

team. Professor Olalekan Yinusa, the Osun State Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, noted that “the data collection process was concluded seamlessly, and all the local government areas were carried along. The Permanent Secretary and Directors of the Ministry of Budget and Planning were involved to ensure the quality of engagement was robust and data could be captured in a way that would inform policy.” Dr. Yinusa noted that there continues to be “robust engagement as to how to mainstream the Citizens Needs’ Assessment report, the Governor’s manifesto and the ‘Thank You Tour’ report into sectoral policies and plans. He explained that the “policy, plan and budget linkage will facilitate effective service delivery to the people of Osun State.”



Community demands are already feeding into the budget in Ekiti State. Osun State is looking to implementing all of the recommendations that came out from the Citizens Needs Assessment Exercise.

According to Professor Yinusa, the Governor is committed to making everything the citizens need, a priority. This commitment was further affirmed at the presentation of the CNA report by DFID, PERL and DAWN Commission to the government on 6th August 2019 where the Governor, Mr Adegboyega Oyetola, thanked DFID, PERL and the DAWN Commission and assured that “all recommendations will be implemented.”

The recommendations made by the CNA report were to:

1. Integrate citizens demands into State Planning and Policy Development and Implementation Frameworks;
2. Establish and strengthen platforms for regular feedback from citizens on project implementation;
3. Build trust with citizens through fiscal transparency and accountability.

The State’s experience in the CNA exercise was positive. It achieved its aim of getting the people’s input in all policies and programmes. Thanking PERL for their support Dr. Yinusa noted that it has gone far beyond facilitating the Citizens’ Needs Assessment to strengthening governance structures through:

1. The development of a gender, equity and social inclusion policy;
2. Support to Commissioners of Budget and Planning through regional and national Communities of Practice;
3. Regional and national peer learning roundtable sessions; and
4. Training planning officers on the Medium-Term Sector Strategy and Expenditure Framework.

Feedback on PERL Support

Both Ekiti and Osun States found the support of PERL beneficial in conducting the CNA exercises. Mrs. Omowunmi, a Senior Planning Officer, Ekiti State Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning concluded that, “so much value has been added through the partnership with DFID. Wonderful exercise! Hope it will cut across all the states in the Southwest region and nationwide if possible, to make the growth and development sustainable. PERL is a partner in progress and we appreciate the interventions and expect more.”

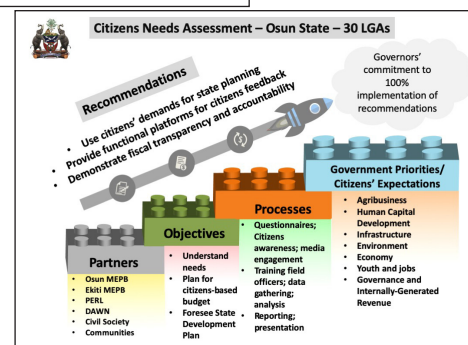
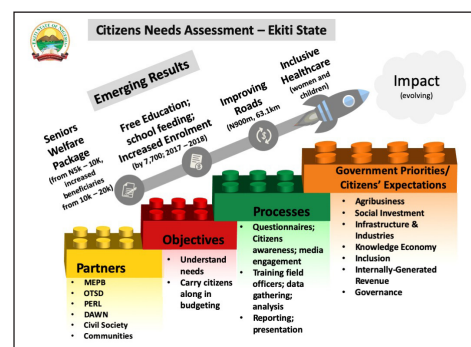
The Director General of the Office of Transformation, Strategy and Delivery (OTSD) Ekiti State, Professor Mobolaji Aluko noted that PERL’s

support has been tremendous. “It has assisted us to provide better service delivery, beginning from free education to free healthcare and budgeting for roads rehabilitation and construction. The support has been helpful, and DFID-PERL worked on the OTSD mandate review too, working together to provide great support. Development partners showing interest in what we do lets us know that what we are doing is important.”

The CNA process in both states was inclusive; priorities and expectations the citizens have of their respective State governments have been clearly articulated and categorized based on whether they are achievable in the short, medium or long term. Ekiti State prioritised Agriculture and Rural Development (agribusiness), Infrastructure and Industrial Development, Social Investment and Knowledge Economy (education and human capital development), Internally-Generated Revenue and Gender, Women and Children. Osun State selected as priorities, Agriculture and Agribusiness, Infrastructural Development, Human Capital Development, Governance and Internally-Generated Revenue, Environment, the Economy, Youth and Jobs. The Ministries of Economic Planning and Budget in both States, through their Monitoring and Evaluation Units are tasked with tracking and reporting progress achieved by the States in line with citizens’ expectations.

In both States, expectations from citizens on agriculture and agribusiness include provision of low-interest agricultural loans, provision of equipment including tractors and processing plants, provision of high-quality seeds, seedlings, herbicides and fertilizers at subsidised rates, among others. On infrastructure, citizens expect rehabilitation of roads, drainages, health facilities and market stalls and improved electricity supply, among others. In human capital development, citizens expect employment of more qualified teachers and improved teachers’ welfare, affordable education, rehabilitation of schools and provision of modern teaching and learning materials, among others. For internally-generated revenue, citizens expect blockage of revenue leakages, sensitisation on tax compliance, an enabling environment for micro, small and medium enterprises and industrialisation, among others.

The Executive Governors and the relevant State Ministries, Departments and Agencies have spoken highly of the exercise and expressed their commitment to providing the needs that were captured during the CNA exercises. There will be more opportunities to determine the longer-term impact of the exercise in line with citizens’ expectations as outlined in the CNA reports.



Contact Address:

10 Bobo Street
Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria

info@perlnigeria.net

www.perlnigeria.net

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Results

Using citizens’ needs for planning and budget in Ekiti and Osun States



Using citizens' needs for planning and budget in Ekiti and Osun States

Both Ekiti and Osun State Governments have conducted Citizens' Needs Assessments (CNA) to ensure that their State budgets are participatory and truly reflect the needs of citizens. The CNA, which was supported by the Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) Programme and the Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission, was first conducted in Ekiti State to:

- i) Understand the short, medium and long term needs of the citizens, and
- ii) Ensure no group's needs were left out during budget preparation.

Subsequently, in line with the desire of the Government of Osun State to improve the livelihood of its citizens, a Citizens Needs Assessment was also conducted with the support of the PERL Programme and DAWN Commission, facilitated by two staff from the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget in Ekiti State. Both staff from Ekiti State were part of the PERL- and DAWN-supported CNA process in the State. The objectives of the exercise in Osun State was the same, with an additional objective of gathering issues that could contribute to the development of a robust State Development Plan.

In Osun State, the CNA was led by the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, while in Ekiti there was additional participation by the reform coordinating agency, the Office of Transformation, Strategy and Delivery (OTSD). PERL and DAWN Commission supported the exercise through facilitation, planning and documentation. The final Ekiti State CNA was submitted to His Excellency, Governor John Fayemi on 22nd January 2019 by PERL while in Osun State the final report was formally presented to the Executive Governor on 6th August 2019.



The Commissioner for Economic Planning, Budget and Development of the State of Osun, Dr Olalekan Yinusa (2nd right), at a roleplay in preparation for the CNA exercise.



Carrying all citizens along in planning for the State is a novelty and an exciting experience. Ekiti and Osun States are leading this initiative in Southwest Nigeria.

Ekiti State Citizens Needs Assessment Exercise

The CNA exercise in Ekiti State was conducted with the participation of the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning and the coordination of the Office of Transformation, Strategy and Delivery. According to the Director Projects, Monitoring and Evaluation in Ekiti State Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Oloniyo Olaseinde Lawrence, the citizens of Ekiti State were "happy to have the platform where government could hear their views on how they wanted to be governed, which elicited a positive response from them. When we engaged the people of the State, we discovered that people's expectations were high and they had many demands," he shared.

Mr Oloniyo explained that progress had already been made in terms of improved service delivery based on the CNA results. "Some quick wins in terms of what the people wanted included free education, which was introduced based on the request of the people." Documents made available to the PERL Programme through the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget in Ekiti State showed an increase in primary school enrollment from 145,290 in 2017 to 152,990 in 2018. In addition to the free education programme, other recommendations implemented from the CNA include activation of the school feeding programme and free healthcare for children under 5 years and for pregnant women.

Mr Oloniyo shared that "the government answered the request for free education. Children are being pulled off the streets and kept in the classrooms. This is about the future of the state and its human capital development. Overall, we are improving the quality of service delivery."

A senior planning officer within the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, Mrs. Ajayi Alice Omowunmi, further explained the process noting that "shortly after the needs assessment from 12th to 14th November 2018, the budget process for 2019 was kick-started. The government held a town hall meeting with the same people who got to make their requests known for the second time. This allowed us to align their needs with the 2019 budget." She noted that some of the road projects that were identified as important to the livelihood of the people were captured in the revised 2019 budget and were being worked on. This includes the construction and rehabilitation of the 28.7km Ayede - Iye - Otun road budgeted at NGN450m and the 34.4km Agbado - Ode - Omuo road budgeted at NGN450m as well. Mrs. Omowunmi noted that Ekiti State hopes for even more alignment in 2020.

The CNA exercise in Ekiti State is already being used to plan for improved service delivery. Mr. Oloniyo noted that the CNA helped to better align the budget priorities of the State with the priorities of the people. He explained that, "the priorities of government were drawn from what the people requested for." The priorities border on healthcare, education, infrastructural development and agriculture.

Learning from Ekiti State

Discussing what Ekiti State learned from the process of conducting a PERL- and DAWN-facilitated CNA exercise, Mrs Omowunmi explained that the citizen inclusiveness inherent in the exercise has gone a long way in getting the buy-in of citizens. "People see themselves as part of government. They realize it is an all-inclusive government. They see that their needs are respected. Citizens realized they are a major part of the government and they are being carried along in identifying their needs. This strategy was great in identifying what projects and programs needed to be done, such as free education, free healthcare and rehabilitation and construction of roads," Mrs. Omowunmi shared.

The Director General of the Office of Transformation, Strategy and Delivery in Ekiti State, Professor Mobolaji Aluko, also noted, "We have done similar exercises and it is a welcome development that it has been formulated in a sustainable manner, carrying citizens along, engaging communities in the State's planning and budget process and providing feedback to the communities; enabling citizens participate in governance processes. The government embraced the citizens' engagement approach and DFID-PERL's facilitation of the process, documentation of, and planning towards the CNA was appreciated."

Experience Supporting Osun State

After conducting their own CNA exercise, members of the Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning in Ekiti State were deployed to support the Osun State CNA exercise. The Senior Planning Officer, Mrs Omowunmi who was part of the exercise (in Ekiti), shared that their comparative advantage from having conducted the exercise allowed them to share with the Osun State team what they should expect and how to achieve comprehensive results. "It was an eye opener to compare the level of development across the two states and in the region, to realize what work needed to be done. It was interesting to compare the needs of the citizens in the two states, there were some similarities with what both sets of citizens wanted from government in the areas of education, healthcare, agribusiness, infrastructure and internally generate revenue. It was a good opportunity to build bilateral relationship between the two states. With the help of DFID-PERL, both of us have realized the importance in carrying citizens along in the development of programs and projects. This is more about what citizens need rather than what can be imposed on them and this is key to speeding up development in the western region," Mrs. Omowunmi concluded.

"It was beneficial to the State and the region," Mr Oloniyo Lawrence, who also supported Osun State, confirmed. "The mandate of DAWN Commission is to ensure effective integration of the States in Western Nigeria. This was addressed as our technical capability was shared to assist our sister State, Osun. "Personally, I benefited because for the first time I was able to traverse Osun State. Sharing lessons with them promotes a good relationship between the two States. We helped to enable them achieve their CNA and promoted regional inclusiveness," he concluded.



Through the Citizens' Needs Assessment exercise, communities in Ekiti and Osun States participate in planning and budgeting processes.

Osun State Citizens Needs Assessment Exercise

In Osun State, the Citizens Needs' Assessment was conducted in collaboration with DFID-PERL and the Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission and supported by the Ekiti State Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget. It was conducted across the 30 Local Government Areas and at one area office. After the Governor was sworn-in in November 2018, he conducted a 'thank you tour' across nine locations where they collated submissions by the citizens on their expectations of the new government. Upon discovering that PERL had assisted Ekiti State with their CNA, Osun requested for similar support. They realised the importance of a more structured and comprehensive engagement with citizens that would be reflective of the inclusive and participatory government the Executive Governor promised the people.

The CNA exercise involved planning meetings with DFID-PERL to craft the questionnaire, ensuring that the structure of the engagement aligned with the pillars of the State Development Plan along seven thematic areas: agriculture and agribusiness, infrastructure, economy, environment, human capital development, governance and growth of internally generated revenue, and youth and development.

There were training sessions that involved two planning officers from Ekiti State, consultants and members of the Osun State Government

