



Akan Etienam · [Follow](#)

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Revitalizing The Nigerian Civil Service: A Pathway to Attracting Youth and Talent



Federal Secretariat, Abuja.

For decades, the Nigerian Civil Service has struggled to attract the brightest minds among the nation's youth. Over the past 20 to 30 years, the system has been marred by mediocrity, inefficiencies, and questionable practices in

employment, promotion, and workers' welfare. These challenges have rendered the civil service unattractive to young people, particularly those with exceptional skills and educational backgrounds. To ensure the nation's future prosperity, it is imperative to implement strategic reforms over the next 10 to 15 years that will position the civil service as a beacon of opportunity and excellence.

Challenges of the Past

The unattractiveness of the Civil Service stems from systemic issues that have persisted for decades. Employment processes are often opaque, failing to provide equal opportunities for all qualified candidates. Promotions are frequently based on tenure rather than merit, which discourages exceptional performance. Additionally, poor welfare packages, inadequate training opportunities, and the lack of alignment between job postings and individual skill sets have further alienated talented young people from pursuing careers in public service.

The Importance of NYFF's "The Nigeria We Want" Document

**NIGERIA
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NYFF Imaginative Futures Working Group

IFWG, Nigeria Youth Futures Fund (NYFF)

The Nigerian Youth Futures Fund (NYFF) captured the aspirations of young Nigerians in its landmark document, “The Nigeria We Want.” This blueprint emphasizes the need for inclusive, transparent governance and the active participation of young people in shaping the nation’s future. The document highlights critical areas for reform, such as creating equitable opportunities, fostering innovation, and building institutions that inspire trust.

A modernized civil service that prioritizes meritocracy, skills development, and welfare aligns perfectly with these aspirations. By implementing the principles outlined in “The Nigeria We Want,” the government can establish a civil service that not only attracts the brightest young minds but also embodies the values of fairness, integrity, and excellence demanded by the youth.



The NYFF's objectives!



Cross section of members.

Strategic Plans for Reform

To reverse this trend and create a Civil Service that attracts and retains the nation's best and brightest, the following strategic plans should be implemented:

1. *Access to Training and Capacity Building*

The civil service must prioritize continuous professional development. This includes providing access to cutting-edge training programs, both locally and internationally, to ensure that employees remain competitive and capable of addressing complex governance challenges.

2. *Generous Welfare Packages*

Offering competitive salaries, allowances, and other welfare benefits will make civil service roles financially rewarding and appealing.

Comprehensive healthcare, housing, and retirement plans should be standard.

3. *Merit-Based Accelerated Promotions*

Promotion systems must reward exceptional performance. Introducing clear benchmarks for accelerated promotions will inspire employees to strive for excellence and foster a culture of meritocracy.

4. *Incentive Programs*

Small yet impactful incentives, such as "Employee of the Month" awards or performance-based bonuses, can significantly boost morale and productivity.

5. *Streamlined Recruitment Processes*

A fair, transparent, and seamless recruitment system is essential. By tying job placements to individuals' skills and qualifications, the civil service can ensure that talent is utilized effectively. For instance, a graduate with a first-class degree in Chemistry should be placed in roles that align with their expertise, rather than being misallocated to unrelated sectors.

6. *Creating Specialized Career Tracks*

The civil service should establish specialized departments that cater to diverse academic and professional backgrounds. This will attract talent from various fields and foster innovation within the system.

The Vision for a Productive Civil Service

Implementing these reforms will not only lay the foundation for an influx of young talent into the civil service but also ensure a more productive and sustainable workforce. The civil service of tomorrow must be characterized by excellence, innovation, and inclusivity. It should serve as a model of efficiency and integrity, inspiring confidence in governance and fostering national development.

By aligning with the aspirations articulated in NYFF's "The Nigeria We Want" document, Nigeria can create a Civil Service that not only reflects the nation's ideals but also serves as a key driver of its transformation. This is a vision of governance rooted in merit, opportunity, and accountability—a foundation for the Nigeria we all aspire to build.

Akan Etienam 

Member, IFWG Nigeria Youth Futures Fund (NYFF)

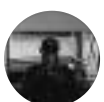
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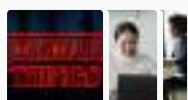
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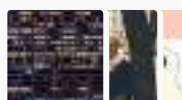


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
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