The Policy Challenge
AFRICA | NIGERIA 2026

Rebuilding Trust, One Policy at a Time:

Policy Ideas from Nigeria's Next Generation of Leaders

POLICY CHALLENGE 2026

COMPENDIUM

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A WORD FROM THE CONVENER

Nature abhors a vacuum. An uncultivated patch of land will soon be overtaken by unwanted plants. It is clear that eggs will become cockerels someday. The question, therefore, is not whether the youth of today will become leaders tomorrow. The real challenge lies in ensuring that the right seeds grow on Nigeria's leadership farmland. How do we ensure that our youth are prepared for tomorrow's challenges?

I do not have all the answers, but there is clear sense in equipping young people with the skills required to tackle current and future problems. With more than a decade working on policy and public sector reform, I have often wondered why young Nigerians appear far removed from the arena where decisions are made, reforms are designed, and where the future of their country is quietly being negotiated. While reflecting on these questions, I am reminded of a famous phrase from the 1995 film Under Siege 2: Dark Territory, where the character Travis Dane repeatedly said: "Chance favours the prepared mind."

Our theory of change is built on the idea that introducing young people to policy and governance at an early stage will improve their chances of participation and their effectiveness when they arrive. The Policy Challenge exists because we believe the best way to predict the future is to create it. This compendium is therefore not a collection of student essays. It is a record of serious intellectual work by young Nigerians who chose to engage with the hardest problems facing their country at a time when most of their peers were told that governance is not yet their business. They were not given easy questions.

The theme of the 2026 Policy Challenge, rebuilding trust in the Nigerian state, is one of the most consequential conversations facing our country today. We asked young Nigerians to look that challenge in the eye and propose solutions. No complaints. No commentary. Solutions. They delivered. The proposals in this compendium were selected from 1,371 expressions of interest and 322 full submissions received across 33 of Nigeria's 36 states. What unites them is not where they came from but what they chose to do with their time, their research, and their conviction that Nigeria can be governed better.

What struck me was not just their ambition but the clarity in their thinking. These ideas are not vague. They proposed reforms and named the institutions responsible for execution. They thought like practitioners. The Policy Challenge is building a pipeline of young Nigerians who understand how governance works and who will carry this rigour into every institution they enter throughout their careers.

To the teams in this compendium: what you have done here is not a footnote. It is a foundation. And to everyone holding this document: the future you have been waiting for is already here. These young Nigerians are ready. The question now is whether we are ready for them.

Ayokunnu Ojeniyi,
Founder, Future Pathways Development Initiative
August 2026

Meet the Judges

SECTION 01

Hon. Seyi Adisa

A lawyer, public administrator, and John Maxwell Leadership coach, Hon. Adisa has spent his career at the intersection of law, policy, and people. He served as Honourable Member representing Afijio Constituency in the Oyo State House of Assembly (2019–2023) and as Principal Private Secretary to the late Governor Abiola Ajimobi (2011–2019) — both before the age of 40.

He is Co-Founder and Partner at Tunde & Adisa Legal Practitioners, where he leads the Public Policy and Government Advisory practice, and Founder of the African Governance Institute for Development (AGID), established in 2023 to train leaders and educate citizens on good governance.

His work has earned him recognition among MIPAD's Top 100 Most Influential People of African Descent Under 40 and selection as one of only 22 African leaders for the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Fellowship.

Khalil Nur Khalil

An economist and investment promotion professional, Khalil made history as the youngest Chief Executive heading a Government Parastatal in Nigeria — appointed Executive Secretary of the Kaduna Investment Promotion Agency (KADIPA) at 28, after becoming the country's youngest Director in civil service a year earlier.

At KADIPA, he attracted over $1.8 billion in investment, helped create more than 25,000 jobs, and drove the reforms that made Kaduna the first state to adopt the National Startup Act. He now serves as Economic Adviser to the Katsina State Government, building a globally competitive subnational economy for jobs and inclusive growth.

His work is proof of what young Nigerians can do inside the system.

Damilola Adefulire

Youth engagement strategist, civic leader, and Founder of Youth Be Involved (YBI) — a youth-led organisation strengthening active citizenship among young Nigerians.

Through YBI, Damilola has led programmes reaching over 1.2 million young Nigerians nationwide, in person and digitally. She's a recipient of a Special Recognition Award from TIME 100 Nigeria and was named among Nigeria's 40 Under 40 Emerging Leaders.

A lawyer by training (LL.B., LL.M.), her work sits at the intersection of youth inclusion in governance, public policy, and civic innovation, helping young people move from awareness to action.

Judging Criteria

SECTION 02

THE POLICY CHALLENGE NIGERIA 2026 — SEMI-FINAL ROUND

Rebuilding Trust in the Nigerian State | National and state-level policy papers | 100 points total

Criterion	Sub-criterion	Pts	Top marks (90–100%)	Marked down (below 75%)
Mastery of the Policy Area 40 points	Subject command, debates and literature	**15**	Deep and accurate; engages data, literature and competing views	Superficial or inaccurate; little engagement with evidence
	Completeness of analysis	**10**	Comprehensive; no critical gap	Gaps that materially weaken the proposal
	Logic: problem → evidence → proposal → impact	**10**	Tight and clear from problem through to impact	Disjointed; weak causal logic
	Responses to judges' questions	**5**	Accurate and confident under probing	Evasive or unable to defend the proposal
Originality & Relevance 30 points	Originality of angle, framing or mechanism	**15**	Genuinely novel within the pool; bold but feasible	Largely derivative of known proposals
	Relevance to a named national or state law	**10**	Precisely targeted at a specific law or linked set	Vague, local-level only, or untied to law
	Focus of research and analysis	**5**	Tightly scoped; every section serves the proposal	Scope creep; substantial irrelevant material
Presentation & Delivery 30 points	Clarity, engagement and persuasiveness	**10**	Compelling, confident and audience-adapted	Hard to follow or disengaged
	Professional demeanor under questioning	**8**	Composed and professional under pressure	Defensive, unprofessional or flustered
	Visual aid quality	**7**	Clean and data-driven; reinforces the argument	Absent, distracting, or a text dump
	Time management	**5**	Uses the allotted time precisely	Significant over- or under-run
Total		**100**		

APPLICATION OF THE RUBRIC

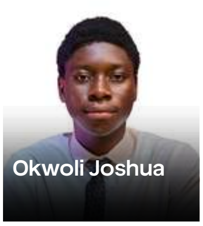
A middle band, 75 to 89 per cent, covered solid work carrying minor gaps or limited flair. Judges scored each sub-criterion out of its allocated points, reserving full marks for exceptional performance, and team scores were averaged across all judges to set the final ranking. Proposals that were local-level only, that costed interventions without naming a funding source, or that strayed from a specific law were marked down under both Originality and Relevance and Mastery of the Policy Area.

The Policy Ideas

SECTION 03

Team SMETrust | Veritas University Abuja


Anigbogu Olivia Nneka


Okwoli Joshua

Topic:

Rebuilding Trust in Nigeria's Tax System:

A Policy Framework for a National SME Digital Compliance Interface

POLICY CHALLENGE

Despite driving the majority of Nigeria's economy, SMEs contribute to a disproportionately low 7.9% tax-to-GDP ratio primarily due to highly fragmented and inaccessible multi-agency compliance systems rather than deliberate tax evasion.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposed structural solution is the **National SME Digital Compliance Interface (NSDCI)**, a unified, mobile-first government platform designed to consolidate all SME compliance requirements by leveraging standardized, machine-readable data published via open APIs from the FIRS, CAC, and State Inland Revenue Services.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Nigeria's informal sector is largely driven by the high cost and difficulty of formal compliance. A 10% increase in voluntary SME compliance could yield over 1.2 trillion Naira in annual revenue without introducing any new taxes.

KEY ACTIONS

- Amend Section 8 of the FIRS Establishment Act 2007 to mandate the publication of standardized compliance data via public APIs.
- Amend CAMA 2020 to apply identical API data publication obligations to the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC).
- Direct NITDA to commission and maintain the consolidated mobile-first NSDCI platform.
- Establish a Joint SME Compliance Coordination Committee, via Ministerial Order, to enforce integration timelines and data standards.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Year 1):** FIRS and CAC will develop their respective APIs. A pilot version of the NSDCI will subsequently launch in Lagos State and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).
- **Phase 2 (Year 2):** Data feeds from State Inland Revenue Services and PenCom will be integrated. The platform will then be expanded to a national scale.
- **Phase 3 (Year 3 onwards):** The platform will enter full operation. Regular performance reviews and annual impact reports will be submitted to the National Assembly.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A 15% reduction in the incidence of SME penalties within the FCT and Lagos during the pilot's first twelve months.
- A 20% increase in the number of tax returns filed independently by registered users of the platform.
- The removal of costly professional intermediaries for routine tasks, immediately lowering the financial barrier for 64.4% of non-compliant SMEs.

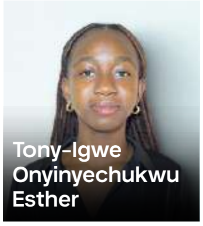
RISKS AND MITIGATION

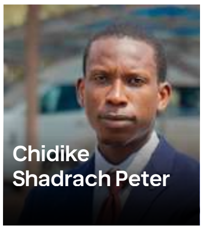
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Inter-Agency Coordination	Form a Joint SME Compliance Coordination Committee with a statutory mandate and National Assembly reporting duties.
Low Platform Adoption	Link NSDCI registration to economic incentives such as government procurement eligibility and CBN intervention funds.
Connectivity Limitations	Implement an offline-capable mobile architecture to ensure core functionalities work during intermittent connectivity.
Data Privacy & Cybersecurity	Enforce end-to-end encryption, role-based access, strict NDPA 2023 compliance, and mandatory independent audits.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt Structural Reform: Prioritize the comprehensive NSDCI infrastructure over incremental updates to currently fragmented portals.
- Secure Sustainable Funding: Leverage a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) or World Bank funding to ensure ongoing, performance-based platform maintenance.
- Prioritize Data Governance: Draft and publish a clear inter-agency data-sharing protocol for public review prior to the platform's launch.

Team Astrum | Nnamdi Azikwe University





Topic:

Powering Trust:

Three Institutional Reforms to Fix Nigeria's Electricity Sector Policy Challenge

POLICY CHALLENGE

With only 13% of citizens receiving reliable power and private generator usage, the systemic failure in the electricity sector remains as unreflective tariffs and weak regulatory enforcement exists. This resulted in a 3.3 trillion Naira debt leaving 5.6 million customers on estimated billing.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposed solution framework are centered on three pillars:

- Ring-Fence Model (GZRF): Grants single private operators unified control over generation, transmission, and distribution within defined geopolitical zones.
- Nigerian Electricity Risk Exchange (NERX): A financial platform leveraging DFI guarantees to deploy yield futures, currency swaps, and tariff put options.
- Accelerated Mass Metering (ANMMP): Mandates 100% metering within 36 months, enforced through automatic revenue-based penalties in concession contracts.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Delivering reliable power restores public confidence and drives industrial growth without expanding public debt.

KEY ACTIONS

- Enforce Section 116 of the Electricity Act 2023 to issue ring-fenced power concessions to qualified private operators and mandate a 10–15% equity stake in ring-fenced utilities for local community cooperatives to reduce vandalism.
- Deploy NERX under NERC Market Rules (Section 32(d)) to issue escrow futures, gas swaps, and tariff put options.
- Enact binding 36-month metering targets backed by automatic financial penalties for non-compliant utilities.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Phase 1 (South East Zone): Replicate and scale the proven Aba power project across Abia, Anambra (Onitsha-Nnewi axis), and Imo State corridors.
- Phase 2 (National Rollout): Expand ring-fenced concessions across the South West, North Central, and remaining geopolitical zones.
- Operational Rollout: Launch NERX market instruments and integrate mandatory metering milestones into all state concession agreements.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Guarantees 18–20 hours of daily electricity supply across targeted ring-fenced economic zones.
- Clears sector debt and eliminates foreign exchange mismatches without adding new federal borrowing.
- Achieves collection efficiency above 85% while securing infrastructure through local community ownership.

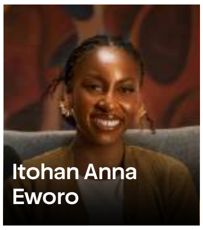
RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Perceived Inter-Regional Inequality	Utilize Phase 1 as a fast-tracked proof-of-concept to build investor confidence for rapid national expansion.
Financial Complexity of NERX Derivatives	Build technical capacity at NERC/FMDQ and leverage multilateral guarantees from the AfDB and IFC.
Upfront Mass Metering Capital Gap	Tap into the CBN Mass Metering Framework, Meter Asset Providers (MAP), and vendor-financed models.
State Technical Capacity Limits	Provide standardized concession templates and technical project support under the Electricity Act 2023.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Pair Ring-Fencing with NERX:** Implement the Ring-Fence Model as the primary structural intervention, backed by NERX as the financial engine.
- **Mandate Enforceable Metering:** Require 100% mass metering within 36 months as a mandatory clause in all ring-fence concession contracts.
- **Institutionalize Community Ownership:** Reserve 10–15% cooperative equity in local power entities to ensure public buy-in and infrastructure protection.

Team Nikao | University of Lagos



Topic:

'Police is Your Friend':

Closing the Gap Between Motto and Reality in the Nigerian Police Force

POLICY CHALLENGE

The Nigerian Police Force has a documented history of extra-judicial killings, extortion, and brutality, leading to a 15% public trust level. Despite progressive laws like the Police Act 2020, weak enforcement renders these legislative reforms completely ineffective, and the motto 'Police is your friend' a fake reality.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

This proposal advocates for a dual accountability framework that applies internal and external pressure on the institution. Internally, it mandates upgrading the police database for behavioural tracking, enforcing strict Complaint Response Unit (CRU) transparency. Externally, it requires decentralizing the police force and granting the Police Service Commission (PSC) binding disciplinary powers.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Police brutality is deeply rooted in Nigeria's colonial history and remains a primary driver of ongoing state-citizen division. Trust cannot be legislated; it must be earned through visible accountability and consistent institutional behavior. Without these structural interventions, progressive policing laws will remain ineffective paper tigers.

KEY ACTIONS

- Integrate early warning and behavioural risk management into the existing **Smartforce** database.
- Publish a comprehensive CRU operational manual alongside detailed quarterly disciplinary reports.
- Appoint PSC members via an electoral college and grant the commission binding sanctioning authority.
- Amend the constitution to establish state police, supported by a specialized transition fund.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Immediate Action:** The Inspector General of Police (IGP) must issue administrative directives mandating CRU public reporting and transparency.
- **System Upgrade:** Enhance the Smartforce database system to track officer conduct and compliance with new human rights training.
- **Legislative Overhaul:** The National Assembly must execute constitutional amendments for state policing and PSC restructuring.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Rebuilding immediate public confidence by making the CRU highly responsive and fully transparent.
- Proactively identifying and dismissing rogue officers before their misconduct escalates into severe violence.
- Fostering community-centric policing where locally invested officers are significantly less likely to brutalize citizens.

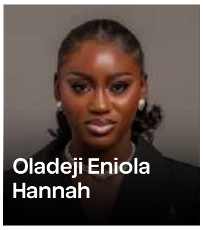
RISKS AND MITIGATION

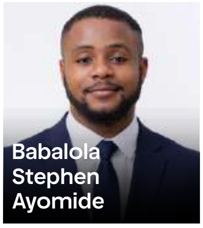
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Legislative Resistance	Use immediate IGP administrative directives to bypass bureaucracy for internal reforms.
System Upgrade Costs	Tap into the newly established Defence and Security Infrastructure Fund for financing.
Inequitable State Forces	Establish a needs-based State Police Transition Fund to financially assist poorer states.
Digital Divide	Popularize phone-based complaint channels to ensure accessibility for rural populations.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Simultaneous Execution:** Implement internal and external mechanisms concurrently to prevent a systemic imbalance in oversight.
- **Enforce Transparency:** Mandate the CRU to publicly detail all complaints, investigation processes, and resulting officer sanctions.
- **Data-Driven Accountability:** Utilize the upgraded database to strictly link officer promotions and retention to behavioral compliance.

Team Ignite | Adeleke University





Topic:

Rebuilding Institutional Trust:

A Legislative Framework for Technology-Driven Public Service Accountability in Nigeria

POLICY CHALLENGE

Millions of Nigerians face chronic delays and unprofessionalism at federal agencies, rapidly eroding institutional trust. Current accountability mechanisms like Service Compact with All Nigerians (SERVICOM) and the Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER) completely lack legal enforcement and ignore direct citizen input.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposal recommends enacting the amended SERVICOM Bill to establish the **National Digital Service Accountability Initiative (NDSAI)**. This creates a legally binding, multi-channel citizen feedback system covering all federal Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). Crucially, verified citizen satisfaction scores will be integrated into the APER framework to directly influence civil servant promotions.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The current civil service structure rewards mere presence rather than measurable performance or positive outcomes. Without statutory backing, existing administrative grievance platforms act as mere suggestions, collecting complaints without enforcing consequences. Embedding accountability into law ensures citizens are treated respectfully while restoring fundamental trust in state institutions.

KEY ACTIONS

- Enact the amended SERVICOM Bill to provide necessary statutory authority for accountability.
- Deploy the NDSAI platform via web, mobile application, USSD, and SMS for universal citizen access.
- Establish an independent **Project Delivery Unit (PDU)** within the Presidency to oversee real-time MDA performance dashboards.
- Link validated citizen feedback scores directly to the APER career advancement and promotion process.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Initial Pilot:** Launch a six-month pilot across high-volume agencies like the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Nigeria Immigration Service, and NIMC.
- **Funding Sourcing:** Secure financing through the World Bank, the Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF), and the Ministry of Communications.
- **National Rollout:** Expand the system incrementally to all federal MDAs after refining the technical infrastructure and orienting staff.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A measurable, sustained improvement in citizen satisfaction scores across all participating federal MDAs.
- A verifiable reduction in informal, unofficial payment demands at public service points.
- Agencies scoring above 80% for two quarters receive priority budgetary allocations, incentivizing top performance.
- Agencies scoring below 40% for two quarters face mandatory management audits and subsequent disciplinary action.

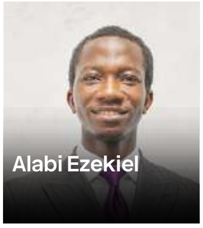
RISKS AND MITIGATION

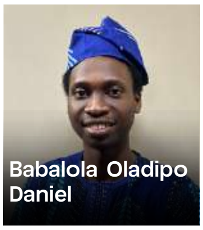
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
False Feedback Manipulation	Require transaction-validated entries using unique service reference numbers or NIN-linked codes.
Civil Service Resistance	Implement a phased pilot strategy to allow for staff orientation and gradual institutional adaptation.
High Implementation Costs	Utilize existing statutory funds like the USPF and phase rollouts across multiple budget cycles.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Prioritize Legislation:** Abandon legally toothless executive orders in favour of enacting the structurally binding SERVICOM Bill.
- **Ensure Inclusivity:** Maintain offline USSD and SMS channels so rural and low-literacy populations can easily report grievances.
- **Enforce Consequences:** Strictly enforce the integration of citizen satisfaction data into the APER framework to guarantee career accountability.

Civic Architects | Nile University of Nigeria





Topic:

The PACT Framework:

A Citizen-Centred Accountability Architecture for Rebuilding Institutional Trust in Nigeria.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Nigeria faces a profound crisis of institutional trust driven by weak public accountability and isolated transparency systems. Citizens consistently hear about budgets and projects but lack accessible avenues to verify their execution or completion. Consequently, public confidence is eroding, reflected by a dismal score of 31 out of 100 on the 2023 Open Budget Survey.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The **Public Accountability and Citizen Transparency (PACT) Framework** is a legally enforceable accountability system. It consolidates fragmented government financial databases into a single, user-friendly public dashboard. Furthermore, it empowers citizens to actively track, verify, and report on public project implementation in real time.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When public resources fail to translate into verifiable public value, widespread civic apathy and deep systemic distrust naturally follow. The PACT Framework bridges the gap between government claims and citizen realities. By making public spending visible and traceable, this reform directly addresses the root causes of institutional disconnect.

KEY ACTIONS

- Mandate comprehensive project disclosure across all federal and state Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs).
- Build a **Centralised Public Platform** combining the TSA, GIFMIS, IPPIS, and Open Treasury portals.
- Launch a **Citizen Verification System** allowing the public to upload geo-tagged evidence of project progress.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1:** Establish legal foundations by amending the Public Procurement, Fiscal Responsibility, and FOI Acts.
- **Phase 2:** Integrate existing digital financial systems and launch a phased rollout of the unified public dashboard.
- **Phase 3:** Train MDA staff and deploy the citizen portal for active civic participation and evidence submission.
- **Phase 4:** Enforce compliance through annual Auditor-General audits and an Independent Oversight Committee.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Significant improvements in Nigeria's Open Budget Survey transparency and public participation scores.
- A measurable reduction in corruption and financial leakages across all participating MDAs and the restoration of institutional trust through verified, citizen-led project monitoring.

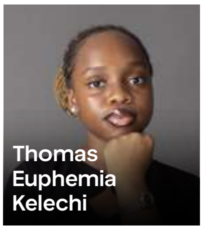
RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Transparency without Accountability	Link disclosure compliance directly to budget suspensions and strict Auditor-General sanctions.
False Citizen Reporting	Require timestamped and geo-tagged evidence for submissions before initiating formal institutional reviews.
The Digital Divide	Deploy offline USSD channels, SMS reporting, and local Community Accountability Centres.
State/Bureaucratic Resistance	Offer conditional transparency grants to states and focus on integrating existing systems rather than duplicating work.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Prioritize Legal Reform:** Immediately amend existing procurement and fiscal laws to make project disclosure an enforceable mandate rather than a choice.
- **Incentivize Compliance:** Utilize conditional transparency grants, mirroring the SFTAS model, to encourage state-level adoption.
- **Ensure Inclusivity:** Sustain funding for offline reporting channels to guarantee that rural populations remain active participants in governance.

Team Renaissance | University of Lagos



Topic:

Rebuilding Trust in Nigerian Elections:

Strengthening INEC Independence Through Financial Autonomy, Appointment Reform, and the Creation of an Electoral Offences Commission

POLICY CHALLENGE

With only 28% of Nigerians expressing confidence in the institution, public trust in the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is critically low. INEC's structural vulnerability stems from its financial dependence on the executive, politicized appointments, and lack of independent prosecutorial power.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

This proposal advocates charging INEC's budget directly to the Consolidated Revenue Fund to ensure financial autonomy. It replaces unilateral presidential appointments with a transparent, multi-stakeholder selection committee. Finally, it creates an autonomous **Electoral Offences Commission (EOC)** to aggressively prosecute electoral crimes.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When citizens doubt the fairness of elections, they resort to apathy and electoral violence. Fewer than ten individuals have been prosecuted for electoral offences between 1999 and 2022. Reforming this system is an imperative that will rebuild trust in the Nigerian state, and elections

KEY ACTIONS

- Operationalize Section 3(3) of the Electoral Act 2022 to guarantee INEC's funding as a first-line charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund.
- Amend Section 154 of the 1999 Constitution to introduce a multi-stakeholder committee for vetting and shortlisting INEC leadership.
- Pass National Assembly legislation to establish the independent EOC with a dedicated mandate to prosecute Electoral Act violations.
- Appoint the EOC's Director of Prosecutions through a merit-based process, securing their tenure against arbitrary executive removal.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Months 1-12):** Amend the Electoral Act 2022 via simple legislative majority to establish the EOC and operationalize direct funding.
- **Phase 2 (Months 13-24):** Initiate and complete constitutional amendments under Section 9 to permanently enshrine financial guarantees and appointment reforms.
- **Funding Strategy:** Allocate approximately N25 billion annually for the EOC, offsetting the estimated N300 billion lost to electoral violence in 2023.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Complete eradication of executive financial leverage over electoral processes and logistics.
- A dramatic reduction in electoral impunity due to the dedicated prosecutorial focus of the newly formed EOC.
- Measurable increases in voter turnout and international credibility.

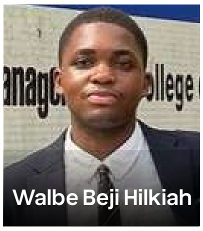
RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Legislative Resistance	Execute Phase 1 using ordinary legislation to build momentum while leveraging civil society pressure for Phase 2.
Institutional Capture	Ensure the selection committee includes diverse bodies like the NBA, NLC, and civil society to dilute political influence.
Duplication of Duties	Explicitly define the EOC's mandate exclusively around Electoral Act violations to prevent overlap with existing agencies.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Adopt a Sequenced Approach:** Implement the three reforms as an interdependent package, prioritizing statutory changes before pursuing constitutional amendments.
- **Decentralize Appointments:** Permanently revoke the President's exclusive nomination power over INEC leadership to prevent partisan infiltration.
- **Protect Tenure:** Require a legislative supermajority to remove EOC leadership, securing the institution against executive retaliation.

Team Revolutionaries | Covenant University



Walbe Beji Hilkiah

Peter John

Topic:

Rebuilding Trust Through Governance Continuity:

A National Framework For Strategic Project Protection And Institutional Stability In Nigeria

POLICY CHALLENGE

Nigeria suffers from chronic governance discontinuity, where successive administrations routinely abandon inherited projects to pursue new political branding. This has resulted in approximately 56,000 abandoned public projects valued at over 17 trillion Naira. Consequently, public trust in state institutions has collapsed, with only 27% of citizens currently expressing trust in the President.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposed solution is the enactment of the **National Governance Continuity and Strategic Projects Protection Act (NGCSPPA).** This binding legislative framework protects strategic national investments from arbitrary abandonment during political transitions. It effectively institutionalizes project continuity to outlast individual political administrations.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Sustainable national development requires durable institutions, not just temporary executive orders or political promises. Unilateral project abandonment wastes massive financial resources and actively destroys public trust. Enforcing continuity translates political commitments into binding legal obligations, directly bridging the gap between state action and citizen expectations.

KEY ACTIONS

- Create a **National Strategic Projects Register (NSPR)** to publicly track major federal projects exceeding 5 billion Naira.
- Enforce **Mandatory Transition Protocols** requiring outgoing administrations to submit detailed project status reports to incoming leaders.
- Establish an independent **Project Continuity Review Panel (PCRP)** to audit projects and refer improper abandonments to anti-corruption agencies.
- Create a **Governance Continuity Fund (GCF)**, reserving 2% of the federal capital budget to bridge transition-period funding gaps.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Months 1-6):** Gazette the Act, officially establish the PCRP, and launch the digital NSPR portal.
- **Phase 2 (Months 7-18):** Register all qualifying ongoing projects, enforce transition reports, and initiate GCF appropriations.
- **Phase 3 & 4 (Months 19-36):** Test state-level pilots, evaluate platform functionality, and expand sub-national adoption via State Houses of Assembly.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Eradication of unilateral and politically costless project abandonment by incoming administrations.
- Protection of multi-billion Naira capital investments, directly curbing the current 17 trillion Naira deficit of abandoned projects.
- Incremental restoration of public trust in democratic institutions through consistent and transparent performance.

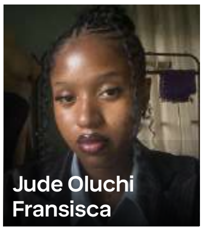
RISKS AND MITIGATION

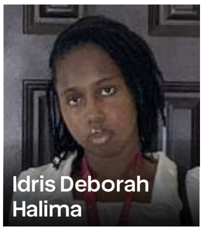
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Political Repeal	Mandate public parliamentary reviews for cancellations, making repeal highly visible and politically costly.
Weak Institutional Capacity	Leverage open-source digital platforms and utilize existing anti-corruption agencies (EFCC/ICPC) for enforcement.
PCRP Politicization	Implement staggered five-year terms and utilize a multi-stakeholder appointment process to ensure independence.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Bipartisan Legislation:** Introduce the NGCSPPA as a private member bill with cross-party sponsorship to ensure broad political viability.
- **Incentivize States:** Utilize the GCF intergovernmental transfer formula to financially reward states that adopt their own local continuity laws.
- **Engage Civil Society:** Include professional bodies like the Nigerian Society of Engineers and the NBA in the PCRP to block political capture.

GGG | LeadCity University





Topic:

Rebuilding Trust Through Emergency Healthcare Financing Reform in Nigeria:

Expanding Insurance Access and Emergency Treatment Protection Under the NHIA Framework.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Millions of Nigerians are denied emergency medical treatment due to low insurance and persistent hospital demands for upfront financial deposits. This practice violates Section 20 of the National Health Act 2014 and directly leads to preventable deaths.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposal introduces an **Integrated Emergency Healthcare Access and Insurance Reform Framework** operating under the NHIA. This system merges mandatory, association-based insurance enrollment with telecom-supported premium payment infrastructure. It also establishes a dedicated emergency treatment wallet to guarantee immediate patient stabilization without upfront deposits.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Out-of-pocket financing creates extreme hardship and completely blocks vulnerable populations from life-saving care. Guaranteeing immediate emergency stabilization protects citizens from financial discrimination during critical medical crises. Ultimately, accessible and reliable emergency care restores the social contract and rebuilds public trust in state institutions.

KEY ACTIONS

- Mandate insurance enrollment through recognized informal sector groups, such as market unions and transport associations.
- Deploy USSD-based telecom payment systems to simplify premium collections for low-income and rural participants.
- Create an NHIA emergency treatment wallet to automatically cover immediate stabilization costs for qualifying patients.
- Develop a centralized digital emergency verification and reimbursement platform to ensure rapid hospital payouts.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Launch phased pilot programs across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones during the first year to refine digital systems.
- Expand the framework nationally by the third year by leveraging public-private partnerships with fintech and telecom companies.
- Finance the initiative using the **Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF)**, expanded premium pools, and targeted health-sector levies.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Significantly expanded health insurance coverage across Nigeria's informal sector, which constitutes 80% of the workforce.
- Immediate reduction in preventable emergency deaths previously linked to delayed financial verification.
- Relief of extreme financial pressure on healthcare providers through accelerated, guaranteed digital reimbursements.

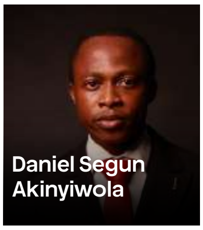
RISKS AND MITIGATION

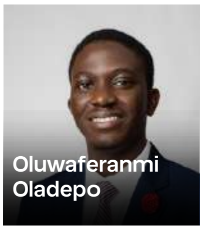
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Informal Sector Resistance	Channel enrollment strictly through established, trusted community associations and trade unions.
Poor Digital Infrastructure	Utilize USSD-based payment systems that operate efficiently on basic mobile phones without internet connectivity.
High Implementation Costs	Implement a blended financing structure involving BHCPF, targeted levies, and public-private partnerships.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adopt a **blended financing structure** that actively leverages tobacco/alcohol levies and telecom micro-levies for long-term sustainability.
- Strategically direct a designated portion of BHCPF allocations specifically toward funding the NHIA emergency treatment wallet.
- Prioritize a phased rollout strategy to monitor fraud, test reimbursement speeds, and build institutional capacity before nationwide deployment.

Team Structura | Federal Univeristy of Technology Akure





Topic:

The Integrated Detention Accountability System (IDAS):

A Multi-Layered Policy Framework for Eliminating Arbitrary Detention and Rebuilding Institutional Trust in the Nigeria Police Force

POLICY CHALLENGE

Local police stations rely entirely on alterable, manual paper ledgers, granting arresting officers unchecked power and monopoly to keep people in detention arbitrarily.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposal introduces the **Integrated Detention Accountability System (IDAS)**, a framework designed to replace paper ledgers with unalterable biometric data. It tackles unrecorded detentions by replacing human discretion with a Biometric Intake Mandate (BIM)

WHY THIS MATTERS

IDAS enforces compliance at intake, making it easier to follow the law than to break it.

KEY ACTIONS

- Enforce the **Biometric Intake Mandate (BIM)**, requiring officers to capture a cryptographic hash of a detainee's fingerprint within 15 minutes of station arrival.
- Implement an automated SMS **Kinship Notification** system via USSD, instantly alerting pre-registered family members upon a verified biometric scan.
- Integrate the PDSS network to automatically dispatch the nearest available duty solicitor within four hours of a confirmed detention.
- Deploy **Geospatial Fleet Telemetry** on police vehicles to flag route deviations and prevent upstream off-the-books detentions.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Months 1-4):** Build Application Programming Interface (API) for logic linking NHRC with NIMC, secure cloud servers, and sign a tripartite MoU between the NHRC, the Inspector General of Police, and the Legal Aid Council.
- **Phase 2 (Months 5-8):** Install GPS trackers, deploy biometric scanners in three Lagos pilot precincts, train officers, and roll out a public USSD awareness campaign.
- **Phase 3 (Months 9-12):** Activate pilot precincts, monitor telemetry through the NHRC IDAS Response Unit, and publish the first quarterly public accountability scorecard.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Total elimination of plausible deniability for arresting officers, rendering unrecorded detentions impossible to bypass.
- Immediate structural enforcement of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) without the need to draft massive new legislation.
- Public validation of compliant police commanders via quarterly accountability scorecards, incentivizing hierarchy with reputational capital.

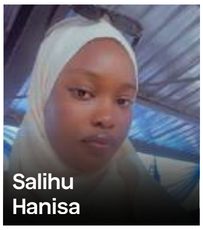
RISKS AND MITIGATION

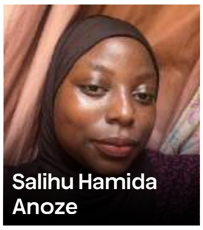
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Hardware Sabotage	Implement a strict liability mandate holding Divisional Police Officers personally liable for claims made during unlogged offline periods exceeding two hours.
Data Privacy Breaches	Transmit only one-way cryptographic hashes rather than raw biometric data, ensuring compliance with the NDPA 2023.
Upstream Street Extortion	Introduce an anonymous public USSD trigger that triangulates bystander reports to force an NHRC alert if no subsequent scan clears.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Amend the ACJA:** Pass a single, narrow amendment defining biometric data captured at intake as prima facie evidence of the time and fact of detention.
- **Reject Unviable Tech:** Discard mandatory Body-Worn Cameras (BWCs), as they require massive, unfunded cloud storage and are highly susceptible to intentional "malfunctions".
- **Condition Expansion on Metrics:** Require an 85% verified scan compliance rate in the Lagos pilot before scaling IDAS to 15 precincts across high-density hubs.

Synergy Circle | Federal University of Lafia





Topic:

The 'Japa' Deficit:

A Multi-Stakeholder Policy Framework for Retaining Medical Talent and Restoring Trust in the Nigerian Healthcare State.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Nigeria faces a severe "Japa" crisis, with the doctor-to-patient ratio worsening to 1:9,000 against the WHO's recommended 1:600. This massive medical migration is heavily driven by institutional decay, with 66% of migrating doctors citing poor infrastructure and substandard equipment as their primary reason for leaving.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The primary solution is the establishment of the **Health-TETFund,** fueled by a dedicated 2% corporate profit tax specifically ring-fenced for medical infrastructure. This is paired with a **Digital Health Workforce Registry** and **Performance-Based Remuneration System.**

WHY THIS MATTERS

Healthcare professionals cannot perform life-saving duties in clinics lacking basic supplies like electricity or oxygen. By fixing the workspace and implementing fair, verified remuneration, the government removes the primary economic and professional "push factors" driving migration.

KEY ACTIONS

- Enact the "National Health Infrastructure Act" to legalize the mandatory 2% corporate health tax.
- Form an independent **Board of Trustees** for the Health-TETFund, including the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) and civil society.
- Deploy the Digital Health Workforce Registry to integrate biometric clock-ins with centralized payrolls.
- Adopt a "project-tied" disbursement model where funds are released only when physical hospital milestones are verified.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Year 1 (Legislative Phase):** Draft and pass the National Health Infrastructure Act to formally legalize the corporate tax model.
- **Year 2 (Audit Phase):** Conduct a comprehensive nationwide audit of all Federal Medical Centers (FMCs) to identify highest-need areas.
- **Year 3 (Rollout Phase):** Execute the first round of hospital upgrades, prioritizing diagnostic tools and staff quarters.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A visible transformation of public hospitals through dedicated, non-budgetary infrastructure funding.
- Total elimination of "ghost workers" and the elite capture of payroll funds through strict biometric monitoring.
- Equitable rural healthcare access by utilizing the digital registry to automatically track and disburse rural hardship allowances.

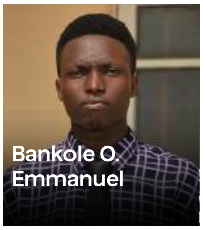
RISKS AND MITIGATION

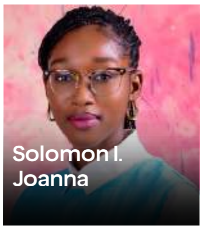
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Corporate Tax Pushback	Offer "early adopter" tax rebates and public recognition to frame the 2% tax as a badge of corporate honor.
Distrust in Fund Management	Utilize open digital ledgers and an independent board of medical professionals and civil society to block corruption.
Doctor Resistance to Registry	Frame the registry as a support tool, offering compliant doctors priority placements and grant funding access.

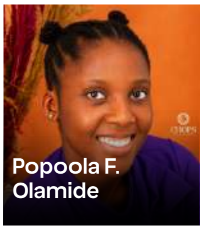
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Prioritize the Health-TETFund:** Focus immediately on infrastructure funding, as data proves physical workspace conditions drive migration more than base salaries.
- **Enforce Project-Tied Funding:** Mandate that all infrastructure funds require transparent, milestone-based physical verification before capital is released.
- **Implement Performance-Based Remuneration (PBR):** Link the biometric workforce registry directly to payroll to fairly reward doctors who actively remain at their duty posts.

GYNOVA Initiative | Ekiti State University







Topic:

A Critical Analysis of NHIA's Exclusionary Framework and Its Effect on Maternal Healthcare Utilization and Trust

POLICY CHALLENGE

The National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA) exclusionary framework severely limits maternal healthcare access for many informal-sector women. Hidden costs and rejected insurance claims deeply erode institutional trust, discouraging vulnerable women from seeking care.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The recommended solution is **Federally Supported Automatic Maternal Enrollment** under the NHIA. This policy will automatically register financially vulnerable pregnant women for specialized health insurance during their first antenatal care (ANC) visit.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Nigerian women face a staggering 1 in 19 lifetime risk of dying during pregnancy or childbirth. Implementing this reform is a moral imperative that directly aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) to reduce maternal mortality.

KEY ACTIONS

- Automatically enroll eligible women into the NHIA during their initial ANC registration without requiring separate applications.
- Expand the **maternal benefits package** to fully cover ultrasounds, emergency caesarean sections, and blood transfusions.
- Integrate digital enrollment infrastructure with National Identification Number (NIN) systems and state insurance databases.
- Finance this comprehensive coverage using the **Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF)** and dedicated federal health allocations.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Initiate a phased rollout targeting states with the highest maternal mortality rates and the weakest insurance coverage.
- Establish eligibility using standardized income thresholds assessed jointly by the NHIA and the National Bureau of Statistics.
- Secure transitional financing and administrative support from international development partners like the World Bank, UNICEF, and UNFPA.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Increase health insurance enrollment among previously excluded informal-sector and low-income women.
- Reduce catastrophic out-of-pocket spending on complicated pregnancies and emergency obstetric procedures.
- Restore public trust in state institutions by providing immediate and visible governmental responsiveness to maternal health needs.

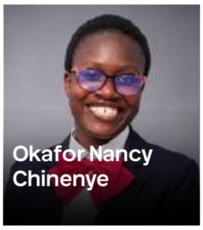
RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Constrained Fiscal Capacity	Target eligibility using strict income thresholds and implement a phased national rollout.
Infrastructure Weaknesses	Channel BHCPF funds directly toward staffing and equipment at accredited maternal facilities.
Fraud and Corruption	Link all digital enrollments to NIN systems and enforce independent maternal health audits.
Reaching Rural Populations	Utilize decentralized, community-based enrollment via primary healthcare centres and community health workers.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Adopt Automatic Enrollment:** Immediately transition to an ANC-linked automatic enrollment system rather than relying on ineffective voluntary participation models.
- **Eliminate Hidden Costs:** Ensure the NHIA comprehensively covers all advanced maternal procedures to prevent out-of-pocket billing at healthcare facilities.
- **Leverage Tax Infrastructure:** Alternatively, explore utilizing the administrative machinery of the 2025 Tax Reform Act to eventually scale informal-sector health contributions.

Aqua Orators | Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Nigeria



Topic:

Promise to Obligation:

A Statutory Framework for Enforcing Judicial Panel Recommendations as a Mechanism for Rebuilding Police Trust in Nigeria.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Trust in the Nigerian police is at a dismal 15%, representing the lowest of any public institution in the country. This systemic failure to enforce state accountability commitments has deeply eroded public trust and state legitimacy.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposal introduces a **Judicial Recommendations Enforcement Framework (JREF)** to make panel recommendations legally binding. It designates the **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** as the statutory monitor to enforce compliance.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Creating accountability processes without legal obligations actively damages state credibility. Enforceable consequences are urgently required to validate citizen grievances and prove that state commitments are real.

KEY ACTIONS

- Amend Section 3 of the Police Act 2020 to officially establish the JREF.
- Empower the NHRC with suo motu authority to initiate Federal High Court proceedings against non-compliant governments.
- Enforce a mandatory 24-month implementation window for compensation payouts and disciplinary actions.
- Launch a publicly accessible, real-time compliance dashboard maintained by independent civic-tech organizations like BudgIT and Tracka.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Stage 1 (Days 1-30):** The Attorney-General issues an immediate compliance directive and activates the NHRC to publish a preliminary compliance register.
- **Stage 2 (Months 2-12):** The NHRC launches the public dashboard, issues compliance assessments, and initiates court referrals for state non-compliance.
- **Stage 3 (Months 6-18):** The National Assembly passes the Police Act amendment to convert interim executive directives into permanent statutory law.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Victims receive guaranteed compensation backed by judicially compellable mechanisms.
- State and federal governments face direct legal, fiscal, and reputational consequences for ignoring accountability reports.
- Public trust is measurably rebuilt through transparent, observable adherence to formal state commitments.

RISKS AND MITIGATION

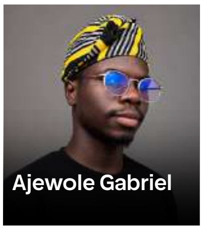
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
NHRC Institutional Capture	Allow CSOs to apply for a writ of mandamus compelling NHRC action if the commission fails to enforce within 60 days.
The Injunction Loophole	Establish a statutory 30-day maximum on any stay of NHRC enforcement proceedings to prevent dilatory litigation.
Budgetary Paralysis	Create a ring-fenced **Police Liability Fund** to strictly separate compensation payouts from police
Panel Avoidance Evasion	Include a dual-trigger provision empowering the NHRC to independently investigate and enforce findings without a formal state panel.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Adopt the Statutory-Executive Hybrid:** Utilize this model to balance immediate administrative action with long-term legal durability.
- **Establish a Verification Gatekeeper:** Require the NHRC to certify panel findings before unlocking federal funds to deter state-level fiscal weaponization.
- **Bifurcate Accountability:** Separate civil compensation obligations from criminal accountability so compensation is paid rapidly while criminal cases undergo independent AGF review.

Future Forward | University of Ilorin

Solomon Promise



Ajewole Gabriel

Topic:

A Blueprint for Citizen-Led Accountability and Digital Governance in Nigeria's Mandatory Health Insurance Ecosystem

POLICY CHALLENGE

Despite the **NHIA Act 2022** mandating universal health coverage, national enrollment remains under 5%, exposing 190 million Nigerians to catastrophic out-of-pocket costs. The system suffers from massive fiscal leakage, with an estimated 10-15% of healthcare funds lost annually to unverified "Ghost Claims" filed by providers.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposal introduces the **Verified Care Ledger (VCL)**, a citizen-led digital accountability tool. It acts as a dual-authentication digital escrow, requiring patients to authorize healthcare transactions using a one-time **Care PIN** on their mobile devices before hospitals can receive state reimbursement.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The VCL transforms citizens from passive subjects into active "Verified Auditors" of public resources, thereby reclaiming the social contract and rebuilding institutional trust. By actively combating fraud, a state like Lagos could recover 300 million Naira annually from its Equity Fund, which is enough to insure an additional 45,000 vulnerable residents.

KEY ACTIONS

- Integrate the VCL as an integrity layer over existing digital platforms, such as Lagos's Smart Health Information Platform (SHIP), using an API.
- Deploy zero-rated USSD shortcodes accessible in local languages to eliminate financial and literacy barriers.
- Shift to a performance-linked model dependent entirely on successful citizen PIN verifications.
- Implement real-time quality care auditing by embedding a 1-5 rating prompt immediately following the USSD Care PIN entry.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Months 1-3):** Complete API integration with SHIP and secure zero-rated USSD channels with major mobile network operators
- **Phase 2 (Months 4-8):** Launch the "Beta-Lagos Pilot" across demographically diverse Local Government Areas to test the fiscal trigger.
- **Phase 3 (Months 9-12):** Execute full mandatory integration across all public and private providers within the Lagos State Health Scheme.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Elimination of fraudulent billing and "Ghost Claims," drastically reducing fiscal leakage in the health sector.
- Creation of a real-time Quality Care Radar that flags underperforming facilities and forces market-like competition among providers.
- Reclamation of institutional integrity by shifting the public perspective from a forced "health tax" to a protected "health right".

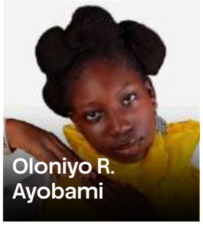
RISKS AND MITIGATION

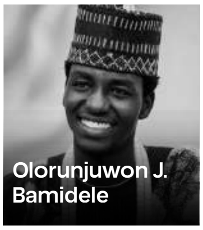
Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
No Phone Access (Minors/Elderly)	Implement a **Proxy Key** mechanism allowing a verified, registered guardian to provide the Care PIN on the patient's behalf.
Medical Emergencies	Establish **Emergency Override Protocols** to bypass the PIN, which automatically triggers a mandatory 48-hour post-care audit to prevent abuse.
Data Privacy Breaches	Transmit only Transaction IDs and PINs—excluding sensitive medical data—to ensure strict compliance with the Nigeria Data Protection Act (NDPA).

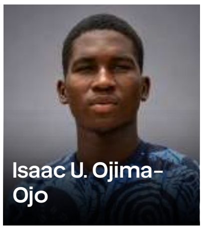
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Embed in State Health Laws:** Include the VCL as the national standard for fiscal integrity and citizen-led service verification into the NHIA Act.
- **Expand Zero-Rated Infrastructure:** Partner with the Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy to provide free, nationwide USSD shortcodes for health verification.
- **Enforce Performance Disbursements:** Transition at least 30% of Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHCPF) payouts to a performance-based model triggered solely by citizen verification by Q4 2026.

The Restorers | Federal University of Lokoja







Topic:

National Electoral Transparency Infrastructure

POLICY CHALLENGE

Public trust in Nigeria's elections is severely eroded due to delayed result transmission, vote manipulation, and weak institutional accountability. Currently, the technical system used by the INEC suffers an overcentralization of technology and lacks strict legal mandates for real-time result uploads.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Establish the **National Electoral Transparency Infrastructure (NETI)**, a comprehensive legal and technological framework. This system integrates secure biometric verification, encrypted digital result transmission, and a public transparency dashboard.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Deploying technical upgrades without corresponding legal accountability fails to resolve the structural public distrust. Transparent digital infrastructure, strictly backed by law, ensures that citizens' votes reliably translate into governance outcomes and reduces voter apathy.

KEY ACTIONS

- Legally mandate the real-time electronic transmission of polling unit results immediately after counting.
- Establish an **Independent Electoral Technology Oversight Commission** to supervise cybersecurity and independent system audits.
- Develop a centralized **National Election Data Infrastructure** protected by encryption and multi-factor authentication.
- Launch a public transparency dashboard displaying real-time upload statuses, technical incident reports, and audit logs.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Legislative):** Amend the Electoral Act 2022, establish the independent oversight commission, and finalize national regulatory standards.
- **Phase 2 (Infrastructure):** Upgrade biometric devices, build secure national election data servers, and conduct rigorous cybersecurity testing.
- **Phase 3 (Pilot):** Test the new infrastructure during off-cycle elections to identify and resolve technical weaknesses before wider rollout.
- **Phase 4 (Nationwide):** Full nationwide deployment during general elections, accompanied by continuous independent public monitoring.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Significant restoration of public trust and a measurable increase in overall voter turnout.
- Drastic reduction in electoral fraud, manipulation, and prolonged post-election judicial disputes.
- Enhanced international confidence in Nigeria's democratic stability and governance framework.

RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
High Implementation Cost	Utilize a phased implementation strategy over multiple election cycles and create a dedicated **Electoral Integrity Fund.**
Rural Infrastructure Deficits	Deploy satellite-enabled transmission devices, solar-powered tech, and offline encrypted storage with delayed synchronization.
Cybersecurity Vulnerabilities	Implement multi-factor verification, blockchain-based audit trails, and mandatory independent cybersecurity audits.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Amend the Electoral Act: **Legally criminalize the** unauthorized alteration, suppression, or deletion of digital election data.
- **Establish an Integrity Fund:** Create a dedicated Electoral Integrity Fund via federal appropriations and international grants to ensure predictable financing.
- **Leverage Private Partnerships:** Collaborate with licensed Nigerian tech companies for infrastructure development under strict conflict-of-interest guidelines.

Team Stone | Federal University of Oye Ekiti

Caleb Peter Nwali

John Peter Nwali

Aremo Peter Oluwamodupeola

Topic:

A Tripartite Trust Compact:

Citizen Participatory Auditing, Beneficial Ownership Criminalisation, and Hybrid Security Governance as Instruments for Rebuilding Institutional Trust in the Nigerian State.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Fiscal opacity, elite capture of extractive wealth, and the theft of 13.5 million barrels of crude oil valued at 4.9 trillion Naira contributes to the deficit in trust in the Nigerian government. Nigeria hereby faces a multi-institutional legitimacy collapse.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The proposal advocates enacting a **Tripartite Trust Compact** consisting of three interlocking statutory reforms. These are the Citizen Participatory Audit Act, the Beneficial Ownership and Extractive Accountability Act, and the Hybrid Security Governance Act. These statutes replace discretionary administrative directives with legally enforceable civic rights.

WHY THIS MATTERS

When resource theft occurs with absolute impunity and citizens endure severe economic hardships, public distrust becomes entirely rational and evidence-based. Institutionalizing citizen oversight directly addresses Goal 16 of the UN 2030 Agenda and actively restores state legitimacy.

KEY ACTIONS

- Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) to integrate Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) into the audit cycle for projects over 500 million Naira.
- Make it a federal criminal offense, punishable by 10 years imprisonment, for public officials to hold proxy interests in extractive companies.
- Mandate the Bureau of Public Procurement to disqualify contractors whose beneficial owners are listed as proxy public officials on the NEITI register.
- Establish a two-tier security model: a constitutionally safeguarded **State Police** and an autonomous, LGA-funded **Community Constabulary.**

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Year 1:** Focus heavily on digital public portal development, CSO accreditation, and integrating the NEITI register directly with the procurement portal.
- **Year 2:** Fully activate the criminal liability provisions and launch the public Verification Challenge mechanism for real-time expenditure audits.
- **Year 3:** Complete the required constitutional amendments for State Police and actively deploy Community Constabularies across all 36 states.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Dismantlement of informal networks that intentionally obscure expenditure data and divert public funds.
- Elimination of elite capture by transforming the NEITI register from a mere transparency disclosure tool into a strict enforcement instrument.
- Drastically improved security response times in communities heavily exposed to insurgency, banditry, and communal violence.

RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Elite Legislative Resistance	Leverage international governance conditionality via the Open Government Partnership (OGP) to create external pressure for passage.
Gubernatorial Abuse of Police	Create an **Independent Police Oversight Board** containing Judiciary and NHRC members to veto the unilateral dismissal of Police Commissioners.
CSO Capture or Incompetence	Enforce strict accreditation rules requiring three years of documented governance work and financial independence from the government.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Focus on Statutory Obligations:** Enact firm legislation rather than relying on revocable executive directives.
- **Incentivize Whistleblowers:** Reward citizens who expose proxy ownership violations with 15% of the recovered contract value from a dedicated Citizen Integrity Reward Fund.
- **Secure Sustainable Funding:** Fund the new Hybrid Security Governance model through a dedicated 1% levy on the Federation Account allocated directly to the Police Trust Fund.

Team Noesis | University of Lagos

Topic:

From Ballots to Blocks:

A Proposal for the Electoral Transparency and Distributed Ledger Bill as a Structural Foundation for Rebuilding Institutional Trust in Nigeria.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Public trust in Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) collapsed to just 23% in 2023 with the Electoral Act 2022 suffering from severe structural flaws, including centralized and mutable vote storage, unverified human collation, and zero post-election accountability.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Enact the **Electoral Transparency and Distributed Ledger Bill (ETDLB)** as a standalone legislative instrument. This establishes a **National Electoral Distributed Ledger (NEDL)**, utilizing permissioned Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) to record votes as mathematically immutable cryptographic transactions.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Centralized databases, like the current IReV portal, are highly vulnerable to manipulation and selective result uploads. Transitioning to a blockchain system permanently removes human discretion from result aggregation, ensuring true end-to-end verifiability.

KEY ACTIONS

- Establish the **NEDL**, operated by a multi-institution consortium where no single entity controls more than 30% of the nodes.
- Implement **Cryptographic Collation** to automatically aggregate polling unit records and instantly flag discrepancies in human-declared totals.
- Deploy an **AI-Powered Identity Verification** module linked to NIN biometric data to detect and eliminate ghost voters.
- Create a **Post-Election Accountability Register** to publicly track the performance of elected officials against their documented campaign promises.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase 1 (Months 1-12):** Deploy infrastructure and pilot the technology in Local Government Area (LGA) chairmanship elections across six states.
- **Phase 2 (Months 13-24):** Expand deployment nationally to all LGA and state constituency elections while fully activating the AI verification module.
- **Phase 3 (Months 25-36):** Mandate the full ETDLB system in all gubernatorial and federal elections.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Generates over N100 billion in long-term savings within two election cycles by significantly reducing physical ballot costs and litigation.
- Provides the end-to-end verifiability explicitly recommended by the European Union Election Observation Mission.
- Lays the biometric and digital foundation necessary for future secure diaspora voting and fully accessible voting for persons with disabilities.

RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Blockchain Hacking	Use a permissioned blockchain requiring strict two-thirds node consensus to alter any recorded data.
Rural Disenfranchisement	Deploy **offline-first terminals** that record votes locally and sync automatically once internet connectivity is restored.
Low Technological Literacy	Retain mandatory **INEC-assisted voting options** and provide USSD-based result verification for basic mobile phones.
Weak INEC Technical Capacity	Distribute operational responsibility across NITDA and a vetted, multi-institution node consortium.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Pass as a Standalone Bill:** Enact the ETDLB independently to avoid the intense procedural delays associated with reopening the entire Electoral Act 2022.
- **Use a Grassroots-First Strategy:** Implement the technology from the bottom up, starting at the LGA level to build public trust and technical capacity.
- **Implement an Electoral Levy:** Fund the N48.7 billion upfront cost via international grants and a temporary 0.01% Electoral Technology Development Levy on corporate income tax.

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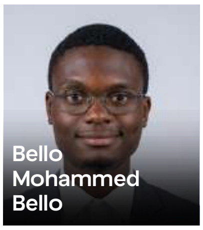

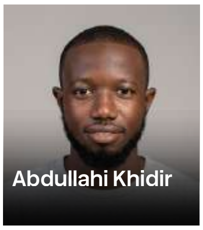

Topic:

The Civic Bridge Framework:

A Closed-Loop Accountability Model for Strengthening Institutional Trust and Public Service Responsiveness in Nigeria

POLICY CHALLENGE

Nigerian public institutions face a severe crisis of trust driven by administrative unresponsiveness, delayed grievance loops, and operational opacity. Fragmented and non-interoperable reporting channels leave citizen complaints buried within isolated bureaucratic siloes. Furthermore, public servants face no statutory deadlines or career consequences for completely ignoring citizen feedback.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The **Civic Bridge Framework** is a closed-loop governance reform designed to mandate public service responsiveness without creating redundant commissions. It optimizes existing bodies like SERVICOM and the Public Complaints Commission (PCC) through an **Integrated Public Complaint Tracking Architecture (IPCTA).**

WHY THIS MATTERS

Converting citizen feedback into a legally binding governance standard directly restores the democratic social contract. Aligned with UN SDG Goal 16, this closed-loop model ensures citizen grievances actively drive structural oversight.

KEY ACTIONS

- Codify the **Right-to-Response (R2R)** protocol mandating a 48-hour acknowledgment and a 14-day substantive resolution path.
- Deploy the **IPCTA** backend to issue unique tracking IDs and auto-escalate unhandled complaints to the PCC.
- Establish the **National Public Trust Index (PTI)**, published quarterly by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) to score MDA performance.
- Link PTI scores directly to senior civil service career advancements and annual MDA budgetary retention thresholds.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- **Phase I (Months 1–6):** Pilot across 4 high-impact federal ministries (Health, Education, Justice, Interior) and 6 geopolitical zone states plus the FCT.
- **Phase II (Months 7–12):** Expand horizontally to all remaining federal MDAs, add indigenous language support, and release the prototype PTI.
- **Phase III (Months 13–24):** Scale vertically to 30 remaining states and Local Government Areas, linking PTI rankings to FAAC allocations.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Short-Term: Achieves a 90% automated tracking ID generation rate and clears initial complaint backlogs across pilot agencies.
- Medium-Term: Secures a 75% compliance rate with the 14-day resolution window while sparking healthy inter-ministerial competition.
- Long-Term: Drives a verifiable 40% increase in aggregate public trust across public institutions by closing the citizen feedback loop.

RISKS AND MITIGATION

Identified Risk	Proposed Mitigation
Bureaucratic Inertia	Link PTI scores directly to OHCSF career promotions and departmental budget retentions.
Digital Exclusion	Deploy a hybrid intake matrix featuring toll-free USSD codes, SMS gateways, and physical council desks.
Data Manipulation	Require citizen-driven SMS/USSD verification codes and random phone audits before closing complaints.
Political Discontinuity	Legally embed R2R and PTI mechanisms via targeted amendments to the Public Complaints Commission Act.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Legislate the R2R Protocol:** Amend the Public Complaints Commission Act to convert public responsiveness into an enforceable legal duty.
- **Optimize Existing Infrastructure:** Reallocate underutilized capacity-building budgets to fund SERVICOM, PCC, NBS, and OHCSF integration.
- **Enforce Hybrid Access:** Mandate zero-rated USSD and SMS complaint intake channels to guarantee access for rural and offline citizens.

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