

Nigeria's State Peer Review Mechanism

Following a decision by Nigeria's National Economic Council, the UK's Department for International Development has been supporting the Nigeria Governors' Forum in developing the State Peer Review Mechanism (SPRM). Using ideas from the African Peer Review Mechanism developed by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the SPRM is the first of its kind at a sub-national level and is an innovative approach to accelerating the development of Nigeria's States.

It is a systematic examination of the performance of each State by other States, with the ultimate goal being to help every State improve its policymaking, adopt best practice and comply with established standards and principles. A set of comprehensive guidelines supporting the SPRM was launched in May 2011, and the first pilots began in mid-2011.



Communicating good practice.

History of the SPRM

The beginnings of the SPRM date back to 2007, when the National Economic Council (NEC) agreed that the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) should take the lead in developing and implementing a peer review mechanism. This followed two rounds of preparation of the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (SEEDS) in 2005 and 2006, which were subsequently discontinued.

Almost simultaneously with the launching of the SEEDS benchmarking exercise, NEPAD's African Peer

Review Mechanism (APRM) process was launched in Nigeria. Although this was focused primarily at the national level, States were involved to some extent in developing a National Programme of Action (NPOA). However, by 2009, only a handful of States had established NEPAD offices.

The NGF charged its secretariat with developing the SPRM, and during 2009 and 2010, early assessments and reviews were completed in all of Nigeria's States. These reviews provided an opportunity for the States to showcase their achievements. Furthermore, the States were able to share their areas of challenge with the NGF review team.

During 2010, the SPRM was developed fully into a set of comprehensive guidelines, which were formally launched in May 2011.

How does the SPRM work?

The first step is for an individual State to assess itself against a set of agreed benchmarks. The process is participatory and involves different stakeholders, both from within and outside government. The result is a report that highlights the strengths and weaknesses of development in the State. This is accompanied by a second report – a remedial action plan.

The strengths of each State are then shared with other States and quality assurance is provided by a review panel made up of national and international experts.

How will the findings be shared?

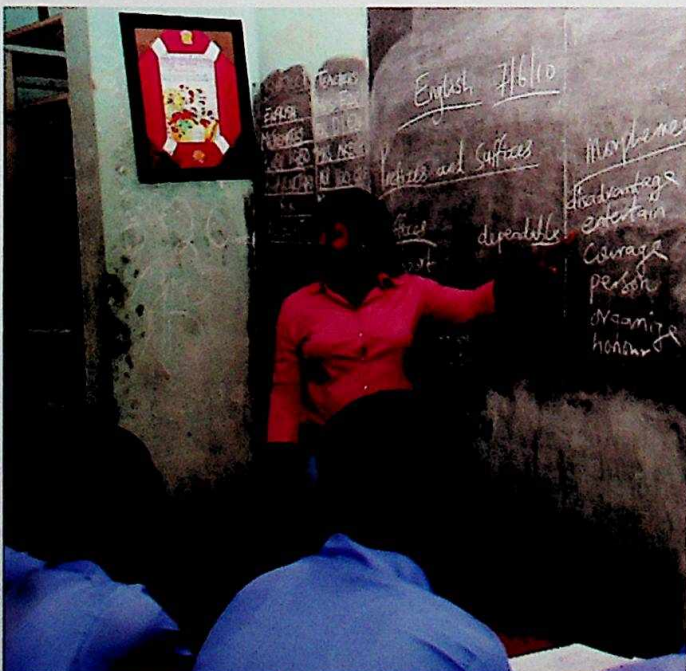
The NGF recognises itself as a 'knowledge organisation'. It recognises the need to develop a system for sharing the strengths of the States across the federation, so it has begun to develop a content management system. This will be specially tailored so that information can be easily posted and retrieved and notifications sent out to users by email and SMS. Access can be expanded as required and the system will be used to share successful technical approaches, State development plans and other information, such as key speeches, State Bills and budgets.

The objectives of the SPRM

The overarching objective of the SPRM is to assist States in improving their development performance through periodic reviews of their achievements and through challenges as they seek to implement their development policies, plans and programmes. The areas covered in the reviews are health, education, economic development, infrastructure, agriculture and the environment, as well as cross-cutting themes such as public financial management, policy and strategy, human resource management, monitoring and evaluation, citizen participation, social inclusion and protection. Through participation in the SPRM, State Governors are able to learn from their peers about innovative and good practices that they can adapt and adopt in their own States.

The SPRM has additional objectives:

- Promotion of co-operation between States;
- Promotion of good governance through the enhancement of transparency, accountability, participation and communication;

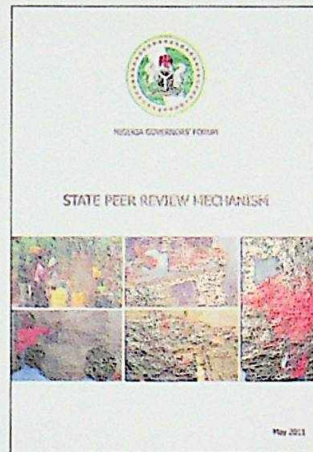


Better delivery of services in education.

Achieving better service delivery nationwide (timeliness, quality and public access). This is achieved, on one hand, through the progressive improvement of policies, planning, budgeting and public service reform, and on the other, through service areas such as education, health, roads and agriculture;

Enhancement of Federal/State co-operation and collaboration through the participation of national/Federal organisations in the SPRM process. This includes the sharing of review reports with relevant national/Federal institutions, especially the NEC, the National Planning Commission, NEPAD and the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs.

SPRM publication



A recently published document (left) sets out the background and process of the SPRM. It describes the leadership and management structures and contains a comprehensive framework of indicators against which States assess themselves. It provides comprehensive guidelines for each indicator and suggests a structure for the resulting reports.

When will the SPRM start?

The first two pilot reviews began in mid-2011 in Anambra and **Ekiti State**, testing the guidelines launched in May 2011 and identifying and making improvements. The NGF is confident that, with the start of the SPRM, the sharing of new ideas by all States in the Federation will lead to better lives for their citizens.

For more information about the SPRM

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