

PERL-ARC: WORKING WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY AND APPROACH PAPER

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



Background and Introduction

The Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) is a five-year Public Sector Accountability and Governance programme, funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). The focus of PERL is to support reforms around how governments organise their core business of making, implementing, tracking and accounting for policies, plans and budgets used in delivering public goods.

The PERL programme is being delivered through three 'pillars' which plan and act together to support sustainable service delivery reforms: Pillar 1. Accountable, Responsive & capable government (ARC); Pillar 2. Engaged citizens (ECP) and Pillar 3. Learning, Evidencing and Advocacy Partnership (LEAP)

This approach paper describes PERL ARC's approach to collaboration and technical assistance between the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) and the PERL ARC programme. It also highlights and underlines PERL ARC's engagement with the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan and the National Strategy for Public Service Reform within the budget framework facilitating a joined up approach in supporting public service reform and improved service delivery; and therefore ensuring better and more effective coherence and coordination.

During the inception phase of the programme, a high-level engagement dialogue was undertaken by PERL to identify government priorities at the Federal level. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was developed between PERL and the Bureau for Public Service Reforms, to guide PERL's engagement with the Federal Government of Nigeria. Given PERL's limited resources, the main focus has been to support core governance reforms and issues that are likely to have the biggest delivery payoff for the country, which have included:

- a) Catalytic process and behaviour change reforms that improve how the government works to plan and deliver change (for example; how government performs budgeting and economic policymaking, planning, performance management and delivery tracking)
- b) Strengthening processes and mechanisms that enhance linkages across the tiers of government (e.g. National Economic Council cross-tier social protection and service delivery, citizen based performance and accountability tracking)

The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan

The Federal Government of Nigeria has articulated a medium term Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP); 2017-2020. The vision of the plan is to promote national prosperity and an efficient, dynamic and self-reliant economy to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every citizen on the basis of social justice and equality of status and opportunity.



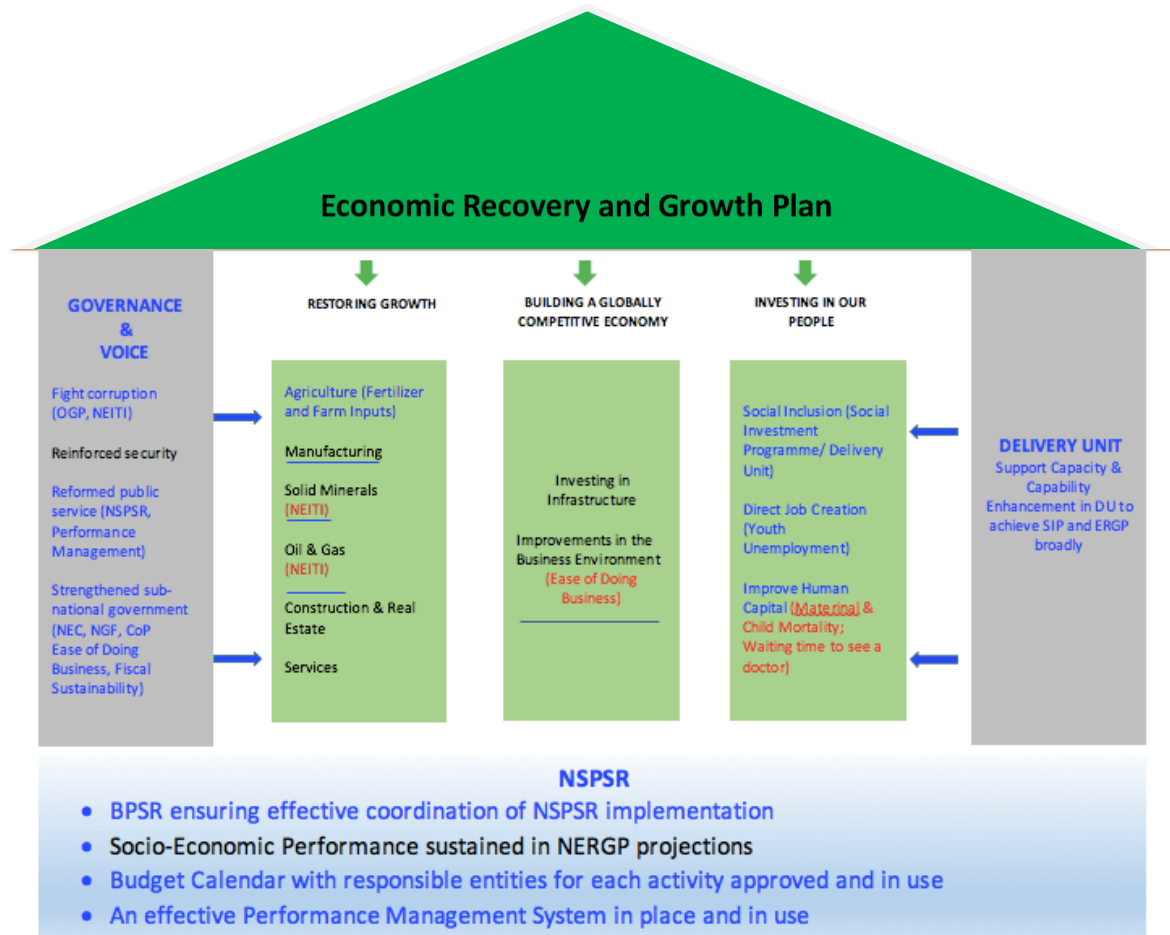
Economic Recovery & Growth Plan 2017-2020

These objectives are underpinned by a focus on good governance and a focus on effective delivery. In addition, a number of priorities have been identified by government within each of these strategic objectives.

Given the importance of the successful implementation of the ERGP, a special delivery unit is to drive its implementation; the unit will closely monitor implementation of the priority initiatives, evaluate progress against targets and milestones, provide early warning signals of potential risks, and work closely with MDAs to articulate actionable measures to be taken against identified constraints and provide periodic updates to Mr. President. There are ongoing efforts to merge into the existing Presidential Delivery Unit currently housed within the Office of the Vice President with which PERL is currently actively engaged.

The diagram below indicates areas of PERL engagement with core engagement in **blue**, linked engagement underlined in blue and emerging activities in **red**.

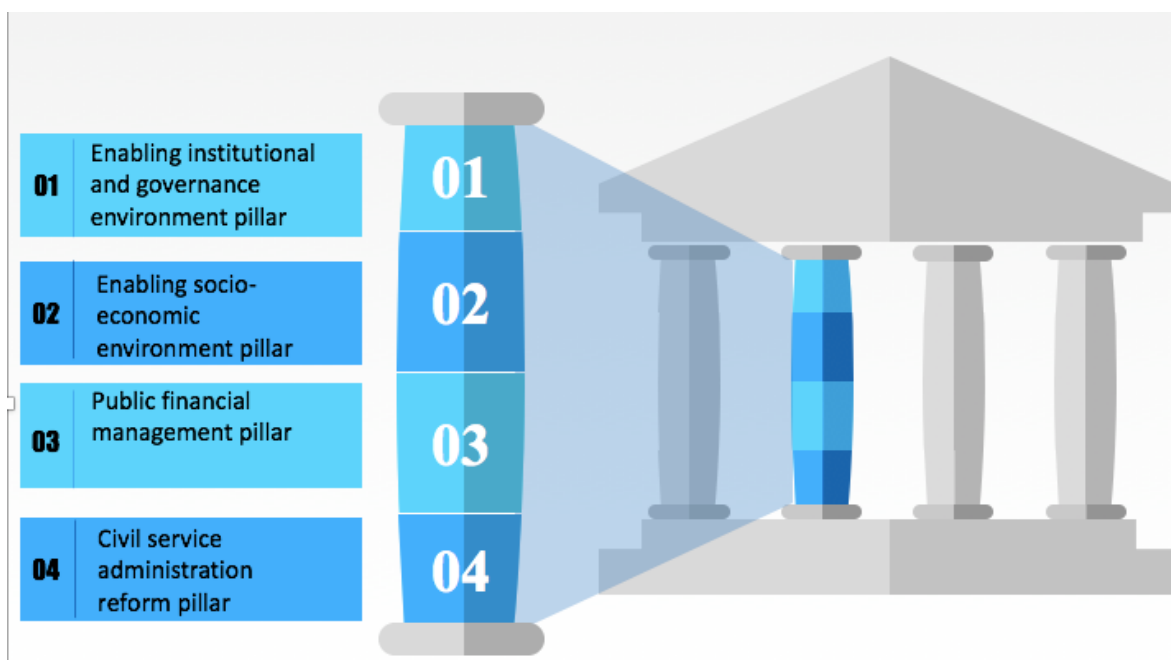
PERL's Engagement with the ERGP and NSPSR



The National Strategy for Public Service Reforms (NSPSR)

The National Strategy for Public Service Reform (NSPSR) provides a common vision and long-term agenda to guide the rebuilding and transformation of the federal public service. For the short to medium term the NSPSR is focused on providing the administrative capacity for implementing the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan and ensuring consistency in service delivery across the public service. Figure 3 below demonstrates the four Pillars of the NSPSR.

The 4 Pillars of the NSPSR



There are significant linkages within and across these pillars.

- **Pillar 1** represents the wider governance and institutional environment in which public service reform is undertaken. Reforms under Pillar 1 are aimed at ensuring that the governance and institutional environment is conducive to reforms in the public service.
- **Pillar 2** is at the core of the reform programme. It reflects the strategic thrust of the ERGP and is focused on achieving the overall social and economic development of Nigeria through policies, programmes, and the provision of public goods and services.
- **Pillars 3 and 4** are more internally focused on the workings of the public service. The public financial management pillar aims to promote fiscal discipline and prudent financial resource use to oil the machinery of government to deliver on its various mandates. The management of the civil service (human resources and operational processes) in Pillar 4 ensures that human capital essential for operating and running government is adequate both in proportions and quality, and is sufficiently motivated to deliver the best performance in productivity and service delivery to citizens. The Civil Service Reform strategy (Office of the Head of the Civil Service) is integral to this process. PERL is engaged in all 4 pillars of the NSPSR.

Reforms need to be taken forward in all four pillars in a coordinated manner, if the overall vision of NSPSR is to be achieved. For each of the four pillars of the strategy, there is a clearly stated development objective, as well as key target results to be achieved through a number of building blocks. PERL will seek synergies and work with the convergences this platform provides.

PERL ARC's Strategic Approach

Taken together, the ERGP and NSPSR provide a holistic framework together with a clear set of Federal Government of Nigeria priorities to guide PERL ARC's engagement and prioritisation.

PERL ARC is already substantially engaged in a significant number of areas within this framework and is working to ensure coordination and coherence across its areas of engagement and opportunities for collaboration and convergence with other DFID programmes (PropCom on Agriculture); as well as other development partners (World Bank on Ease of Doing Business).

The diagram below, illustrates and highlights some of the specific activities in which PERL is involved across the strategic objectives of the ERGP and the NSPSR.

PERL's Engagement and Work at the Federal Level



Other examples of PERL's work at the Federal level include:

- **Strengthening budget processes:** Facilitating the strengthening of policy, plans, budget, and performance management linkages through work with the Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Budget Office of the Federation and other relevant MDAs. Support is being provided to development of medium term sector strategy (MTSS) for sectors/MDAs, linked to high-level goals in the ERGP. These MTSSs are expected to feed into the annual budgets of respective sector/MDAs, in order to ensure that government expenditure is driven by strategic policy priorities. Indeed, PERL is working to improve the realism of budget proposals and credibility of budget execution, for more effective and efficient budgetary out-turns, leading to improved service delivery to Nigerians.
- **Strengthening intergovernmental relations:** Strengthening the National Economic Council; supporting implementation, monitoring and reporting against the 71 National Economic Council resolutions, supporting the Communities of Practice for the 36 State Commissioners of Planning and Budget as a mechanism for fostering cross fertilisation of ideas between states and harmonising policies and plans across the tiers of government.
- **Strengthening intergovernmental relations:** assessing the blockages to the ease of doing business in the South East and South West regions; preparing action plans to resolve identified blockages to create an enabling environment for business to thrive in the two most commercially vibrant regions of Nigeria as well as supporting Jigawa state in developing Public Private Partnerships. At the Federal level, we have identified the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment (whose Minister is the Vice Chair of the Presidential Council on Ease of Doing Business) as a partner for our work on ease of doing business, which is central to achieving the key objectives of ERGP.

- **The Presidential Delivery Unit:** Strengthening the Presidential Delivery Unit to more effectively support the delivery of the social investment programme through improved capacity and capabilities for a data led approach to management that improves results. The proposed Delivery Unit in the ERGP may be subsumed into the Presidential Delivery Unit to facilitate a whole-of-government perspective with sufficient formal and informal authority from the centre of government to remove obstacles, improve coordination, and obtain results.
- **Identifying key Service Delivery blockages:** Engaged with a critical mass of credible stakeholders to; (a) facilitate constituencies to identify and tackle key blockages, (b) engage constituency representatives to tackle those key blockages, and (c) engage governments to tackle key blockages; all contributing to constituencies becoming increasingly effective at influencing governments on selected service delivery and policy issues.
- **Behaviour change:** Engaging with stakeholders around all three outputs directed towards effecting behaviour change, with particular attention to Capability (psychological or physical ability to enact the behaviour), motivation (reflective and automatic mechanisms that activate or inhibit required behaviour, and assessment of underlying interests which militate in favour of or against reform), and Opportunity (sufficient time as well as the physical and social environment that enables the behaviour to develop).

PERL has developed a Federal joint work plan which reflects a coordinated and coherent approach by the PERL pillars to 'plan and deliver as one' in its interventions and activities.

PERL has engaged with the Bureau for Public Service Reforms (BPSR) across a number of disparate interventions, including identifying key service delivery blockages mentioned above, reviewing the NSPSR to align with this administration's policy objectives including aligning with the ERGP to ensure coherence and facilitate coordination, but wishes to have a more strategically aligned collaboration which better reflects the Memorandum of Understanding between the BPSR and PERL.

PERL's joint pillar Federal work plan (attached) could be interrogated to identify synergies and intersections of interest to BPSR'S objectives and activities; this would provide a backdrop from which to identify and form work streams from which subsequent work plans can be developed.

