How to Prepare a State Plan: A Step-by-Step Guide

NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM

www.nggovernorsforum.org

About the Nigeria Governors' Forum

The Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) is a coalition of the elected Governors of the country's 36 States. The NGF is a non-partisan association that seeks to promote unity, good governance, better understanding and cooperation among the States, and to ensure a healthy and beneficial relationship between the States and other tiers of government.

NGF was established in 1999 following a multi-party conference of all 36 democratically elected State Governors. The Forum is registered under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, (CAMA), 1990, and also draws its legality from Section 40 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Contents

Foreword

It is intended that this guide should initially be used in discussions with State policymakers and senior civil servants to raise their awareness of some of the principles that might guide improved policymaking in the State. The aim is to improve the impact of State Government efforts to deliver public goods and to improve the welfare of their citizens. It is envisaged that, following such discussions, a team might be appointed to take this guide and to convert it into a localised document, made specific to the circumstances and aspirations of the State concerned.

Most of the text is technical and could be lifted or edited as local practitioners see fit. However, in some places specific information needs to be added. For example, where illustrations of key policy goals are provided, or where illustrative information about existing plans is listed, these will need to be altered to reflect the circumstances and preferences in the State concerned.

The NGF, in producing this guide to preparing State Plans, encourages States to adopt this approach to policy development. As well as having plans that are more realistic with better outcomes, States will benefit from better governance and improved development performance.

How to Use this Step-by-Step Guide

How to Prepare a State Plan is the first in the series of NGF *How to* guides. The series as a whole is designed to help executives, directors and managers in Nigerian Federal and sub-national public services to build and operate services more strategically and more effectively.

How to Prepare a State Plan is a step-by-step guide to developing a State Plan. It starts with explaining why planning and policy are important and then takes the reader through the three stages, step-by-step. Practical tools are provided to help senior officers to develop a State Plan from scratch, or to review an existing plan. The tools are of three types:

■ **Checklists** that help review where a State is at the moment, identify policy deficiencies and plan ways to prepare and put a State Plan into practice

■ **Tips** to provide suggestions on tackling various tasks along the way

■ **Exercises** that can be used by individuals, working groups or decision makers in working through the process of preparing a State Plan.

The *How to* guides are multi-purpose. Although they can be read from beginning to end, this may not be the best way to use them. States may be at different stages in preparing their plans or may need to strengthen their work in certain areas. What is important is not to skip any steps, particularly in deciding priorities and getting buy-in from important parties. Time saved by cutting corners and not keeping those who need to know in the loop may lead to delays further down the track. If priorities have not been thought through or accepted by those with important roles to play in delivering the plan the process may falter or stall.

How to guides are intentionally short and do not address the nuances of what are complex issues. They do not cover everything. The steps suggested are not exhaustive and there is scope to add further steps if needed.

This guide draws on the State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) report *Making State Policy and Development Plans – A generic guide for State Government Executive and Legislative Policy Makers Final Report September 2012*. The section *Further Reading and Useful Websites* refers readers to other sources where they may find further information and more detail.

About State Plans

Any State needs a State Plan – an approved public statement of its overarching policy position. Some States have these and some do not, but what plans exist are often inadequate. There is a tendency for them to:

- Focus mainly on projects to be implemented without adequate consideration of the expected outcomes
- Consist of separate sections on specific Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) or sectors, without explaining how these join up or complement each other
- Fail to be specific about costs and other resource availabilities, making them generally unrealistic and un-implementable
- Provide inadequate consideration of how performance against the plan is to be monitored or evaluated.

But the challenge only begins with the writing and approval of the plan. The key question is how will the plan be used to ensure that the lives of people in the State are improved? This involves a broader question – what is the role of policy in the State, and what are the responsibilities of the State's policymakers, both in developing policy and in ensuring that it is implemented?

This guide is intended for use by policymakers in the State Government and by the Ministry of Economic Planning (MoEP) or its equivalent. It shows how the plan can improve the lives of people in the State and also answers other questions such as:

- What is policy and how does it relates to strategy?
- What are the main policymaking responsibilities of the Executive Council (ExCo) and of the State House of Assembly (SHoA)?
- What are the basic steps in making a State Development Plan?
- How does the plan connect with other basic steps in the management of government business, so that policies can be effectively implemented?
- How can we ensure that policies are responsive to the needs of the people?

Why Prepare a State Plan?

In each State there normally exist a variety of plans or planning documents, perhaps including a State Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy, 2020 vision plans or other more specific plans.

Definition of a State Plan
An approved public document outlining a State's overarching policy position and the outcomes that the government expects these policies will deliver. The document describes how this will be done within the limitations of resource constraints, so that it is realistic.

Whatever documents exist in each State, these must be identified and their content reviewed.

Key reasons why a new (or revised) State Development Plan is needed are:

- To provide the overall direction of State policy. The MDAs need to know how to direct their sector plans and the State Plan provides the sounding board against which these plans can be evaluated for their contribution to the State's overall policy goals
- To publicise to the general public the direction in which the State Government intends to advance development over the coming few years and beyond.

While the plan can include reference to major projects that the government intends to implement, its main contents should describe the overall thrust of government policy and the major outcomes that it expects to deliver.
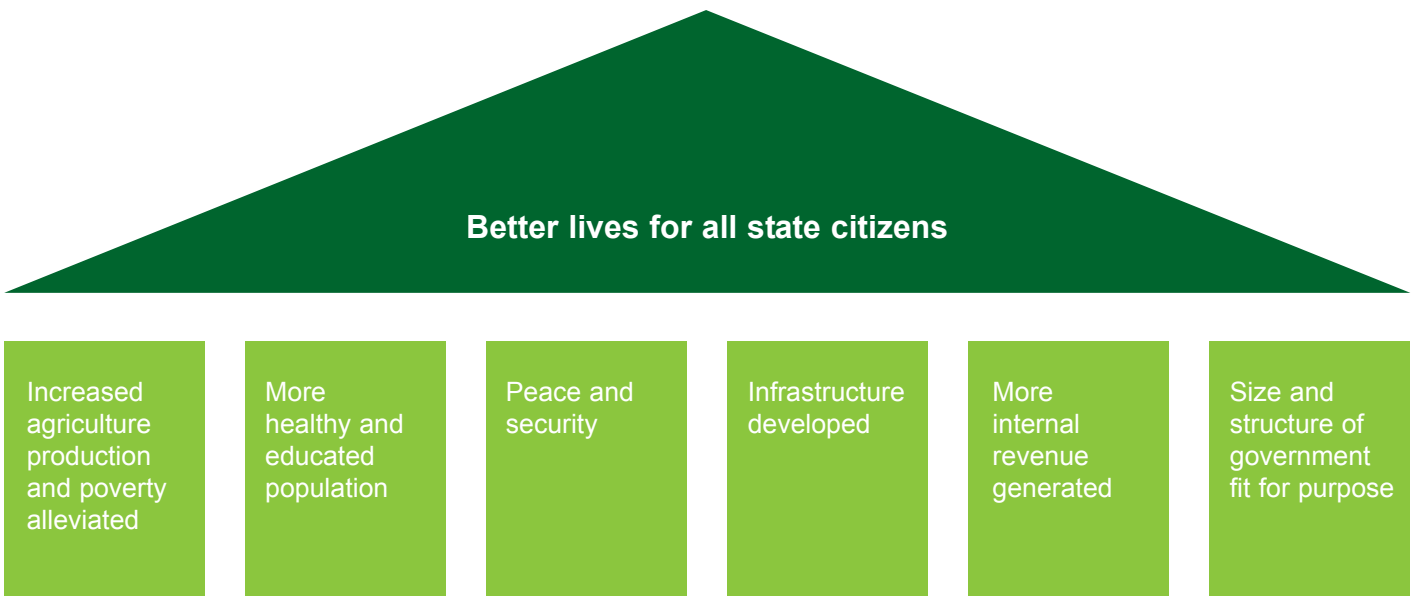
A critical requirement is that the plan should be able to demonstrate the realism of the expected outcomes, and this requires that the financial implications be taken into account. It will also be necessary to specify some basic features of the organisational capacity of the government to achieve these goals.

However, the plan will not describe in details every project or programme that the government intends to implement. This detail will be developed and contained in individual sector strategies, and in annual budgets and operational plans.

Using the Arrow and Pillar Approach

The administrative divisions of the State Government are mainly MDAs. Commissioners are appointed more or less on an MDA basis. Partly for this reason, there is a risk that policy can be developed according to these subject-based silos.

Figure 1: Pillars supporting the achievement of a long-term goal (arrow)

Better lives for all state citizens

| Increased agriculture production and poverty alleviated | More healthy and educated population | Peace and security | Infrastructure developed | More internal revenue generated | Size and structure of government fit for purpose |

But, there are advantages to thinking about policy in a broader sense. If the State Government can agree a relatively small number of key goals, then as different work programmes are developed they can be evaluated according to their potential contribution to these *high-level goals*. For example, if an overall high-level goal is to raise the level of public employment and wealth creation, then programmes in commerce, industry, agriculture, science and technology, transport, works, education and health can all be evaluated for their potential contribution to this goal.

This is referred to as an *arrow and pillar* approach, with the overall progress and future of the State dependent upon a small number of key arrows, with programmes across different Ministries and MDAs contributing to their achievement and described in a set of supporting pillars. This approach is illustrated in Figure 1.

There are no hard and fast rules for choosing the statements in the arrows – and no ideal number of pillars either. The pillars defined are high level. Beneath each one, it is useful to define a series of sectors and beneath these sectors will be a series of MDAs, programmes and projects. For example, a schools expansion programme will involve the construction of schools, but could also contain elements of water supply, public health and security. Programmes are normally managed under one MDA cost centre, but should involve a range of people from different parts of government.

How Should a State Plan Be Prepared?

Preparation of a State Plan should include:

1. Forming a core plan development team
2. Assembling existing plan documents
3. Assembling general planning information
4. Assembling information from performance reviews against the current year's plan
5. Conducting public consultation about recent performance
6. Considering whether the arrow and pillars diagram needs to be altered
7. Reviewing existing policy positions
8. Debating changing options in fiscal policy
9. Debating changing options in expenditure policy
10. Drawing on specific knowledge about intended changes from specific sectors/MDAs
11. Compiling an outline draft document
12. Presenting the proposals and justifications to a wider audience
13. Refining and completing the compilation of the plan document
14. Presenting the document to the ExCo for approval
15. ExCo approval and publication of the document.

About Policy

Collecting and Spending Public Money

Making policy is all about how public money is raised and what it is spent on to achieve the desired objectives. Although many States get a large proportion of their money from Federal sources, they can still make decisions about local taxation.

Making policy is a political process. The decisions that State Governments make have a big effect on people's lives, so decisions about how money should be collected and spent becomes a matter for debate. For example, some might favour levying high taxes and spending a lot on public services. Others might prefer a low tax environment to encourage investment but with lower levels of service delivery.

In a democracy, people are told in party manifestos which choices different parties favour and this influences the way people vote – ultimately, the electorate chooses the party that supports the policies that people prefer.

Is it Policy or Is it Strategy?

The words *policy* and *strategy* are easily confused. In simple terms, policy is about *identifying* broad goals and outcomes, while strategy is about how they can be *achieved*. In other words, policy is mostly about *what* and strategy is about *how*.

That will do for a start, but it is a simplification. In fact, *some* elements of strategy can also be policy. For example, say the State Government has a policy of reducing the incidence of malaria. The strategy for achieving this could be to make investments in public health, but it might be to use services purchased from the private sector. This is certainly a matter of strategy – it's about *achieving* objectives – but it could also be part of a policy platform distinguishing one political party from another.

It is good to be aware of this kind of situation, but it is still useful to rely on the simple distinction described before – policy is about stating *what* goals and outcomes are *identified*, while strategy is about deciding *how* they are to be *achieved*.

Policy Is About Outcomes Not Outputs

Clearly, the right challenge must be identified first. But very often the wrong challenge is identified because it is assumed that policy is about things (or *outputs*), such as constructing something. But policymaking is about *outcomes*. Outcomes are consequences, not things, and ultimately outcomes are about people. An outcome is a statement of how life is better than it was before, in some way, for some people. Deciding upon these outcomes is the key policymaking challenge for the State.

In policy terms, a road is a way of providing an outcome such as reducing the social exclusion of a community, bringing goods to market or bringing medical and safety services into the community. The road matters but the policy is aimed at the results it brings, not the stretch of physical road.

Policy Must Be Realistic

There is no point in identifying a policy goal that is not achievable. A good strategy describes how a goal or outcome is to be achieved, and it must be realistic, both technically and financially. A common challenge is that politicians may want to identify a popular policy goal, but the technical advice they receive tells them this goal cannot be achieved.

For example, a State Government might have a goal of providing free primary education for all, but when the detailed projections and calculations are done it might be found that this would take up all or a large proportion of the State's resources. So the State Government could do nothing else. In other words, that policy goal cannot be achieved – so there is little point in setting it.

The Difference between the Executive and the Legislature

The Governor is elected, but the Governor appoints the ExCo. ExCo appointments are mainly to technical portfolios. Commissioners are not always experts in the field of their responsibility, but they can get advice from civil servants who are technical experts in the sector.

Commissioners are responsible for developing State-level policy *proposals* in their sector. But they are *not* responsible for *approving* policy in the sector. Approval remains the responsibility of the ExCo as a whole. Policymaking entails looking at the whole State – at related options between and across all the sectors. So, each Commissioner has a specific responsibility for developing and arguing the case for their own sector, but shares a collective responsibility with the rest of the ExCo to make funding decisions between the competing claims of different sectors.

The tasks facing legislators (members of the SHoA) are different. Being elected to a constituency, legislative members are primarily responsible to the population of

that area, not for a specific sector, but they will be *concerned* about State policy as it affects the members of their constituency.

The Legislature also has a collective policy responsibility. This will *normally* involve passive scrutiny. That is, the Executive prepares legislative bills that it then presents to the Legislature for consideration and approval. This constitutes a major check and balance point, at which the House may decide to intervene and alter some Executive proposals.

So, for example, the Commissioner of Health might argue that extra resources are required to up-grade existing facilities, to purchase more drugs, and to train and deploy additional medical staff to rural areas. However, the need for these important measures has to be weighed up by the ExCo against the competing claims of other sectors, such as education, agriculture and security.

Exercise: Policy Statements
Imagine you are the Commissioner of Health for your State. You have identified a region where you think new health centres should be built and existing ones renovated. Think of some policy statements you might use when making your proposal.

Answer:
You should talk about the health benefits that the new centres will provide for the people. Perhaps provide data showing the present state of health, especially of women and children, and say how these figures will be improved if your proposal is implemented. Read again the section headed *Policy Is About Outcomes Not Outputs.*

How Policy Fits into the Government System

Policy is no use on its own. It needs to be implemented. This is done through the budget and through the public service. This section will help understanding of the relationship with the budget-making process and with the public service as it implements programmes and evaluates performance.

The Place of the State Plan

How the State Plan fits in with other documents is shown in Figure 2. The State Plan connects with other government plans. It provides the policy background for the development of sector strategies and for the preparation of annual budgets.

Realism and the Budget Process

The difference between policy and strategy has been explained above. A critical quality of *good* policy is that it must be achievable. It is at the budget process that

policy and strategy making meet. The critical question is what can be done with the available resources (both financial and human)?

A fiscal projection is critical. This will be provided by the Planning Ministry or Ministry of Finance (MoF), and should be a realistic expectation of the financial resources available to the State in *the following year*. Major sources are Federal allocations, shares from value added tax, internally generated revenue (IGR), grants and internal and external loans.

It is not helpful if projections of revenue from IGR and loans are over-estimated. This can have serious negative consequences – there will be insufficient

Figure 2: Different plans should talk to each other

Long- and Medium-Term National Policy documents and National Plans (e.g. NV20:2020)	Articulates overall desired National Policy Outcomes, loosely costed to demonstrate realism
Long- and Medium-Term State Policy documents and State Development Plan	Outlines overall State Policy Outcomes, loosely costed if possible to demonstrate general realism
Sector Development Plan – 5 to 10 years	Links policy to strategy, generally costed but may include funding gaps
Medium-Term Sector Strategy (MTSS) – 3 years – No funding gaps	Consistent with the Sector Plan, all activities costed within projected ceilings
Annual Budget	Based on the first year of the most recent rolling MTSS
Annual Operational and Departmental Work Plans	Defines responsibilities for implementation in relation to the budget
Departmental Cash Releases	Quarterly projections of cash requirements against all planned activities

money available for expenditure plans and, consequently, sector plans and strategies cannot be implemented and the potential effectiveness of government is undermined.

Making a Public Commitment

Following budget approval, a public commitment must be made. This is often thought of as being within the responsibility of central MDAs, but in fact, the task more properly falls to politicians.

Public commitments should be based upon sound knowledge that the defined policy outcomes are actually feasible. Making commitments to things that can be delivered should also help politicians hold on to public office.

Policy Topics for Consideration Before Beginning the Plan

Before starting to prepare the State Plan, it is useful to consider a number of general policy topics.

Engaging Stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement is important because the State Plan is about deciding how to use public resources to deliver public goods. But beyond this principle, it is important to politicians, if they believe their positions in power can be sustained by doing their best to deliver on electoral promises, and to deliver what the majority of the population expects.

Stakeholders are people who, because of their job, because of where they live or because of the public or private services they use, will be affected by the proposals made in the State Plan. They may be positively or negatively affected by the proposals, but care should be taken to include all groups involved as each group brings a different perspective that helps to develop a more robust plan.

Stakeholders should be engaged with when work starts on the plan because they need to be worked with all the way through. This is not passing decision making on to someone else. But they need to be understood, both because they may have a different view on what the problem might be, and because they may be part of the solution. This is a critical part of good policymaking.

Responding to the Needs of the Poor and Socially Excluded

Most government fiscal policy takes money away from those who can afford it better (the wealthy) and uses it to provide a range of services to help those less able to help themselves. Means of doing this include the provision of social safety nets, free or subsidised health and education at the point of delivery, and specific services targeted at the socially excluded or disadvantaged, including women, the physically challenged and those suffering from specific diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

In a country like Nigeria in which the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is relatively low, it is hard to provide this kind of support. But it is essential nevertheless to do what can be done to reduce poverty. The reasons for this may be moral, but they may also be politically realistic. After all, it is in countries where governments have failed to provide basic services and basic job opportunities to the poor that civil unrest has been most serious.

It is therefore important that politicians seek to learn about and understand the hardships endured by the poor, women and socially excluded, and build their responses to these concerns into policies that will sustain popular support, welfare and legitimacy, and reduce the prospects for conflict.

Describing the Current Situation

Once the challenge or desired outcome is determined, solutions – or improvements – need to be devised. Some problems are too big and too complex to resolve. It is enough sometimes just to make things better, rather than go for a complete solution. Global warming or poverty cannot be solved, nor free education provided for all. Care must be taken not to make situations worse, especially when it is thought that they are being made better. Doing the wrong thing, even with good intentions, is bad policymaking.

At the simplest level, it must be determined what data already exist. There are numerous surveys and data sets held by State Ministries' Department of Planning Research and Statistics, the State Board of Internal Revenue, etc.

Delivering the Desired Outcomes

Policymaking is about cause and effect. It is all about generating outcomes and the policymaker keeps trying to identify what can be done that will cause the outcome to happen. What is needed is analysis. Unfortunately, there is often too simple an expectation of how people will behave. For example, it is often assumed that purchasing cheap inputs for farmers will result in greater agricultural production. This is rarely the case.

Here is another example. A group of young people were given a training course in computing and, at the end, they were given a computer so that they could follow through with their training and start a small business. Instead, they sold the computer. The output was a group of trained young people with a computer but that did not lead to them starting a business, which was the intended outcome.

Thinking in the Medium Term

Policymakers need to think big because the challenges are big. Nothing stays still. Society, the economy and the environment are constantly changing. The challenges for State Government are huge – a big difference needs to be made for millions of people.

Thinking big also means thinking over years. On the other hand, thinking too big may turn into dreaming, rather than policymaking. In particular, thinking needs to be within the confines of real resource constraints. So, think in the medium term – long enough to tackle a big problem, short enough to manage it.

Managing the Capital–Recurrent Ratio

It is commonly assumed that an increase in the ratio of capital to recurrent is a good thing. This is not necessarily true. Certainly, there is a need to improve infrastructure in Nigeria, and so capital investments are important. But if they are not properly combined with recurrent investments then the expected results will not be realised. Think of a new hospital for example that has no staff in it. Clearly, this will not result in any improvement in health care or any reduction in disease or mortality.

Justifying Policy Decisions

Most policies have winners and losers. A decision to spend money in one place implies that a decision has been made not to spend in another. This is at the core of the contests between different MDAs, and between representatives of people who live in different places, or indeed between the wealthy and the poor, over how public money should be spent.

One thing policymakers can do is to try to balance the overall gains and losses of the strategy options. The costs of the strategy need to be calculated and compared with benefits to see which is bigger. Are the benefits greater than the costs? This can then be used to compare different options. But it is difficult working out a value for benefits as they are often values rather than prices.

For example, a State Government proposed building a new centre for small businesses. There were two designs, at 20 million and 30 million Naira. The budget provided was 30 million Naira. Economists calculated that the community it would serve was unlikely to generate more than 25 million Naira over five years. Cost/benefit analysis showed that the 30 million option was not justifiable, although affordable, but that the 20 million option was justifiable. So the 20 million option was chosen, and the remaining 10 million was spent on something else.

Drawing on Good Advice and Experience

This guide presents a set of principles to use when approaching the policymaking task. However, when policymakers enter government or the Legislature, they may not be experienced in or knowledgeable about the policymaking process.

In most cases, others will have learned lessons about all these things before, and it makes sense to build on this existing experience and knowledge.

Ideally, policymakers should be able to rely upon their civil servants to provide some of this advice. However, other people in society also possess some of the required knowledge. There are always experts available, and increasingly there is good knowledge about practice available from other parts of the world on the Internet. Policymakers can draw on this knowledge, and then discuss options with their civil servants.

Preparing a State Plan

The following checklist will help the assessment of how favourable conditions are for developing a State Plan.

Checklist: Getting Started

- ☐ Is your senior management committed to preparing a State Plan?
- ☐ Is your senior management prepared to implement a State Plan?
- ☐ Can you get help to develop a State Plan?
- ☐ Will time be set aside to prepare a State Plan?
- ☐ Will you have a budget?

Once there is an idea of the situation, there are some important questions to think about.

Exercise: Questions to Consider Before Preparing a State Plan

Give some initial thought to these questions:

- Who will develop the State Plan?
- What process will you use?
- How will you go about developing the plan?
- What will be the key milestones?
- How will you keep people informed and involved?
- What help will you need?
- Who can provide this help?
- Over what timeframe will the plan be developed?
- Who will sign off on the plan?
- How much will preparing the plan cost (for example, running workshops, meetings)?

There are no 'right' answers to these questions. The answers will depend on the State, the resources available and the challenges faced. But the questions apply to all States.

Stage 1. Prepare and Review

Stage 1 involves:

- Making preparations for developing a State Plan

- Reviewing existing planning documents and general planning information
- Gathering and analysing data on how the current year's plan is performing
- Considering whether the arrow and pillars diagram needs altering
- Reviewing existing policy positions.

Step 1A: Set Up a State Plan Core Development Team

Form or reform a State Plan core development team, probably drawing on key figures in the MoEP (or equivalent), two or three selected key commissioners, and a small group of representative people from the civic sector (civil society organisations, private sector, professional bodies). But keep the team small and functional, ideally 10 or fewer people.

Checklist: State Plan Core Development Team

- ☐ Have you set up a State Plan core development team?
- ☐ If there is a team, do you need to modify the membership?
- ☐ Who are the members of the team?

Position	MDA or other affiliation
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

- ☐ Are all key areas represented above?
- ☐ Do members of the team have the skills to develop the State Plan?
- ☐ Are there terms of reference for the team covering the overall function, tasks, membership, appointments and responsibilities?

Step 1B: Gather Together Existing Planning Documents
In developing a draft of the plan there are various existing sources to draw upon. These include:

- The existing draft State Plan or the previous plan, if either exists
- Statements by the government on its general focus and direction, including any agenda or manifesto adopted
- Various sector policy and strategy documents, including the medium-term sector strategies (MTSSs) for Agriculture, Health, Education and Water Affairs.

Based on this material, the plan should be compiled by the MoEP (or its equivalent) in collaboration with the Office of the Head of Service and the MoF.

Step 1C: Assemble Existing Plan Documents
Assemble existing plan documents, including the previous year's State Development Plan if there is one. Review their content and how they match up to some of the standards outlined in this guide.

Step 1D: Assemble General Planning Information
Assemble necessary general planning information (not to the level of detail required for specific sector planning), especially information on fiscal projections, but also any general shifts in major indicator trends in the State, such as GDP and population growth, employment levels, key education and health indicators and poverty data.

Tip for Members of the State Plan Core Development Team
Early on, quickly assess what data and information are available. Decide whether it will be possible to plug any gaps as part of the plan development process.

Step 1E: Assemble Information From Performance Reviews Against the Current Year's Plan
Assemble emerging information from performance reviews against the current year's plan and budget implementation, and for the previous year, and record the successes and failures. Aim to reach conclusions about why certain things worked and others did not. What remedial action is required?

Tip for Members of the State Plan Core Development Team
Collect all relevant planning and performance review documents and examine them for guidance on outcomes that have been achieved and those that have not.

Step 1F: Conducting Public Consultation About Recent Performance
Conduct public consultations, if required, about recent performance. Ensure that key SHoA members are involved at this stage.

Step 1G: Considering Whether the Arrow and Pillars Diagram Needs to be Altered
If the State does not have overall policy outcome targets, then develop them at this stage.

Step 1H: Reviewing Existing Policy Positions
Review existing policy positions – keeping an eye on the arrowhead, medium-term thinking, the capital–recurrent ratio, and choose actions that will deliver the desired outcomes.

Exercise: Data and Information on the State's Performance

List or Comment

- What data are available to describe the current situation in the State?

- What data are available on the socially disadvantaged, for example, handicapped people, in the State?

- What sex-disaggregated data for the State are available?

- Are there any reports from monitoring systems in the State?

- What performance reviews of the State are available?

- Is there any information on the impact of previous programmes in the State? What has been successful and what has not been successful?

- Are there any gaps in the information about the State?

- Will it be possible to plug any information gaps as part of the process of developing the plan?

- Is there sufficient information to write a section in the plan describing the current situation?

Exercise: List Current Long-Term Policy Goals in the State (Arrows)

From your review of planning documents, list the main long-term policy goals (arrows) in the State:

Exercise: Analyse Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

Fill in the matrix looking at strengths and weaknesses of the State and opportunities and threats in the external environment for the planning period (five years). Discuss and come to a conclusion on strengths and weaknesses of the State and the opportunities and threats.

SWOT Analysis

State Strengths	Opportunities for the State
State Weaknesses	Threats to the State

Exercise: Revenue Projections

Describe or Comment

- How realistic are State budgets?

- Are budget envelope projections provided by the central planning ministry by April each year?

- What funding has actually been received by the State in the previous two or three years?

- Is the estimate of funds available to the State realistic?

- Are there other sources of revenue tied to specific activities, such as programmes of development partners for training, drugs, buildings?

Checklist: At the End of Stage 1

At the end of stage 1 check that you have:

☐ A team to lead the process of developing a State Plan

☐ A list of the main State policy goals (arrows)

☐ A description of the current situation in the State and how it is performing

☐ An estimate of the amount that will be allocated to the State in the next three years

☐ The projected commitments for the State in the next three years and the amount of discretionary funds that will be available.

Stage 2. Develop Policy Priorities and Policy Options

Once stage 1 has been completed and there is as good a picture of the current situation as possible, stage 2 involves development of the plan:

- Debate changing options in fiscal policy
- Debate changing options in expenditure policy
- Draw on specific knowledge about intended changes from specific sectors/MDAs.

At the preliminary session, the core development team should assess the current situation and what is likely to happen in the future based on the information gathered and analysed in step 1. The group will need to discuss policy goals, and consider strengths and weaknesses in the State. The discussion can then move on to putting forward priorities for the State and listing policy options.

Step 2A: Debate Changing Options in Fiscal Policy

Debate changing options in fiscal policy and propose decisions on changes to realistic revenue collection, taking account of the potential impact on the local economy.

Step 2B: Debate Changing Options in Expenditure Policy

Debate changing options in expenditure policy, given the projected financial situation in the State over the period of the plan (probably five years). Develop recommendations for changes in expenditure direction and pillar/sector priorities.

Tips for Involving Civil Society in Developing the State Plan

- Explain the limitations of the State Plan, for example financial constraints, so that civil society representatives have realistic expectations
- Invite civil society representatives to provide information on policies that have worked and those that have not
- Invite civil society representatives to provide information about how non-government groups can help government deliver services
- Keep in mind the fact that civil society groups represent different interests and may not agree with each other on which policies should be adopted.

Tip for the State Plan Core Development Team

- Give responsibility for developing and running policy sessions to planning departments in relevant sector MDAs.

Tips for Developing Policy Options

- Analyse information on the State and draw on expert knowledge
- Build on your experience rather than doing exactly what you have done before
- Think constructively about the balance between capital and recurrent expenditure over the term of the strategy
- Think about how other players, such as the private sector, development partners and civil society, can contribute
- Take technical and capacity limitations into account
- Identify both new and current activities
- Ensure policy options are politically relevant.

Step 2C: Draw on Specific Knowledge about Intended Changes

Draw on specific knowledge about intended changes from specific sectors/MDAs, and consider the overall justification for these proposed changes in the context of broad policy aims.

Stage 3. Get Agreement and Finalise the Plan

Stage 3 involves:

- Compiling the outline draft document
- Presenting proposals and justifications to a wider audience
- Refining and completing compilation of the plan document
- Presenting the document to the ExCo for approval and publication.

Step 3A: Compile the Outline Draft Document
Compile an outline draft document, highlighting changes and the justifications for them.

Step 3B: Present Proposals and Justifications to a Wider Audience
Present these proposals and the justifications to a wider audience, especially including wider political leaders, the SHoA and members of the public, to get their feedback.

Step 3C: Refine and Complete Compilation of the Plan Document
Refine and complete the compilation of the new or revised plan document. Obtain the Governor's final review of this draft (the Governor should have been involved at earlier stages anyway).

Step 3D: Present the Document to the ExCo for Approval and Publication
Present the document to the ExCo for approval and when this is obtained arrange for publication and distribution of the plan.

Example: Table of Contents for a State Plan

Part 1: Summary and overview (this part might also include a catchy, political phrase, such as *Achieving Peace and Prosperity for All*)

1   Introduction
1.1   The State Development Plan: Its vision and objectives
1.2   Vision and mission statements
1.3   From vision to outcomes
1.4   From outcomes to strategy
1.5   From strategy to action

2   Development pillars (naturally the titles of the Pillars Sections will vary from State to State)
2.1   Economic development pillar
2.2   Infrastructure development pillar
2.3   Social development and security pillar
2.4   Sustainable environment pillar

3   Achieving implementation
3.1   Finance: Raising money to pay for the plan
3.2   Governance and capacity building
3.3   Implementation, monitoring and review

3   Achieving implementation
3.1   Finance: Raising money to pay for the plan
3.2   Governance and capacity building
3.3   Implementation, monitoring and review

Part 2: Main document (including sector policy details)
1   Introduction
1.1   The vision for the State
1.2   Key pillars of the programme
1.3   A medium-term plan
1.4   An implementable plan
1.5   The government's commitment to development
1.6   Implementation, monitoring and responsiveness

2   An introduction to the State
2.1   History

This sample contents page is not intended as a rigid structure, but it might be useful as a guide. Each State will naturally wish to choose its own structure and emphasis. One key feature to be considered is the purpose of the plan. In the guide, two main purposes are mentioned:

- To provide guidance and direction to State sectors and MDAs, ensuring that their efforts, and especially the spending of public money, are targeted in the best way possible for the achievement of the State's overarching goals
- To provide the public with information about what the State Government's intentions are with respect to the use of public resources.

This implies that there are at least two different audiences for a plan document. In fact, there are probably many different audiences. This is true even within government where there are civil servants in different MDAs, and then there are politicians in the ExCo and the SHoA.

It is probable that these audiences will be looking for different things. Many plans in the past tended to be very long, heavy articles, sometimes running to hundreds of pages. The example provided here, therefore, is an outline for a brief synopsis document that presents the main features of the plan, and then a substantive annex including much more sector detail.

Checklist: At the End of Stage 3

At the end of stage 3 check that you have:

☐ Political approval for the State Plan

☐ A State Plan document that you can share.

Mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion

A Four-Step Approach[1]

Step one. The first step to gender and social inclusion mainstreaming is getting organised, building awareness and ownership, and establishing a structural and cultural basis for equal opportunities.

Step two. The second step is learning about gender differences and other vulnerabilities. In order to establish whether the policy at hand is gender relevant, it must be known if it will affect the daily life of part(s) of the population and if there are differences in the situation of women and men in the specific field concerned.

Step three. Once it has been established that the policy is gender relevant, to avoid unintended negative consequences and improve the quality and efficiency of the proposal, the third step, a gender and social inclusion impact assessment, should be carried out.

Step four. Where the policy is found to have a negative impact on gender equality and social inclusion or to be broadly gender neutral, it is essential to identify ways in which it could be redesigned to promote gender equality and social inclusion.

[1] Adapted from the EU Manual on Gender Mainstreaming

Gender and Social Inclusion in the Policy/Programme Cycle – Key Gender Issues[2]

1. Situation Analysis

Identify the different perspectives of women and men on poverty issues. Examine gender roles and relations in terms of the distribution of power and resources, and how these are affected by social factors such as age, disability, religion, class and ethnic differences. Ensure data collected are disaggregated and analysed by sex.

2. Planning/Design

Ensure objectives and strategies address the gender and social issues identified in the situation analysis. Ensure the representation and active participation of women and men from diverse and marginalised groups in the planning process, and check that their gendered interests are reflected in decisions made.

6. Evaluation

Evaluate the different impact the programme may have had on women and men, and on the power relations between them. Ensure a gender balance of staff on the evaluation team. Ensure that evaluating impact on gender equality is included in the evaluation terms of reference.

3. Appraisal

Identify whether the implementing organisation has gender and social inclusion policies and practices e.g. staff training, resources and leadership on gender. Explore whether programme activities are gender-sensitively planned e.g. does the programme aim to reduce discrimination against women and will this be monitored?

5. Monitoring

Identify gender-sensitive indicators e.g. changes in the balance of women's and men's access to resources and decision making, incidence of gender-based violence, discriminatory attitudes against women, women's empowerment and sensitisation of men to the need to strengthen gender equality.

4. Implementation

Ensure appropriate participation of both sexes in programme implementation. Ensure that the participation of women does not merely increase their workload, but means their active involvement in decision making. Ensure that men understand the reason for this and support it.

[2] Adapted from Elsa Dawson, Gender and impact assessment, LINKS, 1999

Handy Gender and Social Inclusion Checklist for Policies and Programmes

Background and justification. Is the gender and social inclusion dimension highlighted in background information to the intervention? Does the justification include convincing arguments for gender and social inclusion mainstreaming and gender equality?

Goals. Does the goal of the proposed intervention reflect the needs of women, men, boys and other social groups? Does the goal seek to correct gender imbalances through addressing practical needs of men and women? Does the goal seek to transform the institutions (social and other) that perpetuate gender inequality?

Target beneficiaries. Except where interventions specifically target men or women as a corrective measure to enhance gender equality, is there gender balance within the target beneficiary group?

Objectives. Do the intervention objectives address needs of women and men, boys and girls, and other marginalised groups?

Activities. Do planned activities involve both men and women and other relevant stakeholders? Are any additional activities needed to ensure that a gender and social inclusion perspective is made explicit (e.g. training in gender and social inclusion issues, additional research, etc.)?

Indicators. Have indicators been developed to measure progress towards the fulfilment of each objective? Do these indicators measure the gender and social inclusion aspects of each objective? Are indicators gender disaggregated? Are targets set to guarantee a sufficient level of gender balance in activities (e.g. quotas for male and female participation)?

Implementation. Who will implement the planned intervention? Have these partners received gender and social inclusion mainstreaming training to ensure that a gender and social inclusion perspective can be sustained throughout implementation? Will both women and men and other relevant stakeholders participate in implementation?

Monitoring and evaluation. Does the monitoring and evaluation strategy include a gender perspective? Will it examine both substantive (content) and administrative (process) aspects of the intervention?

Risks. Has the greater context of gender roles and relations within society been considered as a potential risk (i.e. stereotypes or structural barriers that may prevent full participation of one or the other gender)? Has the potential negative impact of the intervention been considered (e.g. potential increased burden on women or social isolation of men?)

Budget. Have financial inputs been 'gender-proofed' to ensure that both men and women will benefit from the planned intervention? Has the need to provide gender sensitivity training or to engage gender experts been factored into the budget?

Annexes. Are any relevant research papers (or excerpts) included as annexes (particularly those that provide sound justification of the attention to gender)?

Communication strategy. Has a communication strategy been developed for informing various publics about the existence, progress and results of the project from a gender and social inclusion perspective?

Source: UNDP Gender Mainstreaming Manual

Further Reading and Useful Websites

Enugu State Government. 2012. *Developing the Enugu State Medium-Term Implementation Plan (2010–2013).* http://www.sparc-nigeria.com/RC/

Lagos State Government. 2010. *Report on Review of High-Level Policy Documents.* http://www.sparc-nigeria.com/RC/

SPARC. 2012. *Making State Policy and Development Plans – A generic guide for State Government Executive and Legislative Policy Makers Final Report.* http://www.sparc-nigeria.com/RC/

Glossary

Arrow and pillar approach. A method of policy development where the arrow is a high-level goal and the pillars are the supporting programmes needed to achieve that goal.

Capital–recurrent ratio. The ratio of capital expenditure to recurrent expenditure.

Cost/benefit analysis. The process of comparing the costs involved in doing something to the advantage or profit that it may bring.

Executive. That part of a government that is responsible for making certain that laws and decisions are put into action.

Gross domestic product. The total value of goods and services produced in a country (or part of a country) in a year.

High-level goal. A high-level objective.

Legislature. The group of people in a country or part of a country who have the power to make and change laws.

Medium-term sector strategy. Medium-term strategies set out specific inputs and activities to deliver specific outputs in the medium term (three years).

Outcome. The result or effect of an activity, particularly insofar as it affects people.

Output. Something produced by a project, particularly a physical object or a physical measure of some activity (e.g. the number of training courses carried out).

Policy. A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government, party, business or individual. Policymaking is the process by which governments translate their political vision into programmes and actions to deliver 'outcomes' – desired change in the real world. Policy can take a range of different forms, including non-intervention, regulation, for instance by licensing, or the encouragement of voluntary change, as well as direct public service provision.

Project. A piece of planned work or an activity that is finished over a set period and intended to achieve a particular aim.

Stakeholders. People such as employees, customers or citizens who have an investment, share or interest in something such as an organisation, project, society, etc., and therefore have responsibilities towards it, and benefit from it.

State Plan. An approved public document outlining a State's overarching policy position and the outcomes that the government expects these policies will deliver. The document describes how this will be done within the limitations of resource constraints, so that it is realistic.

Strategy. A detailed plan for achieving objectives in situations such as politics, business, industry, war or sport, or the skill of planning for such situations.

NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM