State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) Annual Report

JULY 2013–2014
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Delivery highlights

- Uptake of reform and processes are becoming institutionalised
- Annual review indicated that all outputs moderately exceeded expectation
- State Partnership for Accountability, Responsiveness and Capability (SPARC) interventions have become much more state-specific
- The Department for International Development (DFID) has requested the SPARC programme to extend to April 2016 to overlap with follow-up governance programmes
Year of delivery

This annual report covers the year July 2013 to June 2014. The report describes work carried out during the year, and highlights achievements and challenges.


Given the diverse nature of states, the year 2013–2014 was both encouraging and challenging. The level of uptake of reform and institutionalisation of processes was encouraging. Nevertheless, the political landscape in the run up to elections presents challenges.

State governments in the five states where SPARC began operating in 2012–2013 (Figure 1) have kept to joint agreed intervention approaches. Following elections, SPARC signed a new agreement with Anambra State. The agreement with Yobe was signed in June.

Progress across the states where SPARC has been operating since 2008 has varied. Progress ranged from some improvement in budgeting systems, to better development of medium term sector strategies, building on monitoring and evaluation processes already instituted, and restructuring the civil service to enhance performance. Challenges across most states included delays in Executive Council approvals, and in producing final accounts and auditor generals’ reports. Weak capacity for establishing statistical offices, identifying qualified staff, deployment of ministry staff, political reshuffles and passage of bills also presented challenges.
During the year, SPARC underwent a DFID annual review to assess performance. The review team visited three states (Jigawa, Kano and Zamfara), and met programme managers in other states, the federal team and SPARC partners. The programme scored an **A+ overall**, and output scores as follows:

- **Output 1**: Policy and strategy development, monitoring and evaluation processes improved – **A+** (moderately exceeded expectation)
- **Output 2**: State public financial management processes improved – **A+** (moderately exceeded expectation)
- **Output 3**: State civil service performance processes improved – **A+** (moderately exceeded expectation)
- **Output 4**: Federal support to state governance processes improved – **A+** (moderately exceeded expectation).

Compared to the previous annual review, scores improved. SPARC has already implemented 60% of the recommendations from the review.

Going forward, DFID has made it clear that the package of follow-up programmes in governance should preferably overlap with SPARC. In view of this, and given the lead time for preparing and mobilising follow-up, DFID has requested the SPARC programme to extend to April 2016. SPARC has presented options to DFID and it is now important for arrangements to be finalised. The extension will enable SPARC to attempt to transition reform into new administrations post-election, rather than closing the programme just as new administrations are getting into gear.

There are several areas where SPARC could benefit from further DFID support:

- State political engagement through DFID state representatives
- Enhanced portfolio management at state level in line with state engagement strategies
- Support for signing, monitoring and evaluating memoranda of understanding and development cooperation frameworks with state governments.
Achievements
and progress
highlights

- Sustained improvement in institutionalising medium term planning in several states
- Solid progress in strengthening budgeting processes across states
- Transparency and accountability improving steadily
- Partner states making progress in organisational mapping, planning and restructuring
- Checklist developed for integrating gender and social inclusion into planning
- Help desk launched, further governance tools and resources produced
Achievements and progress

SPARC supports state government efforts to improve planning, and the management of public finances and staff. Improving planning and management enables states to deliver better services and improve the lives of citizens. In 2013–2014, SPARC worked harder than ever, and delivered over 90% of milestones, more than in any previous year.

In 2013–2014, SPARC ... delivered over 90% of milestones, more than in any previous year

PLANNING PROCESSES INSTITUTIONALISED
Several states have shown sustained improvement in medium term planning, and effectively linking policy, planning and budgeting. Lagos, Kaduna and Kano approved their first ever state development plans, whilst Enugu, Jigawa, Niger and Yobe are rolling over existing plans, and Katsina and Zamfara have put processes in place to develop plans.

In total, 33 sector strategies were developed or rolled over in the year. In Jigawa the government budgeted £8,000 for each sector to roll over its strategy. Zamfara produced its first ever health sector strategy, which fed into its 2014 budget. Enugu, Jigawa and Kano have the most comprehensive set of strategies, covering five or more sectors and representing over 75% of government business.

Commitment to improving data systems and reporting performance management has increased. All states have undertaken annual performance reviews. Several states, including Kaduna, have passed laws setting up a bureau of statistics. Niger continued to strengthen its statistics bureau, and worked extensively on key performance indicators and results-based management.

STRONGER BUDGETING PROCESSES
SPARC has made solid progress in strengthening budgeting processes across states. There is evidence of the sustainability of multiyear budgeting in Kaduna and Zamfara, credible budgets in Jigawa and Lagos, and better budget preparation processes in all other states. Anambra and Niger prepare sophisticated circulars that call for budget submissions within ceilings based on macro-economic forecasts.

States now undertake economic and fiscal updates to determine available resources. They prepare fiscal strategy papers setting out resource use expectations and develop budget policy statements setting out expenditure priorities as a basis for budget preparation. This progress is yielding results, even in states such as Kaduna where budget realism has been a continuing problem. In Kano, the 2014 budget, whilst still overoptimistic, is 8% less than that of 2013.

States now undertake economic and fiscal updates to determine available resources
All states have begun converting account classifications in line with the new 52-digit National Chart of Accounts and International Public Sector Accounting Standards. All SPARC states have complied with the new process. Kaduna is now fully compliant and Yobe prepared its 2014 budget using the new codes.

Timeliness is improving in some states. In Niger, before the SPARC programme began, budgets were generally late. With support from SPARC, Niger now presents budgets on time and before the end of the year. In Lagos, the 2014 budget cycle kept to the timetable, and was more realistic, at £1.8 billion, £62 million less than the budget for 2013.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY
Transparency and accountability are improving steadily. Yobe produced 2013 accounts for audit within four weeks of the end of the year and presented audited accounts for 2012 to the Public Accounts Committee, a committee which is open to the general public and civil society. Yobe has made the 1999 to 2012 accounts publically available on the web site of the Auditor General. Moreover, the Auditor General sends copies of Yobe accounts to counterparts in the other 35 states in the federation. With its new chart of accounts, Kaduna continues to produce detailed accounts extremely quickly and makes the accounts publically available.

The partnership with SAVI continues to grow. In Katsina, over 50 staff of civil society and media organisations received training on budget realism and oversight. Similar partnerships have sensitised state houses of assembly in all states to the necessity for budget oversight.

More states are improving procurement processes and systems. Zamfara, learning important lessons from Jigawa, produced its first ever Procurement Bill. Lagos, with SPARC support, formed a community of practice for procurement officers, which published an article in the first ever procurement journal for Lagos State. In Anambra, a new procurement manual promoting economy, efficiency and effectiveness resulted in cost savings of around £20 million from 18 different construction projects.

Anambra made cost savings of around £20 million from 18 different construction projects

SPARC also supported the development and upgrade of a website for Kaduna. The website is now up and running and contains important government documents. Websites in Enugu, Jigawa, Kano and Zamfara also received SPARC support. Development of service charters continues as a further means to encourage accountability. Service charters now cover 13 sectors in Enugu, four in Kano and two in Yobe, and there are also examples of service charters in all other states.

STRUCTURED GOVERNMENT
Amidst the political issues surrounding civil service reform, states partnering with SPARC continue to make progress. Kano, which has previously shown little interest in corporate planning, has indicated renewed commitment, and has developed a new reorganisation plan for the Ministry of Planning and Budget. In Kaduna and Enugu, rollout of corporate planning continued, making steady progress during the year. With high-level support from senior political office holders and technocrats, corporate planning processes rolled out to five additional ministries in each state.
Kaduna reorganised the Ministry of Economic Planning. A new human resource management department was approved in Katsina, whilst Zamfara is establishing a new ministerial tenders board. Lagos established work processes in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, Niger and Yobe mapped mandates across state government, and Kaduna completed workforce analysis.

GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
As part of increasing commitment to gender and social inclusion, SPARC and the ministries of women’s affairs in five states undertook a project to build capacity, focusing on sector strategies and budgets. States taking part were Enugu (agriculture and health), Jigawa (education and health), Niger (agriculture, education and health), Yobe (health) and Zamfara (health). Jigawa has also begun implementation of its gender policy.

A gender and social inclusion checklist helps ensure that planning delivers results for women, girls and other disadvantaged groups. Kaduna mainstreams gender planning in the development of sector strategies, supported by the Gender Working Group, a community organisation. The Gender Working Group makes sure education planning captures girls' needs, by building separate girls' toilets or hostels for example. Pre-primary enrolment of girls has increased by 24% since 2010, resulting in an additional 22,615 girls in the educational system.

In Lagos, the development of service charters has led to various improvements. Some ministries have now put in ramps to enable access by people with special needs. Lagos has upgraded the Civil Service Rules on maternity and paternity leave, and has adopted guiding principles and policies on diversity, social inclusion, gender and disability.

FEDERAL INCENTIVES
Work on federal incentives for state reform continued apace. The Conditional Grants Scheme (CGS) now involves 471 local governments. Good governance criteria control the release of CGS funds – £378 million of debt relief finance so far – and project implementation.

SPARC remains committed to supporting the Nigeria Governors’ Forum (NGF). Despite a political rift, NGF has the potential to be a major force for change after the next election. For example, in Anambra, which pioneered the NGF State Peer Review Mechanism, the Governor conducted local government elections for the first time in over 12 years. SPARC continued working with NGF and in particular with the State Peer Review Mechanism, its flagship. Peer reviews are complete or nearly complete in Ekiti, Jigawa, Niger and Rivers as well as Anambra.

GOOD GOVERNANCE REPLICATED
SPARC made extensive efforts to replicate reforms during the year. The innovative ‘ASK’ help desk provided support beyond the 10 states where we work. Through the ASK facility, SPARC
SPARC has responded to 18 different enquiries. Ebonyi, Oyo, Taraba and Delta States have received various tools and resource materials to enable them to commence reform and have held face-to-face discussions with SPARC and counterparts from other states.

SPARC produced and disseminated more governance tools in 2013–2014 than in any other year, including ‘How to’ guides on: state development planning, sector strategies, developing policy briefs and budget realism. A new toolkit on corporate planning was also completed. The Bureau of Public Service Reforms is replicating the ‘How to’ guide on sector strategies at federal level.

The World Bank is currently replicating the public financial management database. The database will be the first in Nigeria to contain budget information for all 36 states. SPARC also supports World Bank communities of practice. Our technical expertise, ‘How to’ guides and toolkits are now available to all 36 states and communities of practice are looking at four areas in budget preparation and execution.

Following the series of governance share fairs held in 2012 and 2013, two tracking studies provide evidence that the fairs helped stimulate adaptation and adoption of governance reform in non-SPARC states, and reinforced the need for reform. Ondo and Osun have now stepped up action to improve internally generated revenue. After adopting Lagos-style reforms, Osun now raises over £5 million a month in internally generated revenue, which is five times more than in 2010.

After adopting Lagos-style reforms, Osun now raises over £5 million a month in internally generated revenue

PREPARED FOR ELECTIONS
The next elections in Nigeria are due in February 2015, when around eight of the governors in partner states will change. In preparation for changes, SPARC developed an overarching election and transition strategy. Following up on this, each state is developing a specific plan to ensure reform is sustained through the election period and into new administrations. We are also working in partnership with the other DFID programmes to develop a cross-programme approach to the elections.

In preparation for changes, SPARC developed an overarching election and transition strategy
In Anambra, which has already had elections, the proactive approach paid off. The transition strategy was implemented to great effect. A briefing for the new, incoming Governor and a retreat for his new cabinet promoted interest in reform. The new Governor signed a new agreed intervention approach with SPARC, committing to several high-level reform initiatives. SPARC has already begun work with the new administration to prepare a new state development plan.

In line with the proactive approach to political engagement, SPARC continues work on agreed intervention approaches in four other states (Katsina, Niger, Zamfara and Yobe). The agreement with Yobe was signed during the year. In the other states, engagement continues through the change programmes. In Kaduna, engagement is enshrined in the Development Cooperation Framework with the World Bank, DFID and the United Nations. This framework comes to an end in 2013–2014, but the Kaduna State Government has already started to refresh the framework, a process which DFID will support.

**PROGRESS AGAINST 2013 LOGFRAME MILESTONES**

Progress towards the logframe outcome and outputs was considerably better in 2013–2014 than in the previous year (Figure 2). Similarly, progress against milestones was considerably better than the previous year. In all 10 states and the federal component, SPARC achieved over 80% of milestones and in all except two states over 90% of milestones (Figure 3). In Jigawa in particular, where SPARC completed 68% of milestones in 2012–2013, a commendable 97% were completed 2013–2014. In Niger and Kaduna, an impressive 100% of milestones were achieved.

The proportion of the budget spent in 2013–2014 was slightly less than in the previous year because of heightened political activities, security concerns and more use of in-house resources to deliver milestones. In federal work, we were unable to complete the State Peer Review Mechanism pilot process because of the rift in the NGF, which resulted in unspent funds in this area. In addition, governments themselves are increasingly financing governance reform initiatives, for example Kaduna funded its Executive Council Induction, which SPARC has previously supported.

**Figure 2. Progress towards outcome and outputs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Output 1</th>
<th>Output 2</th>
<th>Output 3</th>
<th>Output 4</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Anambra</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
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<td>G</td>
</tr>
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<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
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<td>G</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
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<td>A/G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
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<td>A</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
</tr>
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<td>A</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
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<td>A/G</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>A/G</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

- **G**: Fully achieved
- **A**: Partially achieved
## Delivery of activity milestones 2013–2014

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<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Benchmark 100% completion</th>
<th>% of budget spent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaduna</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme</td>
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<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jigawa</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anambra</td>
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<td>71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federal</td>
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<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enugu</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lagos</td>
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<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Kano</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamfara</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Milestones achieved
Value for money highlights

- SPARC has generated significant returns, and is increasingly cost-effective and efficient
- State budgets are becoming more realistic
- SPARC-supported changes have resulted in states making significant savings and generating more revenue
- SPARC support is helping give other development partners the confidence to invest in state governments
- SPARC contributions encourage states to spend more on education and health
- SPARC is successfully encouraging state governments to take financial responsibility for governance reform initiatives
Value for money

The integrated financial and management information system makes it possible to give an overall assessment of the extent to which SPARC delivers value for money. The assessment of value for money builds on previous analysis, and includes all 10 supported states and recent data on state government expenditure.

Overall, SPARC has generated significant returns, is increasingly cost-effective and efficient, and has successfully economised and made savings. The annual review determined that SPARC represents value for money (Figure 4). In total, since the beginning of the programme, SPARC has achieved efficiency and economy cost savings of around £8,400,000 (17% of total spending to date) (Figure 5).

SPARC support helps give other development partners the confidence to invest in supporting key institutional reforms in state governments. For example, with SPARC’s help, Lagos State Government successfully met the conditions required to access the first two tranches of World Bank loan financing and is expected to meet conditions for a third tranche – amounting to around £350,000,000 (Figure 4: 3).

SPARC work in support of sister programmes, ESSPIN and PATHS2, has contributed to encouraging states to spend more on education and health. This was achieved by improving sector strategies, the predictability of sector budget releases and the way in which public services are managed (Figure 4: 4). This support, together with savings and higher revenues, has contributed to state governments spending an additional £183,000,000 on education and health (Figure 4: 5). This, in turn, has helped enrol almost 1,500,000 more children in primary and junior secondary schools, and ensured that an additional estimated 273,000 children received all their basic vaccinations (Figure 4: 6).1

SPARC support has contributed to changes that have resulted in states making significant savings and generating more revenue. For example, SPARC helped Enugu, Kano and Jigawa States to recover funds from dormant bank accounts. SPARC supported initiatives that improved revenues in Enugu and Kaduna, and helped remove ‘ghost’ workers from payrolls in Katsina and Zamfara. These initiatives have freed up an estimated additional £149,000,000 for delivering basic services (Figure 4: 2) since the programme began.

1 Education figures from the Annual School Census in the five original SPARC states where ESSPIN also works. Vaccination estimates calculated from 2008 and 2013 DHS vaccination rates applied to 2006 census figures for the five original SPARC states where PATHS2 also works.
Figure 4. Value for money

1. Compared to baseline budgets, for every £1 spent by SPARC from 2008–2012 on public financial management (PFM) reforms, the 10 state governments with whom the programme works have made their 2010, 2011 and 2012 budgets £62 more realistic.

   - £523,000,000
   - £8,500,000
   - £48,000,000
   - £149,000,000

2. Since the programme began, for every £1 spent, SPARC has helped state governments redirect £3 to delivering basic services through initiatives such as increasing revenues, reducing payrolls and closing dormant bank accounts.

3. In Lagos, for every £1 spent, SPARC helps government access £47 in additional financing through support to meet conditions for releasing three World Bank loan tranches.

4. From 2009–2014 SPARC spent around £7,000,000 to improve the way in which basic services are delivered through helping 10 state governments develop more effective strategies and organise better.

   - 45 (each £92,000)
   - 122 (each £23,500)

5. Compared to baseline figures, for every £1 spent by SPARC from 2008–2012, the 10 state governments with whom the programme works spent an additional £6 on health and education in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

6. For every £24 spent by SPARC from 2008–2013, one additional child was enrolled in a primary or junior secondary school in the five original SPARC-supported states compared to 2009/2010.

   - 273,000
   - 825,000
   - 670,000

In addition, in the same states, compared to 2008, it is estimated that an additional 273,000 children aged 12–23 months received all their basic vaccinations from 2009–2013.
EFFICIENCY

SPARC successfully encourages state governments to assume financial responsibility for governance reforms. Financial responsibilities states have assumed include funding the development or upgrading of integrated financial management information systems in Enugu and Jigawa, state government officials acting as lead trainers and facilitators in Niger, and funding a review and refresher session for a development cooperation framework in Kaduna. Since the beginning of the programme, this adds up to over £2,100,000 provided by state governments – an amount that SPARC would otherwise normally have provided.

SPARC has sought to keep increases in administrative spending to a minimum in order to direct most of the overall budget to core technical work. For example, despite expanding into five additional states, SPARC has reduced the administrative share of the budget from 15% in 2010–2011 to 13% in subsequent years. This reduction represents a saving of almost £500,000. Together with the £2,100,000 provided by state governments, this adds up to a saving of £2,600,000 (Figure 5: 1).

Rather than engage consultants, SPARC continues to assign full-time technical staff a greater role in supporting capacity development. This has saved around £3,300,000 since the start of the programme (Figure 5: 2). The strategy of using Nigerian consultants (and international-calibre consultants based in Nigeria) in preference to flying in expatriate consultants continues, even with expansion to five more states.

Across the entire programme, the proportion of consultancy days provided by national consultants rose from 44% in 2009–2010 to 62% in 2013–2014, reducing average fees and contributing to economy savings (see later).

... the proportion of consultancy days provided by national consultants rose from 44% in 2009–2010 to 62% in 2013–2014

ECONOMY

SPARC’s main cost is consultancy fees. In the early stages of the programme, SPARC did not deploy large numbers of consultants, despite DFID’s concerns that the programme was too lean at inception. Instead, SPARC gradually scaled up technical assistance based on identified needs and the likelihood of success. As indicated previously, SPARC increasingly uses Nigerian consultants. As a result, the average consultant’s fee fell by 14% over the period 2009–2010 to 2013–2014, saving around £1,700,000.

In implementing programme activities, SPARC ensures that it seeks the best value possible. This does not mean that we always opt for the cheapest products or services, but that we balance initial costs against long term efficiency and effectiveness. We have negotiated discounts with hotels and training venues, sought no-cost alternatives to office locations and training venues (e.g. state government secretariats), and expanded the roles of existing staff rather than appoint new ones. We estimate that through these other economy measures we have saved over £800,000, which, added to the £1,700,000 savings in consultants’ fees comes to £2,500,000 (Figure 5: 3).
1. SPARC has made almost £2,600,000 in efficiency cost savings by crowding in direct government funding of programme initiatives and constraining administrative spending – despite expanding into five additional states and scaling up in others.

2. SPARC has gradually increased the proportion of inputs delivered by national consultants and has made economy savings of almost £3,300,000 through increasing the technical roles of full-time staff.

3. Since the beginning of the programme, SPARC has gradually improved delivery of work plan milestones to 93%, whilst at the same time reducing the average fee by 14% – which, together with other economy measures, has resulted in savings worth over £2,500,000.
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