



NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM

REPORT ON THE INITIATION / SENSITIZATION WORKSHOP ON THE STATE PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (SPRM) IN ANAMBRA STATE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14TH AND THURSDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER, 2011 IN AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

1. INTRODUCTION

The State Peer Review Mechanism (SPRM) is a unique innovation by Nigeria State Governors geared towards assisting states in Nigeria to accelerate the pace of their development through periodic reviews of progress in the implementation of their development policies, plans and programmes.

The initiation and stakeholders' workshop in States marks the official flag-off of the SPRM. Its primary objective is to sensitize state stakeholders on the methodology, objectives, questions and indicators of the assessment process. The Initiation/ Sensitization Workshop for Anambra State was organised by the Anambra State Government in collaboration with the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat and facilitated by the State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) on 14th and 15th September, 2011.

In what follows, we succinctly present highlights of the event.

2. PREPARATORY MEETING

The SPRM Team comprising staff of NGF and SPARC arrived in Anambra State on Tuesday 13th September. Thereafter, it held a meeting with Professor Chinyere Stella Okunna, Anambra State Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget and her team.

The Commissioner indicated that some amendments were effected on the programme of events for the Opening Ceremony to accommodate key stakeholders in the state omitted from the original programme. Specifically, the President-General of Town Unions (ASATU) and ASATU Women Wing have been added to the list of Stakeholders" that will present Goodwill

Messages. Dr. Afeikhena Jerome, the SPRM Coordinator, congratulated Anambra State on being the first State to initiate the SPRM initiation/ Sensitization Workshop for Stakeholders' and expressed optimism that the state would complete the State Self-Assessment Report (SSAR) and State Programme of Action (SPoA) within the stipulated 6 months period. He appealed to the State officials to be as objective as possible in drafting the SSAR and SPoA as the exercise does not rank States but rather documents best practices as well as the areas of challenges inherent in States with a view to overcoming them Professor Chinyere Stella Okunna expressed Anambra State's readiness to develop the SPoA and SSAR and appealed to the SPRM team to simplify the methodologies and indicators during presentation to the State actors so as to carry them along. The team thereafter inspected the facilities to be utilised for the opening ceremony of the workshop.

3. OPENING CEREMONY

More than two thousand participants attended the opening ceremony of the Workshop which was held at Anambra State Women Development Centre, Awka. These included His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Rotimi Amaechi, Governor of Rivers State and Chairman of the NGF, represented by His Excellency, Dr. Emmanuel E. Uduaghan, Governor of Delta State; His Excellency, Mr Peter Obi, Governor of Anambra State and Vice Chairman, NGF; His Excellency, Mr Emeka Sibeudu, Deputy Governor of Anambra State; Rt. Hon. Princess Chinwe Nwaebili, Speaker of Anambra State House of Assembly; Hon. Justice Peter Nnanna Umeadi, Chief Judge of Anambra State and HRM Alfred Nnaemeka Achebe, Obi of Onitsha.

3.1 OPENING REMARKS

Professor Chinyere Stella Okunna, Anambra State Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, in her welcome remarks explained that through the Anambra Integrated Development Strategy (ANIDS), the obi administration had put in place processes for planning, budgeting and implementation of projects in the state. She reiterated the importance of the SPRM review process and appealed to the participants to make the most of the opportunity provided by the exercise and ensure that they are fully involved in the workshop. She indicated that Anambra State people are noted for their resourcefulness and this would be brought to bear in the exercise. His Excellency, Rt. Hon. Rotimi Chibiuke Amaechi, Governor of Rivers State and Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, represented by His Excellency, Dr. Emmanuel E. Uduaghan Governor of Delta State, in his opening remarks, thanked the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank for their efforts at encouraging the development of States through the SPRM.

The Governor noted that the SPRM owe its origin to the National Economic Council (NEC) decision which implored the 36 states to fashion out a peer review mechanism which the NGF decided to model after the African Union (AU) Peer Review exercise, The process has been

endorsed by all the 36 Governors and he was optimistic that through the process, States would learn from each other through experience sharing and the reinforcement of commendable innovative practices.

Dr Uduaghan indicated further that ~~that~~ the overarching objective of the workshop was to sensitize stakeholders on the methodologies, objectives and indicators of the assessment instrument. He also dwelt on the need for closer interaction between Delta and Anambra States as neighbouring states. In conclusion, he emphasized that the SPRM is not a scorecard or finger-pointing exercise, but an instrument for advancing governance and development in States. The workshop was therefore, an invitation to all stakeholders to collaborate on a common platform to uplift development in States in a non-adversarial manner.

3.2 GOODWILL MESSAGES

Goodwill Messages were presented by the following:

- Mr Julius Court, Head of Governance, DFID Nigeria, on behalf of the DFID, observed that the relationship between the United Kingdom and Nigeria was waxing stronger by the day. He also appreciated the partnership between the DFID and the NGF, stressing that the opportunities and challenges of the SPRM would greatly enhance the development of states. He reiterated the commitment of DFID to further support the process as it unfolds.
- Dr. John Litwack, Lead Economist, World Bank, Nigeria, on behalf of the World Bank, emphasized that the World Bank was interested in state-level development policies in Nigeria. He noted further that the SPRM could be a critical instrument for improving governance and development in States. The NGF is in an ideal position to facilitate information exchange and disseminate best practices. In this regard, the World Bank as a knowledge institution would be willing to partner with the Nigeria Governors' Forum. He also informed the gathering that the World Bank in partnership with DFID is introducing a new approach to supporting development initiatives in Nigerian states. Under the proposed Multi-State Development Policy Operation, the World Bank will provide budget support to some states selected through a competition.

Other stakeholders who gave goodwill messages included:

- Ohannaeze Nnaemeka Achebe, the Obi of Onitsha represented traditional rulers. In his goodwill message, he indicated that there has been excessive preoccupation with inputs in measuring development performance in Nigeria. In this regard, he expressed the hope that the peer review indices would measure the outputs and outcomes of government expenditure in various sectors rather than inputs. He also observed that

Delta and Anambra States have a lot of economic potential and suggested that both States should combine forces to transform the lower Niger. This could be facilitated through the establishment of a development commission.

- Rt. Hon. Princess Chinwe Nwaebili, Speaker, Anambra State House of Assembly represented the State House of Assembly. She noted that cooperation by all agencies of government was necessary for peace and tranquillity which would in turn facilitate development.
- Justice Peter Nnanna, Chief Judge, Anambra State represented the judiciary. In his speech, he observed that meaningful development cannot be achieved without according priority to quick and effective dispute resolution mechanism.
- Bishop Dr. Ephraim Ndife, President of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Anambra Chapter who represented religious organisations in the State noted that the church has a stake in the development of the state.
- Ohanaeze Phillip Attamuo who represented Ndigbo community in Anambra State commended the SPRM process as an innovation by the NGF.
- Dr. Dozie Ikedife, President, Elders Council, Anambra described the SPRM as a paradigm akin to a shift from analogue to digital method of governance.
- The Organised Private sector represented by Engr. Dr. Ajulu Uzodike, pledged acceptance of the programme and commitment in providing the necessary information that may be relevant to the assessment.
- The youths represented by Dr. Okey Ikechukwu noted that the SPRM provides an opportunity for unbiased assessment of performance.
- Mr Mike Opia on behalf of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) pledged their support for the SPRM process in the State.
- The physically challenged in the State, represented by Gloria Nwafor, disclosed that the foundation for the physically challenged in the state has all the prerequisite information on issues pertaining to people with disability in the state.
- Other representatives of Stakeholders that spoke include Mr Denzer Udeozor, Chairman of Njikoka Local Government Area; Elder Chris Elwemunor, Deputy President

of Anambra State Association of Town Unions (ASATU); Dr. Mrs. Chinelo Okechukwu, ASATU Women Wing and Nwabufor Nwankwo, representing the youth. They all pledged to support the SPRM process in the state.

3.3 PRESENTATION ON THE SPRM PROCESS

Professor Alex Gboyega, on behalf of the SPRM Team made a presentation on "the States Peer Review Mechanism (SPRM) Process ". In his presentation, he elucidated on the fundamental details of the SPRM Process including: Assessment Instruments, Guiding Principles, the State Programme of Action (SPoA), Stages of the SPRM, Types of Review and Periodicity, Scope of the SPRM Framework, Sectors of Assessment, Main Deliverables, and the Benefits of the SPRM to the State Government.

3.4. ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, MR. PETER OBI

In his address, His Excellency, Mr Peter Obi indicated that he is not surprised that Anambra State was selected as a pioneer state for the project, noting that through the Anambra Integrated Development Strategy (ANIDS), the state had moved up in the development chart. He recalled that donor agencies were moving out of the state years ago which he said was as a result of crisis occasioned by politicians, but now the ~~story is different.~~ *reverse is the case.*

Governor Obi reiterated his commitment to good governance in general and the resolve of Anambra State to ensure the success of the Peer Review Exercise in the State. While giving assurances of his administration's commitment towards the success of the Peer Review exercise in the state, he stressed the need for continued collaboration with non-state actors.

3.5. VOTE OF THANKS

The opening ceremony was concluded with a vote of thanks by Alhaji L.O.T. Shittu, Executive Director, Strategy and Research, NGF. He thanked the Organisers for an extremely well organised event and commended Anambra State for the energy and enthusiasm displayed as well as the large turnout for the workshop.

4. MEETING WITH NON-STATE ACTORS

A follow-up meeting was held with the Non-state Actors and it was attended by about 45 participants. The session was facilitated by Professor Alex Gboyega and Mr Joe Abah. Among the issues discussed were:

- Synergies between the Government and Non-State Actors in the State;

- Expectations from the SPRM; and
- Modalities for participation.

Participants were sensitized on the need to be fully involved in the development of the State. The SPRM Team noted that Non-State Actors have a lot of influence over the people. Hence, it is imperative to take advantage of such influence and be fully involved in the decision making process in the State.

Participants raised some concerns concerning the following:

- The sustainability of the SPRM project compared to NEPAD's APRM;
- The reality of their involvement in the decision making process of the State;
- The stage at which they would be involved in the decision making process; and,
- The assurance that their input and recommendations would be included in the SSAR and SPoA respectively.

The SPRM Team reassured the participants that the SPRM process guarantees a transparent process of assessment. At the end of this session, the Non-State actors commended the SPRM initiative and pledged their commitment to participate in it in a non-adversarial manner.

5. TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON THE SPRM

Day 2 was devoted to a technical workshop for public servants including the Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Directors of Planning, Research and Strategy (PRS), Permanent Secretaries, and Heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). These are officials that would drive the SPRM exercise in the State.

The workshop commenced with an overview of the SPRM Process in Anambra State by Professor Olaseni Akintola Bello, Anambra State SPRM Coordinator, He highlighted a number of measures taken by the State government to ensure an inclusive and participatory government. They include:

- The formation of a Budget Forum, which comprises both state and non-state actors;
- The Citizen Report Card, which facilitates accountability, access and satisfaction by providing Anambra people with the opportunity of assessing the service delivery strategy of the government. This was done in the areas of Waste Management, Health and Education;
- Poverty Mapping;
- Evidence-based Policy Assessment;
- The Medium Term Sector Strategy (MTSS); and
- Anambra State Strategic Plan.

Notwithstanding these landmark achievements, he noted that unavailability of primary data may delay the SPRM process in the state.

5.2. TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS

Professor Gboyega gave a presentation on the SPRM Process, explaining the Objectives, Guiding Principles, the Unique Characteristics of the SPRM, the Management Structure, the Stages of the SPRM Process, Types of Review, the Main Deliverables (which include the SPoA, SSAR and SPRR), and the Benefits of the SPRM.

He reiterated that state-actors had the responsibility of ensuring the success of the SPRM in the State, and implored them to collaborate with the Non-state actors to make the exercise a success. They were also assured of readily available technical support from the DFID and the NGF Secretariat.

Mr. Chinedu Eze made a presentation on the "Scope of Framework of Indicators." His presentation dissected the major technicalities involved in the process namely:

1. The Framework of Indicators which covers:
 - I. Policy and Strategy
 - II. Resource Management
 - III. Service Delivery
 - IV. Citizen Engagement, Social Inclusion and Protection
 - V. Monitoring and Evaluation
2. Thematic Areas:
 - I. Health
 - II. Education
 - III. Agriculture
 - IV. Infrastructure
 - V. Environment
3. Assessment Area
 - I. Policy and Strategy/ Monitoring & Evaluation (21 indicators)
 - II. Economic Development (8 indicators)
 - III. Public Finance Management (29 indicators)
 - IV. Human Resource Management (13 indicators)
 - V. Education (29 indicators)
 - VI. Health (36 indicators)
 - VII. Environment (38 indicators)
 - VIII. Agriculture (38 indicators)
 - IX. Infrastructure (17 indicators)

X. Citizen participation, social inclusion and security (34 indicators)

4. Key Elements of Assessment

- I. Existence and application of legal and regulatory framework
- II. State Government performance
- III. Efficiency and effectiveness
- IV. Sustainability

He emphasized the fact that the indicators were developed to highlight the areas that need improvement and give a clear sense of direction in policy making.

Mr Myani Bukar's presentation was on Content Management System of the SPRM. This bordered on the components of the Content Management System, the main sections, the knowledge management cycle, and the benefits of the Knowledge Management System to the SPRM.

The final presentation was by Dr. Afeikhen Jerome on the methodology for preparing the State Self- Assessment Report (SSAR) and State Programme of Action (SPoA). He indicated that the SSAR should document the findings on all the indicators by thematic areas, clearly defining achievements, best practices, challenges and recommendations. The findings and recommendation would then provide the basis for the SPOA which should be prioritised and well costed. He also implored them to ensure that the reports reflect the views of Anambra people generally and not the government in power.

5. POST-WORKSHOP/ DEBRIEFING MEETING

The SPRM Team had a brief meeting at the end of the event with the Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, in which it gave specific recommendations on the flag-off of the SSAR and SPoA. It was suggested that the Commissioner should:

- Constitute an SPRM Unit, a Steering Committee and a Technical team in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget; with members drawn from the main assessment areas. The team should also include 3 or 4 commissioners and 2 members from the CSOs. Other members would include, the Speaker of the State House of Assembly, one representative of the youth, women group and the town union association respectively and a Content Manager;
- Decide on the segmentation of Non-State actors and schedule periodic meetings with them;
- Prepare a feasible and defensible budget for the Self-Assessment phase and forward to the Governor;
- Obtain a letter from the Governor, undertaking the SPRM process and requesting for access to information from MDAs;

- Ensure a detailed documentation of the process, starting from the planning and initiation of the stakeholders' workshop. As the pioneer State, they could share their experiences with other states;
- Engage with other ministries to produce individual draft reports;
- Upload reports on the State website and make it more functional;
- Liaise with other organisations such as the World Bank, National Population Commission (NPC), National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Board of Internal Revenue Service (BIRS) etc. to collate data/ information needed for the assessment;
- Develop a roadmap for implementation immediately and forward to the NGF Secretariat.

8. CONCLUSION

The workshop was a resounding success. The Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget and her team, as well as the major stakeholders responded to it with considerable zeal. The Commissioner was assured of the readily available assistance from the NGF Secretariat, as the team anticipates that the SSAR would be completed within the stipulated time.

At the end of the 2-day workshop, the following resolutions were reached, as stipulated in the communiqué:

- Anambra State, as the pioneer State in the SPRM, is fully committed to the process;
- There is need for continuous sensitisation of stakeholders on the SPRM to enhance understanding of the concept;
- The State Government was enjoined to fund the SPRM adequately;
- Since Anambra State is committed to meeting the 6 months deadline for the completion of the Self-Assessment Phase of the SPRM, the State should immediately develop a roadmap for the implementation of the mechanism.