ogun state, TEP Centre makes the following recommendations:

- The government should encourage the exchange of value without money which has been proven to deliver tremendous results as in the case of TEP Centre and the Ogun state HGSFP team at the state and local government levels. The relationship between TEP Centre and the Ogun HGSFP is a classic example of a public-private partnership which does not necessarily involve money.
- The government should incorporate capacity building into its work plan and it should always be planned for. This would ensure that knowledge is retained at the institutional level, rather than just at the individual level, retaining capacity in spite of the turnover of government officials.

References:

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Source: Google



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