Anticorruption: On a steady course

Problem description
Of Nigeria’s 178 million people, 64% live in poverty. Despite oil revenues, Nigeria’s human development indicators are worse than in comparable countries. Poverty and underdevelopment are widely attributed to poor governance, and the misuse of resources is one of the biggest impediments to public service delivery in Nigeria. According to the World Wide Governance Indicators, Nigeria is globally rated in the bottom quarter on indicators of government effectiveness and control of corruption. Under the Transparency International Perception Survey for 2010, Nigeria scored just 2.4 out of 10 and was ranked 134 out of 138 countries for corruption.

SPARC approach
As a programme operating inside the governments of ten different states, SPARC does not explicitly seek to identify and address corruption as this could be confrontational and counterproductive. The programme has two approaches – first, closing down the spaces that facilitate corruption by tightening procedures relating to the management of public finance and the civil service; second, improving the robustness of planning frameworks and improving transparency and accountability in planning. The programme works very closely with State Accountability and Voice Initiative on transparency and accountability, and with them through State Houses of Assembly to strengthen oversight.
Results from tightening financial management

- Introducing more detailed and transparent Budget Classifications and Charts of Accounts in almost all states has made it less easy for governments to hide away receipts and expenditures – this has been particularly successful in Jigawa, Kaduna, and Yobe – the latter produced its 2014 budget in compliance with international standards.
- Reducing budget sizes to restrict governments’ ability to enter into unaffordable contractual commitments – in Niger State, the 2013 budget was £44 million less than that of 2012, which was a further £144 million less than that of 2011.
- Improving controls over payrolls, resulting in weeding out ghost workers – in Katsina and Zamfara states this saved £7 million in 2013.
- Tightening controls and introducing due process in procurement – bid reviews alone have saved £150 million in Enugu since 2012.
- Reducing the numbers of bank accounts government operates helps to restrict moneys being lost, forgotten about or stolen – in 2010 in Jigawa, over 500 accounts were closed and £7.6 million returned to treasury, whilst in 2014 in Enugu, £2 million has been identified in 296 accounts which will be closed – £700,000 has already been returned to treasury.

Results from transparent and accountable planning

- Opening the doors for civil society engagement in planning to promote transparency and make it less easy for governments to syphon expenditures into non-essential areas – for example, the robust work of the Gender Working Group in Kaduna.
- Linking state wide development plans with sector strategies for health, education and other essential services, and linking these plans with state budgets, making the planning framework less susceptible to interference – for example, the strong state wide Comprehensive Development Framework in Jigawa, backed up with budget execution rates of over 90%.
- Improved monitoring and evaluation, and performance reviews, and transparently using evidence and data so that government cannot escape poor performance – for example, work on Results Based Management Frameworks in Niger; Key Performance Indicators and a comprehensive Management Information System in Jigawa and Lagos; timely production of data, such as government accounts in Kaduna, Lagos and Yobe.

Contact details

SPARC has eleven offices in Nigeria.
For more information on our work:
Email: info@sparc-nigeria.com

Or

at ask@sparc-nigeria.com
Telephone: +234 (0) 809 564 3426
Visit our website: www.sparc-nigeria.com

Find us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/SparcGovernanceNews

The opinions expressed in this leaflet are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department for International Development.