



Ms. Ibukunoluwa Ajao, Team Lead on Agriculture and Agribusiness (right), during a session on mandates review for the Agric sector in Ogun State.

DAWN has derived multiple lessons from the partnership. "Our internal systems are now more coordinated, systematic and timely, and directed towards mandates and deliverables. Field experiences, facilitated by the partnership, have been particularly used to deepen theoretical knowledge and provide opportunity to gather primary data for professional use," said a Senior Associate working on the Health Desk, Ms. Damilola Araoye.

DAWN, with its improved capacity, now responds to requests from member states more competently. States increasingly believe DAWN can provide the answers and support they need, to enhance reforms and provide coordination of regional projects and programmes. Member states readily reach out to the Commission to help identify appropriate expertise to support reform initiatives across the region. "States are becoming increasingly comfortable with DAWN because of the exposure gained from its partner, PERL. Actors now consider the Commission as increasingly relevant to the development of the region", the DG of DAWN, Mr. Oyeleye confirmed.

The partnership has provided extensive visibility for the commission. As pointed out by an Investment and Economic Development Analyst, Mr. Olugbenga Wahab, "PERL took us through a learning curve with field experience and trainings. The trainings enhanced our skills while the field experiences gave us exposure to the governance actors we were yet to interact with. The exposure provided opportunities for DAWN and its staff to demonstrate competence. Having shown capabilities according to our mandate, states now believe in the capacity of the Commission to deliver. Though expectations continue to build up, we manage them and function within our mandate and resources."

"Before the partnership with PERL, DAWN worked predominantly with the political structures. PERL's coming on board brought expertise, exposed our staff to reform management and development strategies, and helped enhance our abilities to work with technocrats and other project implementers in the states."

Mr. Seye Oyeleye, Director-General, DAWN Commission

With PERL support, the Commission is fast becoming a knowledge hub for the Southwest. States now turn to DAWN Commission for answers on regional planning, development frameworks and regional Ease-of-Doing-Business opportunities. DAWN uses its needs-based approach to support the six states and provide information, access to expertise and pointers to areas of collaboration between and among states. According to Prince Adetayo Adeleke-Adedoyin, "DAWN is becoming the technical glue that binds the Southwest as PERL continues to build our capacity on stakeholder management, programme delivery, project management and knowledge management.

We are becoming the hub around which Southwest development revolves. Now, we are better able to connect states in the direction of integrated regional development."

DAWN, with its capacity, is now leading improvements in regional integration, seeking to reduce duplication of efforts among states and providing basis for more efficient coordination. In the process of working with PERL, DAWN is taking a central role in governance reforms in the Southwest. According to the commission's Team Lead for Agriculture and Agribusiness, Ms. Ibukunoluwa Ajao, "The mandates review, supported by PERL, helped identify governance overlaps in the agriculture sector within and among states. The review helped to deepen learning and regional integration, placing the Commission in the lead role. The Southwest now has an agriculture roadmap, with prospects of following it up with an implementation plan." Led by the Commission, the mandates review will go beyond the agriculture sector, following the region's development agenda. The DG of DAWN Commission, Mr. Oyeleye concludes that the partnership with PERL has been productive. "DAWN still gladly leverages on the work with PERL to signal to states that the Commission can be relied on, to enhance the Southwest integration agenda."

Other results of the partnership include the establishment of the Ogun State Public Service Transformation Office; the review and improvement of Office for Transformation, Strategy and Service Delivery in Ekiti; the innovative reflection session for governance actors in the region; and the Southwest Heads of Service Community of Practice. PERL continues to partner with relevant stakeholders across States and regions to enhance reforms and achieve accountable, responsive and capable government in Nigeria.



Ms. Damilola Araoye, a Senior Associate, Health Desk (right) and Mrs Titilope Oyeola, an Associate, Governance Desk, at a reflection meeting for partners, organised by DAWN Commission and supported by PERL.

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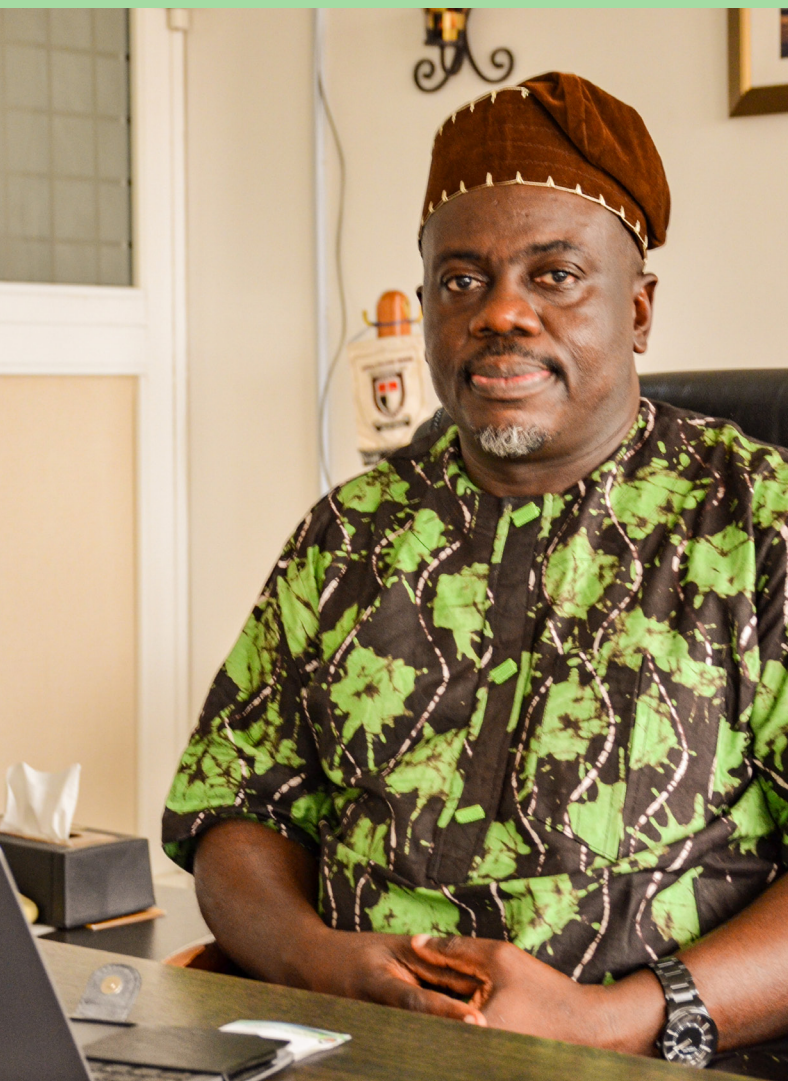
Partnership

Building Stronger
Institutions Through
Partnership



Building Stronger Institutions Through Partnership

The backbone of any institution is the capacity of its staff. This is the foundation behind the support by the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) programme on governance reforms and institutional strengthening at state, regional and Federal levels. In the Southwest region, the programme has built partnership with reform agencies and knowledge hubs, including the Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission. The partnership with DAWN Commission started in 2016 when states in the region were supported to map and evaluate good practices, which were showcased at an innovations conference supported by PERL in February 2017.



Mr. Seye Oyeleye, the Director General of DAWN Commission, believes that the partnership between PERL and DAWN is helping the Commission to carry out its mandate of Southwest regional integration.

The PERL programme collaborates with the Commission because both entities share a common vision and geographical mandate. The PERL Southwest Hub and DAWN Commission operate in six states of Southwest Nigeria: Lagos, Ekiti, Ogun, Oyo, Ondo and the State of Osun. The governments of the six Southwest states established the commission in the year 2013 as a dedicated coordinating agency that facilitates the delivery of the development aspirations of the region, using locally-led approaches. The mandate of DAWN Commission, as it relates to the six states, is to coordinate regional programmes and projects, which include reforms in the Southwest for sustainable development and regional integration.

According to the Director General (DG) of DAWN Commission, Mr. Seye Oyeleye, "Regional integration promotes economies of scale and reduces the high cost of governance; enhances knowledge and experience-sharing among member states and improves ease-of-doing-business." The mandate of regional integration for sustainable development and improved governance is the meeting point between PERL and DAWN.

For partners to work well together, there must be mutuality and the capacity to co-function. It was agreed that PERL would work with the DAWN Commission to enhance the capacity of the staff to enable it to achieve the demands of its organizational mandate and support the drive for reforms in the region.

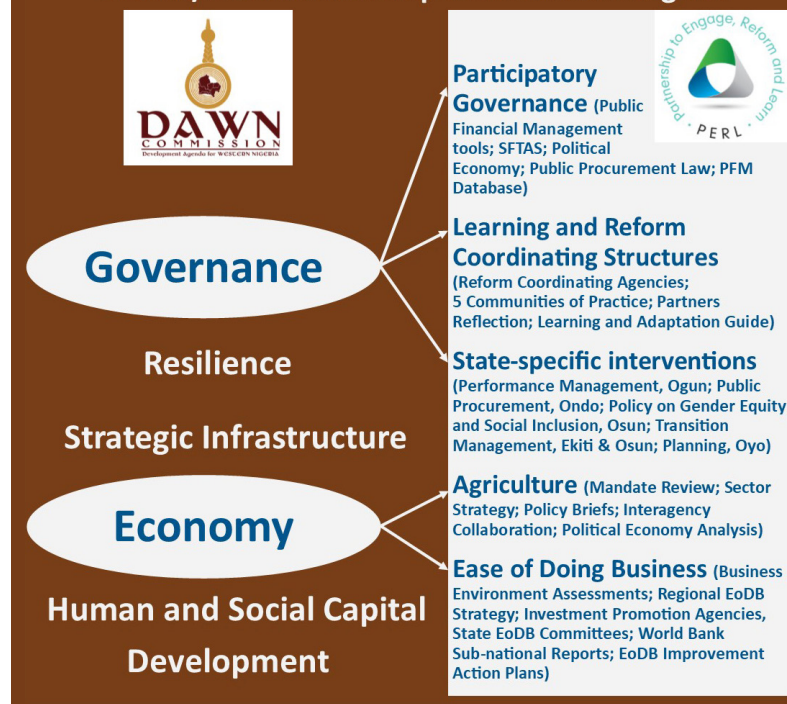
Since the inception of the PERL programme, DAWN staff at various levels received training and capacity building on partnership facilitation, reporting, reform coordination, knowledge management, stakeholder mapping and development monitoring and evaluation. As expressed by DAWN's Head of Special Projects and Funding, Prince Adetayo Adeleke Adedoyin, "PERL helped build the capacity of staff in areas that were most needed. The programme provided a huge learning curve, enriching the capacity of the Commission, causing DAWN to enjoy a higher esteem and standing among its stakeholders." Mr Seye Oyeleye, the DG of DAWN reconfirmed, "Before the partnership with PERL, DAWN worked predominantly with the political structures. PERL's coming on board brought expertise, exposed our staff to reform management and development strategies, and helped enhance our abilities to work with technocrats and other project implementers in the states."

With DAWN staff increasingly demonstrating professional capacity in diverse fields, the Commission rapidly became an institution greatly regarded within the region. "DAWN, with strengthened capacity of its staff, began to reach out to other agencies, to build the capacity of those agencies, particularly those within the region for broader impact in governance reforms", Prince Adetayo added.

According to DAWN's Analyst on Governance and Inclusive Institutions, Mr. Abiodun Oladipo, "Apart from the trainings and capacity building received due to the partnership, active involvement of DAWN staff within PERL's work has provided learning through experience. Working with PERL has opened opportunities to engage more professionally at policy, decision-making and implementation levels of government. We now use the methodologies and skills acquired to engage in other aspects of DAWN's work for the development of the region."

The partnership is yielding results that indicate the potential for sustainability of reforms within the Southwest. DAWN now has the capacity to actively engage with the Communities of Practice (CoPs), supported by PERL. The CoPs include that for Heads of Service, Commissioners of Economic Planning and Budget, Heads of Reform Coordinating Agencies and Regional Ease-of-Doing Business Committees.

DAWN/PERL Partnership in Southwest Nigeria



According to a Senior Associate on Investment and Economic Development, Mr. Tosin Oke, "DAWN is becoming stronger and increasingly competent to deliver on its mandate to sustain ongoing governance reforms." "Because of the Commission's increased capacity, states consider DAWN as a source of technical support. Staff of the Commission now use skills learned through the partnership to reach out to member states," Mr. Oke added. The commission also supports regional reflection sessions as a learning platform for state and regional reform actors.



L-R: Mr. Oluwatosin Oke, a Senior Associate on Investment and Economic Development; Mr. Abiodun Oladipo, an Analyst on Governance and Inclusive Institutions; Mr. Olugbenga Wahab, an Analyst on Investment and Economic Development and Ms. Titilope Oyeola, an Associate, Governance Desk, during a planning meeting with PERL.

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Mr. Abiodun Oladipo, An Analyst on Governance and Inclusive Institutions, DAWN Commission