



**IMO STATE PROJECT  
FACILITATION FUND (PFF)  
BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL  
PLAN**

**2025**



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## **1. Strategic Overview**

### **1.1 Background and Rationale for Establishing the PFF**

The **Imo State Project Facilitation Fund (PFF)** is established as a practical policy instrument to support the preparation and delivery of priority investment projects that can stimulate economic activity, expand employment, and strengthen private sector participation in the State. The Fund responds to long-standing challenges affecting project development in Imo State, including weak project preparation capacity, limited access to early-stage financing, and insufficient coordination across Ministries, Departments, and Agencies. These gaps have often prevented viable ideas from reaching implementation or attracting private investment, despite their potential contribution to growth and service delivery.

Small and medium-scale enterprises, cooperatives, and local investors in Imo State continue to face difficulties accessing affordable finance, technical support, and structured market opportunities, particularly in agriculture, agro-processing, infrastructure services, and emerging productive sectors. The PFF is therefore designed to provide targeted financial and technical support that helps transform viable concepts into bankable projects. By supporting feasibility work, advisory services, and early transaction preparation, the Fund will help reduce project risks, improve investment readiness, and enable greater participation of local businesses, youth, and women in the State's economic development agenda. This Business and Financial Plan is developed pursuant to the Imo State Public Private Partnership Law (2010), and the Executive Order 13 of 2024 Imo State Project Facilitation Framework (PFF).

### **1.2 Mission, Vision, and Strategic Objectives**

#### **Mission**

To strengthen the capacity of entrepreneurs, cooperatives, and project sponsors in Imo State through coordinated financial and technical support that enables viable projects to reach implementation and contribute to economic growth.

#### **Vision:**

A resilient and inclusive Imo economy, powered by thriving small businesses and productive enterprises that generate jobs, wealth, and shared prosperity.

#### **Strategic Objectives:**

1. To provide targeted financial support to high-potential businesses and cooperatives in priority sectors.
2. To stimulate job creation and skills development across urban and rural communities.
3. To promote local production, value addition, and import substitution through enterprise growth.

4. To improve access to finance and reduce youth and women unemployment.
5. To align enterprise support with the Imo State Economic Development Strategy and national policy frameworks.

### 1.3 Expected Outcomes and Development Impact

The implementation of the Project Facilitation Fund is expected to yield the following measurable outcomes and long-term impacts:

- Increased business startups and expansion of existing enterprises across sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, technology, and services.
- Job Creation: Generation of direct and indirect employment, particularly among youth and women.
- Enhanced participation of marginalized groups in economic activities through targeted support.
- Strengthening of local production and supply chains to boost domestic output and reduce dependency on imports.
- Increased internally generated revenue (IGR) through business growth, tax contributions, and improved formalization.
- Strengthened support infrastructure for entrepreneurship, including training, mentorship, and business advisory services.

### 1.4 Strategic Value Proposition and Alignment with Government Priorities

The PFF aligns with the Imo State Government's strategic vision for sustainable economic transformation, as outlined in development frameworks such as the Imo State Economic Development Plan, the Imo State Agricultural Transformation Agenda, and the Nigeria Economic Sustainability Plan (NESP).

The fund acts as a **strategic enabler** by complementing existing social investment programs (e.g., KWASSIP), industrial policies, and youth empowerment initiatives. It leverages both financial and non-financial support to position Imo State as a hub for **inclusive, innovation-driven, and enterprise-led development**.

Through PFF, the government reinforces its commitment to:

- Reducing poverty and unemployment.
- Promoting local investment and value addition.
- Enhancing access to finance for underserved segments; and
- Creating an enabling environment for private sector growth.

The strategic value proposition lies in PFF's ability to unlock enterprise potential, mobilize private investment, and contribute to shared economic prosperity in line with state and national development priorities.

## 2. Pipeline Alignment and Market Positioning

### 2.1 Linkage with the State PPP Pipeline and Priority Investments

The Imo State Project Facilitation Fund (PFF) is strategically designed to align with the State Government's pipeline of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects and high-priority investments identified under the Imo State Economic Development Strategy. This includes sectors such as:

- Agro-processing and industrial parks
- Renewable energy and infrastructure
- ICT and digital innovation hubs
- Affordable housing and urban renewal
- Transport and logistics value chains

The Fund serves as a complementary instrument that de-risks early-stage private sector participation, especially for SMEs and indigenous businesses that can integrate into larger PPP frameworks. By providing targeted financing and support, the PFF enhances the commercial viability of local suppliers, service providers, and cooperative-led enterprises that can serve as feeders or partners to ongoing and future PPP projects in the state.

### 2.2 Role of the Fund in Transaction Development and Delivery

The PFF plays a critical enabling role in the preparation and delivery of investable projects through several mechanisms:

- Seed and bridge financing for small enterprises involved in value chains critical to PPP projects (e.g., local contractors, agro-suppliers, off-takers)
- Support for feasibility studies, business planning, and technical validation for early-stage concepts that can grow into PPP components
- Capacity building for project promoters to improve governance, risk management, and bankability
- Facilitation of linkages between community-based enterprises and institutional investors or concessionaires

This proactive support ensures that more local initiatives are **transaction-ready**, reducing delays in PPP delivery and promoting inclusive growth through local participation.

### 2.3 Anticipated Value-Add and Contribution to Bankable Projects

The PFF is expected to create significant value addition to Imo State’s economic ecosystem by:

- Expanding the pipeline of bankable enterprises that can attract private capital or participate in blended finance models
- Improving the quality and scalability of local businesses, making them more attractive to financial institutions and development finance partners
- Unlocking funding for otherwise overlooked but strategic micro-projects that support broader PPP infrastructure and service delivery goals
- Bridging the last-mile financing gap, particularly for women- and youth-led businesses, which often lack collateral or access to formal credit

Ultimately, the Fund will contribute to the creation of a robust and diversified project pipeline, help crowd-in private-sector investment, and foster inclusive economic development aligned with Imo State’s long-term policy vision.

### **3. Institutional and Governance Framework**

#### **3.1 Host Institution and Reporting Structure**

The Imo State Project Facilitation Fund (PFF) will be hosted by the Imo State Public Private Partnership Board, in coordination with key implementation ministries and agencies, including the , Imo State Ministry of Trade and Investment , Imo State Investment Promotion Agency (ISIPA) .

The Fund will operate as a semi-autonomous initiative with apparent oversight and accountability mechanisms. It will report directly to the Executive Governor of Imo State through the, Imo State Public Private Partnership Board with periodic performance reviews, financial audits, and programmatic assessments submitted to the State Executive Council and relevant legislative committees.

#### **3.2 Governance Organs and Management Roles**

The governance structure of the PFF will comprise the following core entities:

##### **A. Project Facilitation Fund Steering Committee (PFF-SC):**

- Commissioner for Economic Planning – Chair
- Commissioner for Finance – Member
- Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice – Member
- Commissioner for Works – Member
- Director-General, BPPP Agency – Member
- Director-General, Budget Office – Member
- Chairman, State Internal Revenue Service – Member

- B. Representative of the Governor – Member
- C. Head of Secretariat – Secretary

**B. Fund Management Unit (FMU):**

- Led by a Fund Manager appointed by the Governor
- Responsible for day-to-day operations, including fund disbursement, monitoring, reporting, and stakeholder engagement

**C. Technical Advisory Panel (TAP):**

- Composed of professionals from the banking sector, development finance institutions (DFIs), MSME support organizations, and academia
- Advises on due diligence, project appraisal, risk assessment, and capacity development programs

**3.3 Organizational Structure and Staffing Requirements**

The Fund Management Unit will be structured as follows:

<b>Key Units &amp; Staff Roles:</b>	
<b>Units</b>	<b>Key Personnel</b>
Fund Administration	Fund Manager, Finance Officer
Project Appraisal & Investment	Investment Analyst, Risk Officer
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	M&E Specialist, Field Officers
Capacity Building & Partnerships	Program Officer, Training Coordinators
Legal & Compliance	Legal Advisor
Communications & Outreach	Communications Officer

Staffing will be guided by a merit-based recruitment process, with emphasis on financial expertise, enterprise development experience, and knowledge of local economic contexts.

**3.4 Delegation of Authority and Decision-Making Processes**

To ensure transparency and efficiency, a Delegation of Authority (DoA) Framework will be established and embedded into the Fund’s operational manual. Key features include:

- **Threshold-based approvals:** Project proposals and disbursements will be approved based on amount thresholds. For example:
  - ≤ ₦2 million: Fund Manager
  - ₦2–10 million: PFF Steering Committee Subgroup
  - ₦10 million: Full Steering Committee and Ministry approval

- **Multi-tiered appraisal:** All applications undergo technical review by the Fund Management Unit and due diligence by the Technical Advisory Panel before funding decisions.
- **Quarterly governance reviews:** All decisions, fund performance, and project outcomes will be reviewed quarterly by the Steering Committee to ensure accountability and adjust strategies as needed.

This structure ensures a balanced approach between autonomy, accountability, and strategic oversight, fostering trust among stakeholders and beneficiaries.

#### 4. Financial Plan

##### 4.1 Fund Size, Capitalization, and Duration

Initial capitalization is projected at ~~₱5–₱10~~ billion over 5 years (2025–2030), subject to annual review based on uptake and impact.

##### 4.2 Funding Windows — Structure, Purpose, and Allocation

Window	Purpose	Criteria
A: Enterprise Support	MSMEs, cooperatives, startups	Business viability, innovation
B: Project Preparation	Feasibility studies, transaction design	Linked to PPP pipeline
C: Strategic Projects	High-impact sectors (e.g., agro, logistics)	Government priorities, scale

##### 4.3 Start-up Capital Requirements

The State commits **≥3% of PPP pipeline CAPEX (FY2025/26)**.

If CAPEX is ~~₱100B~~, minimum state contribution = ~~₱3B~~.

##### 4.4 Fund Flow Mapping and Disbursement

Funds will flow through a dedicated account, with disbursements made via financial intermediaries after project appraisal and approval. All disbursements will **be performance-based** and milestone-linked.

## 4.5 Funding Sources

### Internal:

- State budget
- ISIPA allocations
- SOE contributions

### External:

- DFIs (AfDB, World Bank)
- Donor agencies
- Private investors
- Impact funds
- HOPE-GOV

## 4.6 Leverage and Co-Financing Strategy

Target leverage: **1:3 ratio**

Mechanisms:

- Risk-sharing with banks
- Matching grants
- Equity co-investments
- Syndicated project support

## 4.7 Terms of Support

- **Grants:** For early-stage MSMEs
- **Viability Gap Support:** For PPP-linked projects
- **Guarantees:** For credit risk sharing
- **Contingent Liabilities:** For PPP commitments

## 4.8 Funding and Expenditure Plans

Year	Window A	Window A	Window A	Total
2026	₦1.5B	₦5000	₦1B	₦3B
2027	₦2B	₦700M	₦1.5B	₦4.2B
2028	₦2.5B	₦1B	₦2B	₦5.5B

#### 4.9 Medium-Term Financial Projections

Source	2026	2027	2028	Total
State Budget	₦2B	₦2.5B	₦3BN	₦7.5B
DFI Contributions	₦1B	₦1.2B	₦1.5B	₦3.7B
Private Leverage	₦3B	₦4B	₦5B	₦12B
Total	₦6B	₦7.7B	₦9.5B	₦23.2B

#### 4.10 Fund Sustainability Strategy

- Revolving Fund Mechanism: Loan repayments recycled
- Cost Recovery: Fees charges on services
- Risk Management: Monitoring and restructuring
- Efficiency Partnerships: Reducing overhead via collaboration

#### 4.11 Financial Plan Approval & Revision

Annual plans are:

1. Drafted by the FMU
  2. Reviewed by the Advisory Panel
  3. Approved by Steering Committee
  4. Integrated into the State Budget
- A **mid-term review** is conducted every two years.

### 5. Implementation Roadmap

#### 5.1 Operationalization Timeline and Milestones

The PFF will be rolled out in three phases over a 12-month period, with defined deliverables to ensure smooth implementation, strong oversight, and stakeholder alignment.

Phase	Timeline	Key Activities / Milestones
<b>Phase 1: Pre-launch (Mobilization)</b>	Q1 2026	

- Approval of Fund structure by Executive Council
- Budgetary allocation and initial capitalization
- Legal and regulatory framework development
- Establishment of Steering Committee and Fund Management Unit (FMU)
- Development of operational manuals, fund disbursement guidelines, and M&E frameworks

**| Phase 2: Setup & Capacity Building | Q2 2025 |**

- Recruitment and onboarding of FMU staff
- Procurement of IT systems, accounting tools, and databases
- Engagement of technical advisors and financial intermediaries
- Sensitization campaigns and public awareness drives
- Selection and onboarding of partner financial institutions (PFIs)

**| Phase 3: Launch & Initial Disbursement | Q3–Q4 2025 |**

- Call for applications (MSMEs, project promoters, cooperatives)
- Project evaluation and approvals under funding windows
- Disbursement of first batch of funds
- First round of monitoring, learning, and adaptation
- Stakeholder review and quarterly reporting

## 5.2 Staffing Plan, Recruitment, and Capacity Requirements

A lean yet highly skilled team will lead the Fund’s operations, drawing on sectoral and financial expertise. Recruitment will be merit-based, with an emphasis on public-sector accountability and private-sector efficiency.

Unit	Key Roles	Recruitment Source
<b>Fund Management Unit (FMU)</b>	Fund Manager, Finance Lead, Admin Officer	Open competitive process
<b>Investment &amp; Appraisal Unit</b>	Investment Analyst, Risk Officer	Private sector/DFIs
<b>M&amp;E &amp; Reporting</b>	Monitoring Officer, Learning & Data Analyst	Development sector / NGOs
<b>Legal &amp; Compliance</b>	Legal Advisor, Internal Auditor	Legal firms/public service
<b>Capacity Development Unit</b>	Program Officer, MSME Trainer	MSME networks/training firms

### Capacity Needs:

- Investment appraisal
- Risk management
- Project preparation techniques
- MSME support and financial inclusion
- ICT systems for fund tracking and reporting

Capacity-building workshops will be conducted in partnership with institutions like the Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN), BOI, and relevant donor agencies.

### **5.3 Engagement of External Advisors, Fund Managers, or Transaction Experts**

To enhance credibility, transparency, and technical quality, the PFF will engage vetted external experts and third-party service providers, including:

- **Transaction Advisors:** For project preparation, feasibility studies, and structuring PPP components
- **Fund Administrators or Financial Intermediaries:** For disbursement, recovery tracking, and financial reporting
- **Legal & Regulatory Consultants:** For risk mitigation, compliance, and contract management
- **Auditors & M&E Consultants:** For independent evaluations, audit trails, and performance management

All engagements will follow open competitive bidding, in line with Imo State public procurement laws, 2010, with provisions for framework contracts and performance-based payments.

### **5.4 Coordination Strategy with MDAs, Investors, and Development Partners**

Effective implementation of the PFF will depend on structured collaboration between the Fund and key stakeholders across government, the private sector, and the development community.

#### **Coordination Strategy:**

- **With MDAs:**
  - Regular joint planning and review sessions with key ministries (Finance, Planning, Agriculture, Commerce, Environment).
  - Sharing of beneficiary data and sectoral intelligence to avoid duplication and ensure harmonization with state policy.
- **With Investors and PFIs:**
  - Partnership agreements outlining co-financing mechanisms, risk-sharing terms, and application screening roles.
  - Regular investment forums and pitch days to link PFF beneficiaries with venture capital and commercial lenders.
- **With Development Partners and Donors:**
  - Alignment with donor-funded enterprise support initiatives (e.g., GIZ, World Bank, AfDB).
  - Donor coordination working group hosted bi-annually to align funding and technical assistance pipelines.

- Resource mobilization strategy targeting grant matching, TA support, and blended finance models.

PFF will also maintain a **Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan (SECP)** to ensure transparency, public awareness, and accountability.

## 6. Risk Management Plan

### 6.1 Risk Identification and Categorization

Effective risk management is central to the success and sustainability of the PFF. The following categories of risks have been identified based on the Fund’s design, operational environment, and stakeholder profile:

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Financial Risk</b>	Misuse of funds, delayed repayments, or non-performing loans
<b>Operational Risk</b>	Delays in fund disbursement, weak M&E systems, or inadequate human capacity
<b>Political Risk</b>	Change in government priorities, policy reversals, or political interference
<b>Reputational Risk</b>	Perceived or actual lack of transparency, mismanagement, or exclusion
<b>Regulatory Risk</b>	Non-compliance with state procurement or financial regulations
<b>Fraud/Corruption Risk</b>	Potential for bribery, kickbacks, or unauthorized approvals
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	Poor alignment with the PPP pipeline or a mismatch between funding and actual demand
<b>Environmental &amp; Social Risk</b>	Environmental degradation or social exclusion tied to funded projects

### 6.2 Risk Matrix with Likelihood, Impact, and Mitigation Measures

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
Misappropriation of Funds	Medium	High	Independent audits, fund flow tracking system, strong internal controls
Weak Project Selection	Medium	High	Multi-layered appraisal, technical advisory input, defined evaluation criteria
Delays in Disbursement	Medium	Medium	Clear fund flow protocol, staff training, performance-based timelines

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>
Political Interference	Medium	High	Legal framework for fund autonomy, steering committee with multi-sector representation
Non-Performing Loans (NPLs)	High	High	Credit scoring models, guarantees, borrower vetting, repayment tracking
Fraudulent Applications	High	Medium	Identity verification, vetting through partner banks, penalties for misrepresentation
Regulatory Non-Compliance	Low	High	Legal advisor embedded in FMU, training on public procurement and finance laws
Reputational Risk	Medium	Medium	Transparent reporting, grievance redress mechanism, open application process
Environmental/Social Harm	Low	Medium	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) for qualifying projects

### 6.3 Oversight and Compliance Mechanisms

The PFF will embed a multi-layered oversight and compliance framework to proactively manage risks and ensure integrity:

#### A. Internal Oversight

- Fund Manager: Accountable for all operational, financial, and compliance functions.
- Internal Auditor: Regularly reviews financial records, procurement, and disbursements.
- Monitoring & Evaluation Unit: Tracks project milestones and identifies red flags in implementation.

#### B. External Oversight

- Annual Independent Audit: Commissioned by the Steering Committee and shared with the Executive Council.
- State Auditor General's Office: Authorized to review all public fund allocations and expenditures.
- Steering Committee: Provides quarterly performance review, policy oversight, and governance assurance.

#### C. Compliance Tools

- Whistleblower Policy & Reporting Channel: Anonymous platform for reporting misconduct or fraud.
- Procurement & Financial Operations Manual: Defines clear procedures and responsibilities.

- Risk Register: Maintained and updated quarterly to capture emerging risks and mitigation actions.

By institutionalizing a strong risk governance culture, the Fund will maintain public trust, investor confidence, and alignment with Imo State’s transparency and accountability standards.

## 7. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting Framework

### 7.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Inputs, Outcomes, and Impact Metrics

The PFF’s M&E framework is structured around a Results-Based Management (RBM) model, with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) spanning four levels: inputs, outputs, outcomes, and long-term impacts.

Level	Indicator Type	Examples of KPIs
<b>Inputs</b>	Resources committed to activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amount disbursed per window</li> <li>- Number of staff recruited</li> <li>- Number of external advisors contracted</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	Immediate results of fund-supported activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No. of MSMEs funded</li> <li>- No. of cooperatives supported</li> <li>- No. of trainings delivered</li> <li>- Jobs created</li> </ul>
<b>Outcomes</b>	Medium-term changes resulting from outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase in revenue of funded businesses</li> <li>- Loan repayment rates</li> <li>- No. of projects linked to PPP pipeline</li> <li>- Contribution to GDP growth</li> <li>- Reduction in unemployment</li> </ul>
<b>Impact</b>	Long-term systemic changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased IGR</li> <li>- Poverty reduction metrics in target areas</li> </ul>

These KPIs will be tailored per funding window (A, B, C) and tracked using digital dashboards and periodic field assessments.

### 7.2 Medium-Term M&E Plan

The PFF will adopt a 3-Year Rolling M&E Plan, updated annually to align with emerging priorities and feedback. The plan will cover:

Component	Activity	Frequency
<b>Baseline Survey</b>	Conducted before fund disbursement begins to establish benchmarks	Once (pre-2026 launch)
<b>Quarterly Monitoring</b>	Physical and financial progress monitoring of funded projects	Quarterly
<b>Mid-Year Reviews</b>	Internal performance assessments and adjustment of activities	Semi-annual
<b>Annual Outcome Evaluation</b>	Evaluation of performance against KPIs and sector targets	Annually
<b>Independent Impact Review</b>	External evaluation of fund impact (economic, social, gender-inclusive)	Every 2–3 years

M&E will be led by the Monitoring & Evaluation Unit of the Fund Management Unit (FMU), with technical support from third-party consultants and development partners.

### 7.3 Reporting Channels, Disclosure, and Transparency Protocols

To ensure transparency and accountability, PFF will institutionalize a structured reporting and disclosure system:

Report Type	Audience	Frequency	Channel
<b>Operational Report</b>	Steering Committee, MoF, Governor	Quarterly	Internal dashboard, formal report
<b>Public Progress Report</b>	General Public, Beneficiaries	Bi-annually	Official website, press releases
<b>Audit Report</b>	State Auditor-General, Donors	Annually	Shared via state audit system
<b>Impact Assessment Report</b>	State Government, Investors, Donors	Every 2–3 years	Online publication & briefings

The Fund will maintain a **transparency portal** where users can view disbursement data, beneficiary information, and performance metrics in compliance with the Imo State Open Governance Initiative (IMOOGI).

### 7.4 Feedback Mechanisms for Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement will be driven through real-time data, stakeholder input, and adaptive program design. Feedback channels will include:

- Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM): A centralized, accessible platform for reporting complaints and concerns.

- **Beneficiary Feedback Surveys:** Collected via SMS, online forms, and physical monitoring visits after disbursement.
- **Quarterly Stakeholder Forums:** Including MDAs, PFIs, cooperatives, youth/women groups, and donor partners to discuss lessons learned.
- **Learning & Adaptation Workshops:** Internal sessions to adjust strategy and processes based on findings.

A **Feedback-to-Policy Loop** will be built into the M&E system to ensure that relevant insights inform:

- Operational guidelines
- Disbursement protocols
- Sector focus and funding allocations
- Capacity-building efforts

## 8. Pipeline Development and Origination Strategy

### 8.1 Project Screening and Prioritization Criteria

To ensure the PFF funds are directed toward high-impact, feasible, and scalable initiatives, a rigorous project screening and prioritization process will be applied at all stages of the funding lifecycle. This process will be guided by pre-approved eligibility, strategic alignment, and technical criteria.

#### Key Screening and Prioritization Criteria:

Category	Criteria
<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	Project must align with Imo State development priorities and PPP pipeline
<b>Commercial Viability</b>	Clear business model, revenue potential, cost efficiency
<b>Development Impact</b>	Potential to generate jobs, increase local production, or improve livelihoods
<b>Readiness</b>	Project must have basic documentation: business plan, feasibility, etc.
<b>Inclusivity</b>	Preference for youth-, women-, or rural-led enterprises
<b>Environmental/Social</b>	Must comply with relevant ESIA or demonstrate minimal environmental risk

Projects will be evaluated using a standardized **scoring matrix** to ensure consistency, objectivity, and transparency in decision-making.

## 8.2 Early-Stage Project Development and Readiness Assessment

To address the challenge of weak project readiness, the PFF will support a dedicated early-stage development framework under Window B (Project Preparation Support).

### Key Features of Early-Stage Support:

- **Technical Assistance (TA):** Support for preparing feasibility studies, market assessments, and financial models.
- **Business Planning Clinics:** Workshops and coaching for MSMEs and cooperatives to develop bankable proposals.
- **Project Readiness Assessment Tool (PRAT):** A checklist used to assess the maturity of proposed projects along key dimensions (technical, legal, financial, and operational readiness).
- **Partnership with Incubators and Hubs:** Collaboration with local innovation centers and business support organizations to incubate early-stage ideas into viable businesses.

Projects that successfully complete the readiness process will be fast-tracked for financing consideration under Windows A and C.

## 8.3 Ensuring a Steady Flow of Commercially Viable Transactions

The long-term success of the PFF depends on maintaining a strong and continuous pipeline of high-quality, investment-ready projects. To achieve this, the following mechanisms will be employed:

### A. Proactive Market Engagement

- Regular calls for proposals in priority sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, ICT, logistics, etc.).
- Investment roadshows and sector-specific business forums.
- Partnerships with chambers of commerce, cooperatives, and youth/women-led groups.

### B. Pipeline Development Partnerships

- Working with key MDAs (e.g., Agriculture, Works, Energy) to identify public and private sector-led opportunities.
- Leveraging donor-supported enterprise development programs to source and prepare pipeline projects.
- Coordination with DFIs and commercial banks to align fund-supported projects with downstream investment opportunities.

## **C. Pipeline Management Tools**

- Project Pipeline Database: A live repository of pipeline projects, regularly updated by the Fund Management Unit.
- Digital Application Portal: A web-based interface for businesses to submit proposals, track status, and receive feedback.
- Project Review Committee: A multi-disciplinary team to screen and validate pipeline projects monthly.

These efforts will ensure a dynamic, demand-driven pipeline that reflects market opportunities, supports state development goals, and attracts co-investment from public and private sources.

## **9. Capacity Development Strategy**

A robust and sustained capacity development strategy is essential to the successful implementation of the PFF. It ensures that institutions, personnel, and systems involved in fund administration and project delivery possess the skills, tools, and frameworks required to operate at a high standard of efficiency, transparency, and impact.

### **9.1 Capacity-Building Programs for MDAs**

The PFF will support targeted capacity-building initiatives for key Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) involved in project origination, appraisal, and oversight.

#### **Target MDAs include:**

- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
- Imo State Investment Promotion Agency (ISIPA)
- and other social enterprise agencies

#### **Training Areas:**

- PPP structuring and project appraisal
- Fund management and financial oversight
- Monitoring and evaluation best practices
- Public procurement and regulatory compliance
- Environmental and social safeguards (ESS)

### **Delivery Mechanism:**

- In-person workshops
- E-learning modules
- Peer learning exchanges
- Strategic partnerships with national institutions (e.g., ICRC, BOI) and donor-funded programs

These programs will be evaluated annually for effectiveness and alignment with evolving operational challenges.

### **9.2 Technical Support for Project Preparation and Management**

To bridge the technical gap that often hampers project implementation, the Fund will provide **hands-on technical assistance** to both public- and private-sector project promoters.

#### **Support Areas Include:**

- Feasibility studies, business planning, and financial modelling
- Legal and regulatory advisory (e.g., permits, licenses, contracts)
- Market analysis and demand assessment
- Environmental and social impact assessments (ESIA)
- Value chain mapping and logistics design

#### **Beneficiaries:**

- MSMEs and cooperatives
- Local contractors and service providers
- Government project units working on PPP or value-chain projects

#### **Delivery Partners:**

- Technical advisory firms
- Development finance institutions (e.g., DBN, AfDB)
- Academia and research institutes
- Industry-specific experts (e.g., agri-business consultants)

This pillar ensures that projects funded by the PFF are bankable, executable, and measurable, reducing risk and enhancing outcomes.

### 9.3 Strengthening Systems, Standards, and Operational Efficiency

The PFF will invest in institutional strengthening and systems development to improve transparency, efficiency, and service delivery across the Fund’s operations.

#### Focus Areas:

Area	System / Standard
<b>Fund Management</b>	Implementation of digital MIS (Management Information System) for fund tracking and performance monitoring
<b>Procurement</b>	Adoption of e-procurement tools and standardized tendering processes
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	Development of real-time dashboards and project-level performance trackers
<b>Financial Reporting</b>	Compliance with IPSAS (International Public Sector Accounting Standards)
<b>Service Delivery</b>	Helpdesk systems, digital portals for beneficiaries, and automated workflows

These investments will be guided by periodic institutional capacity assessments, with reforms and improvements built into the Fund’s annual performance and budget review cycle.

### 10. Communications, Visibility, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The success of the PFF will depend not only on sound financial and operational management, but also on how well it is **understood, trusted, and supported** by the public, private investors, development partners, and other stakeholders. This section outlines a robust plan to ensure visibility, engagement, and accountability throughout the life of the Fund.

#### 10.1 Brand Positioning and Awareness Creation

The PFF will be positioned as a **flagship enterprise and investment facilitation instrument** of the Imo State Government — focused on driving inclusive growth, supporting MSMEs, and enabling public-private partnerships.

#### Key Branding Strategies:

- Develop a **dedicated PFF brand identity** (logo, tagline, color scheme) consistent with the Imo State Government’s investment narrative.
- Create **public-friendly messaging** to explain the fund’s purpose, benefits, eligibility criteria, and how to apply.

- Establish an official **PFF website** and digital portal, integrated into the Imo State Government platform and updated regularly.

#### **Awareness Channels:**

- Radio and TV jingles (local and state-wide)
- Social media campaigns (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter/X)
- Town hall meetings and market sensitizations
- Print publications and stakeholder brochures
- Local language translations for community outreach

The communication campaign will target entrepreneurs, cooperatives, local leaders, youth, women, financial institutions, and media influencers.

#### **10.2 Investor and Market Engagement Strategy**

To unlock co-financing, leverage, and PPP collaboration, the Fund will implement a structured investor and market engagement plan, focused on building confidence and attracting interest from financial and development stakeholders.

#### **Key Activities:**

- **Quarterly Investor Roundtables:** Featuring fund updates, pipeline briefings, and networking opportunities with public and private partners.
- **Bilateral Investor Engagements:** With DFIs, commercial banks, private equity funds, and philanthropic foundations.
- **Sector-Specific Pitch Events:** For MSMEs in agro-processing, ICT, manufacturing, logistics, etc.
- **Inclusion in State Investment Summits:** The PFF will feature prominently in investment promotion events, supported by KWIPA and related MDAs.

#### **Collateral and Content:**

- Investor fact sheets
- Deal books highlighting bankable projects
- Case studies on early successes
- Regular investment newsletters and reports

The Fund's visibility will be tied to its ability to mobilize external capital and demonstrate tangible impact across sectors.

### **10.3 Transparency, Public Communications, and Accountability Approach**

Public trust is critical to the sustainability of the PFF. To ensure transparency and accountability, the Fund will adopt a three-tiered communications and disclosure approach:

#### **A. Public Reporting**

- Quarterly Fund Updates: Published online with data on disbursements, beneficiaries, and outcomes.
- Annual Impact Report: Captures financial performance, development impact, and lessons learned.
- Audit Summary Disclosures: Non-technical audit highlights made available to the public.

#### **B. Participatory Communications**

- Feedback forms and surveys for beneficiaries.
- Community engagement forums in urban and rural areas.
- Public consultations during fund redesign or strategy shifts.

#### **C. Grievance Redress & Whistleblower Systems**

- Establish a grievance redress portal for complaints and beneficiary issues.
- Launch a whistleblower hotline for confidential reports of misconduct or fund misuse.

By embedding openness into its communications culture, the PFF will uphold the principles of good governance, equitable access, and citizen participation in economic development.

