

EDO STATE



Geopolitical Profile: Edo State was created out of the former Bendel State on 27th August, 1991 and broadly covers the former colonial Benin Province, save the old Asaba Division. Edo State is largely homogenous as the people were of the common ancestry at the core of the ancient Benin Empire. The state is located in the South-South geopolitical zone and is one of the states in the Niger Delta region. It is bordered by Kogi State to the North, Delta State to the East and South, and Ondo State to the West. Lying between latitude 5.44° and 7.34° North and longitude 5.4° and 6.45° East, the State has a land mass of 19,187 square km or (7,494.92 square miles). With eighteen (18) local government areas, the State has an estimated population of 3,602,124 (as at 2010).

By the results of the governorship election in June 2012, the ruling political party in the State is the All Progressives Congress (APC). During the April 2015 elections, the APC won 20 (twenty) seats in State House of Assembly while the People Democratic Party (PDP) won 4 (four) seats in the 24-member EDHA. However, in the earlier National Assembly elections, the PDP won five (5) while APC won four (4) seats in the House of Representatives. Similarly, in the Senatorial elections, the PDP won 2 (two) and APC (1) one seats respectively.

Economic Potentials: Edo State is endowed with abundant agricultural, forestry and mineral resources. In addition to the well-known forestry and wood products of the state, it has a high yield of food and cash crops, among the most valuable cash crops are cocoa and rubber. The mineral resources in Edo State include marble, clay, limestone, iron-ore, gypsum, glass-sand, gold, dolomite, phosphate, bitumen, oil and gas. Thus, it has the capacity to support major manufacturing and service industries, especially in areas of large-scale farming, agro processing and packaging, solid minerals mining, oil and gas, bitumen processing, petrochemicals and tourism in the Okomu, Sakponba in Benin area; Udo in Esan area, Sobe, etc., forest reserves in

Afemai areas, respectively. The State has three public universities and four private universities with numerous other higher institutions of learning both public and private.

Public Economic Management And Investment Policies: The Edo State Government has continued with the privatization policy, introduced in the 1990s which reduces its share-holding interest in any commercially-oriented enterprise to not more than 20 percent. As part of incentives to create enabling environment to attract, promote and sustain local and foreign investors, the government has developed industrial estates in the three geopolitical zones of the State. Thus, well-laid out land resources are allocated as industrial plots to private investors (local and foreign) and loans provided through special purpose agencies to industrialists like the “loan guarantee scheme.” There is also a policy of preparation and making available to entrepreneurs feasibility studies and project profiles as well as various skills acquisition programmes for youths.

Governance Policies: Since 2009 the government has introduced far-reaching reforms in the areas of governance, taxes and public expenditure management. About N1.5b (one billion, five hundred million Naira) is realized monthly as internally generated revenue from taxes and rates and public expenditure is standardized through application of modern ICT resources.

Situational Analysis of Edo State: Edo State is relatively peaceful as it is largely devoid of inter-communal clashes, faith-based violence nor has it witnessed generalized insecurity. However, the ugly incidence of kidnapping and armed banditry was noticeable in the State in the recent past. It is also remarkable that the political system in Edo State is not sufficiently democratic, which partly explains that the two major political parties in the State are in constant abrasive contestation and public spat. The language of interchange of the parties is often less than civil.

It is significant that the State Civil Service is the largest employer of labour. However, it requires more in-depth performance management training. The lower and middle-level hands in the service appear to be in a major quandary not only due to noticeable evidence of quantitative gaps but also the seeming lack of resources and circumstances for mentoring of the middle echelon.

FINDINGS

Public Access to budget documents

Edo state scores 11 out of 100 on the State Budget Transparency Index. While most documents are produced in the state, not a single document is publicly available.

Public participation in the budget

Citizens and CSOs in Edo state have almost no space to be involved in the budget process with a score of 3 out of 100.

Public access to procurement information

With a score of 10 out of 100, citizens have very limited access to procurement information in Edo. The Edo State Public Procurement Law of 2012 regulates the entire procurement process and established the Public Procurement Agency. The state government publishes some awarded contracts online.

Recommendations

CIRDDOC recommends the following to improve budget transparency, public participation in the budget process, and transparency in the procurement process:

Budget Transparency

The state executive can easily increase budget transparency in Edo state by timely publishing, online, the following documents:

- ☐ Call Circular for 2014 Budget Preparation
- ☐ Proposed Appropriation Bill Edo State of Nigeria and Edo State Medium Term Fiscal Strategy Paper
- ☐ Proposed Appropriation Law, Edo State of Nigeria
- ☐ Budget Performance Reports
- ☐ Mid-Year Budget Performance Report
- ☐ Accountant-General's Report
- ☐ Report of the Auditor-General of Edo State on the Accounts of Government of Edo State of Nigeria

In addition to publishing these documents, the Ministry of Budget, Planning and Economic Development should partner with CSOs in the state to develop a Citizen's Budget.

Public Participation

To effectively take advantage of knowledge of CSOs and citizens, the government of Edo state should do the following:

- ☐ open the budget formulation process to all constituencies; establish effective mechanisms to solicit the public's inputs on what should be included in the State Draft Estimates; and clearly articulate what the government expects to do with these inputs.

- ☐ publish a list of beneficiaries of projects, subsidies, social plans and other targeted spending from MDAs.
- ☐ establish practical mechanisms for the public to provide inputs on how the budget is being implemented and publish reports on how these inputs are used.

Similarly, the Edo State House of Assembly should do the following:

- ☐ hold open committee hearings on the budget for the public where citizens and CSOs can testify and publish reports on these hearings.
- ☐ hold public hearings on the Auditor General's Report.

Lastly, the Auditor General should do the following:

- ☐ establish practical mechanisms for the public to submit inputs on what should be audited.

Procurement Process

To improve the entire procurement processes, the following should be done:

- ☐ the executive should ensure that the Edo State Public Procurement Law is available to citizens.
- ☐ the government should give the Public Procurement Agency the resources necessary to fulfill its duty and establish a procurement complaint board that manages an alternative dispute mechanism.
- ☐ the executive should publish all procurement decisions along with their justifications for all community projects.

Access to Information

To improve access to information in the state, the government should do the following:

1. Domesticate the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, 2011.
2. Establish Freedom of Information (FOI) Agency in the state.