Abandoned Projects in Nigeria

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The Nigerian Government faces a condition of abandoned public infrastructure projects in many sectors (more importantly water, energy, and transportation) at all government levels. This condition is rooted in four main problems:

- Difficulty in continuing projects after government transitions
- Inadequate project planning
- Poor budgeting consideration
- Lack of accountability between contractors and project monitors
Problem Deconstruction - Fishbone Diagram

**Budgeting**
- Can fund 'new' or legacy, not both
- Sometimes budget not fully awarded
- Insufficient funds sought

**Planning**
- Low Project planning capacity
- Lack of clear 'bright spots' success models
- Ineffective Project Monitoring and Evaluation
- Failure to forecast inflation or plan for imported equipment
- Local Constituencies not always consulted, may disrupt project
- Needs evolve over time. Some projects are rendered obsolete by new developments

**Accountability**
- Lack of Cost Benefit Analysis (performed or Available to public)
- Lack of adequate training on planning for public servants
- Deficient anti-corruption enforcement
- Conflict of interest between private and public sectors
- Lack of soft law/behavioral incentives to increase accountability
- Lack of transparency mechanisms in project approvals
- Inadequate budgeting and planning

**Abandoned Projects in Nigeria**
- Newly elected people do not gain by supporting initiatives of political opposition
- Newly elected are stifled in advancing the will of their voters if not given adequate financial means to do so

**Election Cycles**
- No punishment for not supporting previous projects.
- No reward for supporting previous projects.
- Limited citizen engagement and feedback

**Governmental Structure**
- Rainforests make projects more expensive
- States with mining have more resources
- Insurgents in North East make project completion dangerous

**Geography**
Entry Points Identified

● **Governmental Budgeting Process:**

Engage Nigerian Civil Society Organizations to play a role in building communication and report between the Legislative and Executive branch regarding budget dialogue.

● **Government Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Adopt the draft of the “National Monitoring and Evaluation” policy at the Plateau State Level to create transparent and comparable data about project completion and suspension.

● **Civil Society:**

Expand the “Eyes and Ears” program from Kaduna State to Plateau State so that citizens can aid elected officials in project monitoring and hold their state government to account.
Early Iterations of Recommendations

Produce a report describing the steps taken as a team to arrive at our recommendations for initial action inclusive of:

- A framework for action to inform and ignite outreach to Nigerian civil society organizations.

- An objectives and key results (OKR) table to implement the ‘Plateau State model’ for the draft of the “National Monitoring and Evaluation” policy.

- Outline steps in a campaign to adopt the “Eyes and Ears” program from Kaduna State in Plateau State that identifies stakeholders and possible financial resources.
Later Recommendations Identified

1. Engage Nigerian civil society organizations to build the bridge between the Plateau State Executive and Legislative in budget discussions.

1. Pilot the draft "National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy" at the Plateau-State level.

1. Implement the “Eyes and Ears” platform in Plateau State.
Leads Identified - Board

1. Engage Nigerian civil society organizations to build the bridge between the Plateau State Executive and Legislative in budget discussions

2. Pilot the draft "National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy" at the Plateau-State level

3. Implement the Eyes and Ears in Plateau State?

Color legend: Purple: Leads (What) - Pink: Iterations (How) - Blue: Risk/Criticism - Green: Mitigation
An Action Learning Agenda for Plateau

**Next 21 days**
Identify and reach out to interested civil society orgs to assist and champion the state implementation of the draft national policy (**Lead 2**)

**Next 30 days**
Hold a stakeholder meeting with Plateau’s Executive, Legislative and at least 3 civil society orgs to discuss a model for participatory budget discussions (**Lead 1**)

**Next 21 days**
Have an informational session with state legislators to discuss the draft "National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy" (**Lead 2**)

**Next 10 days**
Contact Eyes and Ears developers to calculate the cost of implementing the system in Plateau in the next 10 days (**Lead 3**)

Lessons Learned

Problem
Causes
Ideas you tried
Working as a team
Doing PDIA

- Problem ≠ Condition
- Deconstructing Problem → Causes Identification → Change Space
- Causes are the clues for mapping a change space
- Mapping causes builds authority
- Trying ideas is about working iteratively: L = P + Q + R
- PDIA: quick practical learning opportunities > strategizing the ultimate solution
- Teamwork, trust-building = intellectual + also emotional collaboration
Appendix 1: Team Constitution

General Agreements and Accountability

● Each group member agrees to bring their best thinking and work to the group, work collaboratively to explore concepts and move the project forward;
● As a metaphor for our participation, we are all engaged in a learning ‘dance-party’. What is crucial then, is that we each dance, not that we each dance perfectly. We agree to all make attempts and to not worry if we may occasionally appear foolish.
● Each member will contribute to the project, managing responsibilities and offering their expertise as needed;
● Everyone responds in a timely manner and engages respectfully;
● We will divide responsibilities on a weekly basis to ensure fairness in terms of work distribution (individual schedules and the class syllabus will be considered);
● Every week, each team member will have an actionable task to deliver/iterate on.

● If a member of the group is perceived as not being responsive or constructive it is the commitment of the other group members to raise awareness of this and seek to help the member to participate fully and constructively. We each commit to be open to this type of communication.
● Every team member will upload their weekly individual assignments to the special folder we have for that over Google Drive. This is to keep us all informed about each other’s individual work and main findings.
● Where possible, we will strive for an equity in talking opportunities in our main PDIA class check-ins to make sure that each person’s contribution and thinking can have equal chances for feedback.
● It has been experienced that it’s a challenge to have meetings each week with people related to this issue in Nigeria. Where possible, we will try and share opportunities to talk with sources throughout the group.
Appendix 2: Documents Read (1/2)


Abandonment of Building Projects in Nigeria – A review of Causes and Solutions.

Abandonment of Construction Projects in Nigeria: Causes and Effects.

NDD N833 billion in 19 years as failed projects litter N-Delta

Why numerous road projects were abandoned — FG tells Senate

Atlas of Economic Complexity

World Bank overview

The Cost of Abandoned Projects in Nigeria - Stears Business (stearsng.com)


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ocn7qVqi7E

Corruption With Tribal Marks: Explaining The Ethnic Nature Of Political Corruption In Nigeria By ADIGUN, Olalekan Waheed, BSc (Politics, Philosophy & Economics) (ife), MSc (Political Science) University of Lagos, Akoka.

“Nigeria’s Federal Character Commission (FCC): a critical appraisal” by Leila Demarest (Feb 16, 2020),

The economics of public private partnerships (a basic guide), by Engel, Fischer, and Galatovic; Cambridge Press, 2014

Nigeria - Draft National Monitoring & Evaluation Policy

FG receives draft Policy document on Monitoring, Evaluation (Feb. 9th, 2021)

Government to deploy geospatial tech in project monitoring (Feb. 11th, 2021)
Appendix 2: Documents Read (2/2)

YMonitor: Scourge Of Abandoned Projects In Nigeria Pt 1 - YouTube

The Effective Strategies of Managing Abandoned Projects in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions

The economics of public private partnerships (a basic guide), by Engel, Fischer, and Galatovic; Cambridge Press, 2014

Failure of Public Infrastructure Projects in Nigeria: Causes, Effects and Solutions (Texila International Journal) Nnamdi Nweze


The Cause And Effect Of Having 56,000 Abandoned Projects Across Nigeria - YouTube

STATE OF ABANDON PROJECTS IN NIGERIA(ROADS, SCHOOLS, ETC) - YouTube

Local-Empowerment-Through-Rapid-Results.pdf (squarespace.com)

'Lagos shows how a city can recover from a deep, deep pit': Rem Koolhaas talks to Kunlé Adeyemi

5 Laws on Corruption in Nigeria

Some Key Issues In Nigerian Anti-Bribery and Anti-Corruption (“ABC”) Law for Foreign Investors

Nigeria makes anti-corruption moves amid criticism over progress – Financial Times

Nigeria steps up probe at anti-corruption agency – Financial Times

How citizens have become “eyes and ears” in Nigeria’s Kaduna State

States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability PforR Project for Nigeria
List of People Engaged

Classmates from “DPI-535: Making Change When Change is Hard: the Law, Politics, and Policy of Social Change”

Classmates from “DEV-338: Contemporary Developing Countries: Entrepreneurial Solutions to Intractable Problems”

Abisoye Ajayi: CEO For Pearls for Africa

Former Nigerian Ambassador to Djibouti Nkoyo Toyo

Dr Linda Arogundade: Public Health Physician

Chinedu Emmanuel Anene: Nigerian Lawyer at Schneider Law Group in New York but has worked with the Nigerian Government for over ten years

Abosede Alimi: Co-Founder at ElectHER Nigeria


Vanessa Brigham, formerly the country director for Chemonics International and senior representative to the Global Fund in Nigeria and Director of Global Health Supply Chain activities in Nigeria.

Lauren Truong: Classmate from MLD 103B

Henry Lee: Harvard Kennedy School faculty, expert on Infrastructure in Developing Countries

Etty Peter (BudgIT Nigeria)