

# Revitalise the engine of public service reform: The Enugu State Performance Improvement Bureau

Improving the performance of public services is critical for driving the Enugu State Government 4-Point Agenda forward. The Performance Improvement Bureau, set up in 2005, was intended to be the spearhead for helping Ministries, Departments and Agencies to become more effective. But, because of lack of support and funding, the Bureau has lost strength and credibility – which means that it cannot be at the forefront of reforms as intended.

## What does the Performance Improvement Bureau do?

The Performance Improvement Bureau guides, facilitates and monitors implementation of the Government's Governance Reform Programme. Its role is to help public services perform better and deliver better services to citizens.

## What is the problem?

**"The Performance Improvement Bureau is severely limited ...."** *Review of Performance Improvement Bureau, March 2010*

The Performance Improvement Bureau suffers from two problems. First, it is not fully staffed and struggles to maintain credibility.

Second, it has not been adequately resourced to fulfil its mandate – infrastructure is poor and funding is insufficient and unreliable.

## Why does it matter?

The inability of the Bureau to lead public service reforms matters because reforms central to the 4-Point Agenda cannot be promoted and sustained without guidance from the Bureau. The Bureau has brought about several important public service reforms, including introduction of Service Charters



and a Code of Conduct for public servants, but it has not previously held such wide responsibilities as it now faces. Continued investment by programmes such as SPARC hinges on revitalising the Bureau.

## What can be done?

The State Government can breathe new life into the Bureau by boosting financial and political support. There are four key steps to be taken: give the Bureau a new mandate, reorganise the structure, allocate adequate resources and ensure high calibre staff.

### Key actions to revitalise the Performance Improvement Bureau

- Strengthen the mandate
- Reorganise the structure
- Provide adequate funding
- Ensure high calibre staff

**"Ministries, Departments and Agencies want the Performance Improvement Bureau to epitomise the service culture that others aspire to and to provide meaningful networking and communication on the Reform Agenda."** *Review of Performance Improvement Bureau, March 2010*

## Strengthen the mandate

The first step is for Enugu State Government to charge the Bureau with a stronger mandate setting out clearly how it will lead and support Ministries, Departments and Agencies in implementing public service reforms.

### New, strong mandate for the Performance Improvement Bureau

To stimulate the drive for reform in the Public Service, the Performance Improvement Bureau will:

- Provide practical guidance to steer the reform agenda;
- Provide technical assistance to improve the delivery of services;
- Develop, communicate and publish clear performance criteria;
- Develop and monitor work processes, and ensure compliance to the Code of Conduct for the Civil Service;
- Conduct systematic and transparent organisational reviews;
- Provide independent reports to Government on progress, improvements and performance;
- Ensure that good practices are identified, documented and disseminated; and
- Coordinate and facilitate service improvement programmes to ensure conformity and synergy with the Enugu State Reform Agenda.

## Reorganise to strengthen and deepen relationships with Ministries, Departments and Agencies

The Government can also reorganise the Bureau to become more client-centred and to ensure that it collaborates more with Ministries, Departments and Agencies. A stronger structure that effectively links the Bureau to Ministerial Performance Improvement Units is needed.

### A stronger structure

To provide it with a strong structure, PIB will need

- To be small and tightly organised within the Office of the Head of Service with
  - Four Advisers
  - Four Technical Officers, and
- To have the minimum of bureaucracy

## Resource adequately

To provide the Performance Improvement Bureau with the funds, people and facilities it needs to spearhead reform, the Government must allocate, and release on time, sufficient and reliable funds to the Bureau.

### Sufficient, reliable resources

- A specific sub-vote within the Office of the Head of Service's recurrent budget
- Capital to upgrade facilities and infrastructure
- Recurrent and capital allocations to be released in full and on time

## Recruit high calibre staff

Staffing the Bureau with competent, dedicated professionals will be essential for the Bureau to provide the leadership required. This means recruiting a minimum of three new high calibre staff through tough, open competition.

### High calibre staff

New high-calibre staff must be

- Highly qualified
- Able to relate to others
- Able to engender respect at all levels

## What can SPARC do to help?

SPARC has helped to build up the Bureau through technical support and training. With State Government investment this support can be intensified, enabling the Bureau to fully execute its role in spearheading public service reforms.

## Contact details

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