



AIG-IMOUKHUEDE
FOUNDATION

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NEWSLETTER

October 2022



Notes from the Executive Vice-Chair

One of our objectives at the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation is to engender buy-in by different stakeholder groups of the need to be actively involved in national transformation. To this end, in October, we invited Professor Stefan Dercon, a professor of economic policy at the University of Oxford and author of the book ***Gambling on Development: Why Some Countries Win and Others Lose***, to visit Nigeria and share the premise of his book with different stakeholder groups.

Professor Dercon held In Conversation sessions in Lagos and Abuja and shared his research findings on the development bargains that laid the groundwork for economic development and consequent poverty reduction across nations as diverse as China, Indonesia, India and Mauritius. The sessions were aimed at stimulating thought and action by different stakeholders, towards an elite consensus for a greater Nigeria

You can read more about these and other updates in this newsletter.

Ofovwe Aig-Imoukhuede
Executive Vice-Chair,
Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation.



FEATURES

PROFESSOR STEFAN DERCON'S VISIT TO NIGERIA

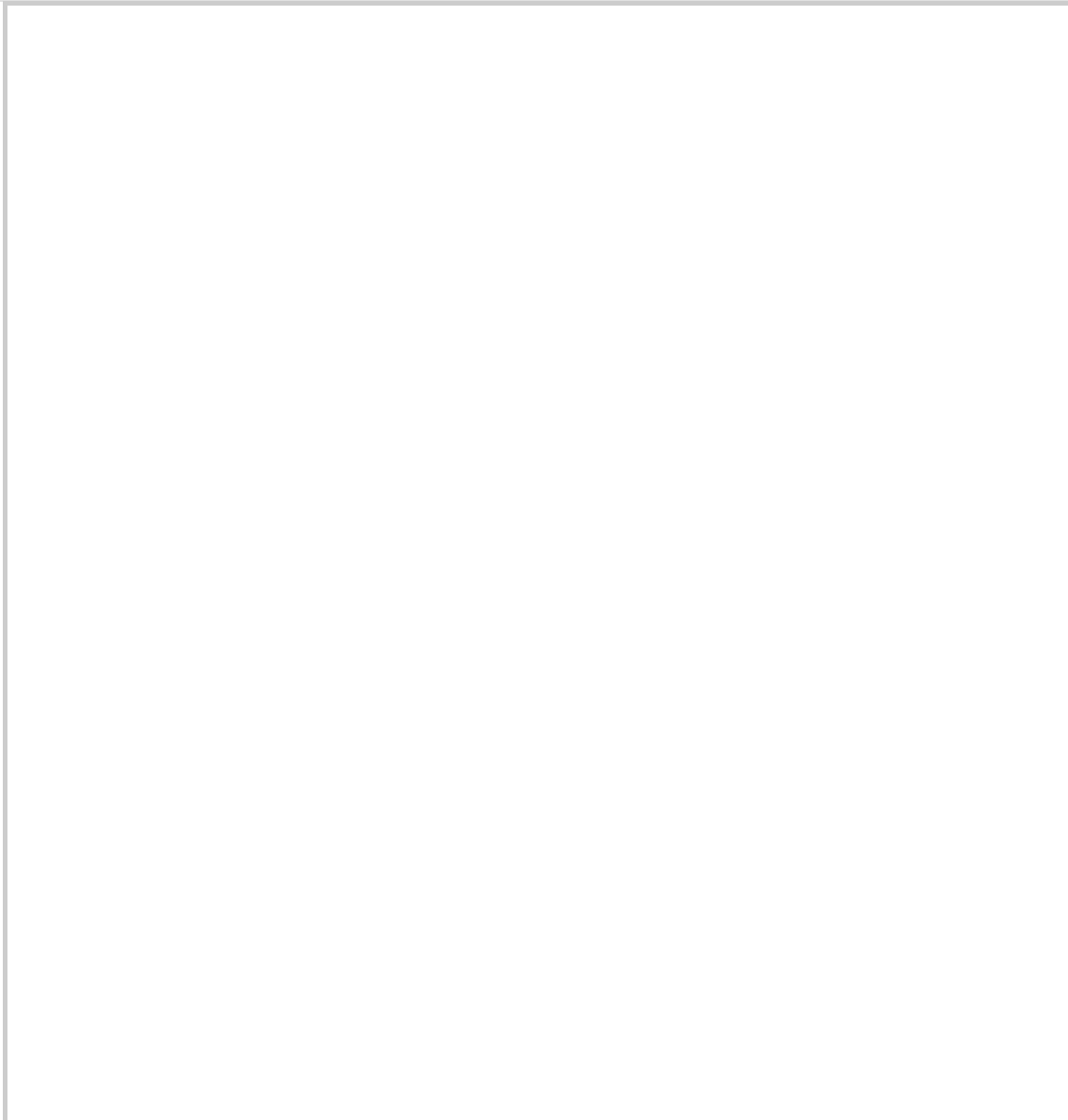
In October, we invited Professor Stefan Dercon, renowned Belgian-British economist and Professor of Economic Policy at the Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford, to visit Nigeria and share the premise of his book, *Gambling on Development: Why Some Countries Win and Others Lose* with different stakeholder groups.

In the book, Professor Dercon, explores why some countries have managed to settle on elite bargains favouring growth and development while others have not. He argues that the answer to a nation's development lies not in a specific set of policies but in a key 'development bargain', where the elite shift from protecting their positions to gambling on a growth-based future. He provides examples of countries such as China, India, Indonesia and Bangladesh where the elite have made successful bargains that have resulted in positive developmental outcomes and contrasts them with countries, such as DRC and Nigeria, where no such bargain exists and where socio-economic conditions continue to deteriorate.

The events were aimed at raising the awareness of key stakeholder groups of the long term implications of Nigeria's current development trajectory and the urgent need for the elite to put aside their selfish interests and gamble on a growth based future for the country. Three events took place, the first with the private individuals in Lagos, the second a closed session with civil servants in Abuja and the third an alumni lunch.



LAGOS EVENT





The Lagos event, which was an In Conversation session, was chaired by His Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and moderated by AIG Fellows Professor Attahiru Jega, and Mrs Ifueko Omoigui Okauru. During the conversation, Professor Dercon informed the audience that at current population growth rates, it is predicted that Nigeria will have the highest number of people living in extreme poverty in the world by 2030. It is therefore crucial that positive change happens in the country. He shared how the elite in other countries arrived on an elite bargain that paved the way for economic and social development.

While there were different contextual factors at play in each country, one defining element was unity of purpose. Consequently, a key takeaway from the session was the need for Nigerians to have unity of purpose and a common objective to make our country better. Please, click [here](#) to watch the event.

ABUJA EVENT



The Abuja event was a meeting between Professor Dercon, the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation Dr Folasade Yemi-Esan and Federal Permanent Secretaries. In his remarks to the civil servants, Professor Dercon stated that Nigeria's lack of development was not due to incompetence, economic illiteracy, or a lack of ideas but was instead a result of the elite pursuing their own objectives that did not allow for economic development. He shared his own experience as a civil servant and highlighted the need for the Permanent Secretaries to understand the power they had to drive change and the important role they could play in national development.

In her response, the Head of Service, Dr Folasade Yemi-Esan, affirmed that the Permanent Secretaries are capable of effecting the change the Nigerian public desires and she charged them to ensure that all their processes are open to scrutiny and to be prepared to hold themselves accountable.



ALUMNI LUNCH



Members of the Foundation's Alumni group interacted with Professor Dercon over lunch. It was an interactive session with the group sharing their thoughts on the premise of his book and the possibility of a development bargain for Nigeria.

Idowu Bakare, Assistant Director, National Assembly, an alumnus of the AIG Public Leaders Programme, stated that the conversation helped to corroborate his long-standing belief that development trajectories for third-world countries begin when a nation arrives at a critical juncture where a decision is made to move from a vicious cycle to a virtuous cycle where institutions become more inclusive rather than extractive in nature.

"The session with the Professor positively disrupted my thoughts and convinced me with evidence that growth begins when then elites gamble or bet on growth by agreeing to let things work finally. I found his line of thought very thought-provoking and have since pondered over what point the Nigerian elite will make such a decision and in what form the decision will be made. Will they be forced?"



NEWSLETTER DEVELOPMENT TRAINING



As part of our support for the Civil Service Culture Change campaign, we facilitated a newsletter development training course to build the capacity of civil servants to communicate the ongoing changes in the civil service to internal and external

stakeholders.

The expected outcome of the training is that participants will be equipped with the skills to develop digital newsletters to drive continuous stakeholder engagement and buy-in.

AIG-IMOUKHUEDE PUBLIC SECTOR PERFORMANCE INDEX UPDATES



The Aig-Imoukhuede Public Sector Index seeks to enhance the performance of the public sector, by measuring the impact that public sector activities have on the overall productivity and economic growth of the Nigerian economy and on the wellbeing of its citizens.

Ahead of the data collection phase of the project, enumerators were recruited and trained to aid data collection. Facilitated by our partners, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the training session was designed to ensure that the enumerators were equipped with the knowledge they needed to comply with extant rules on data collection and exposed to some pitfalls to avoid while on the field.

The training session was effective and data collection activities were successfully concluded in October, with the submission of survey responses from the ten ministries involved in the pilot phase of the Index development and a number of Civil Society Organisations. Data analysis is now underway.



ALUMNI UPDATE



2018 AIG Scholar Louisa Chinedu-Okeke is the Special Assistant to the President on Finance, working in the office of the Vice President.

Louisa applied for the AIG Scholarship to undertake a Master's in Public Policy degree

(MPP) at the University of Oxford because she wanted to make a leap from a career in consulting to the public sector and sought to gain knowledge and develop skills from one of the world's leading universities that would help her be successful as she transitioned into the public sphere.

“The MPP allows you to engage with a broad spectrum of policy areas without feeling restricted. The applied elements of the course enable you to go beyond the theory and develop a diverse set of skills integral to working in public policy.”

She says that apart from the formal teaching from the faculty, one of the most exciting aspects of her time at Oxford was the knowledge she gained from her fellow MPP classmates.

“The MPP is an international programme with a rich and diverse cohort from very different backgrounds. The experience of interacting with them helped me to broaden my thought process and to develop critical thinking skills. I can now better analyse situations based on the big picture and consider contextual situations, external parameters, and international perspectives.”

In her current role as Special Assistant to the President on Finance, Louisa assists in policymaking. She works on technical committees to create policy strategies and advice on budgeting and implementation plans. Her experience from the MPP has allowed her to be more effective in her role.

“As a result of the training and experience I received from the MPP, I can critically review my opinions and the views of other parties to structure my position so that my proposals and recommendations for policy direction are always evidence-based. Additionally, I gained important soft skills that have helped me enhance my results by building consensus with people.”

Louisa was a member of the committee that monitored and evaluated the implementation of Nigeria's economic sustainability plan, created in response to the economic impact of COVID-19. With a focus on job retention and creation, this work enables her to play a role in alleviating the effects of the pandemic on Nigeria's citizens. She was also a member of the Fiscal Policy Reform Committee that came up with the finance bill for 2021. She was particularly interested in how public and private sector players collaborated in policy formulation.

Louisa says the AIG Scholarships are a rare opportunity, and she is deeply grateful to the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation.

“Not only did the scholarship make it possible for me to attend the University of Oxford, but it also provided a great support network. My fellow AIG Scholars were a ready-made community that helped me navigate the programme and settle into life in Oxford. The team at the Aig-Imoukhuede Foundation were always on hand to provide advice and support. I encourage any Nigerian Civil Servant looking to create change in the public sector to apply for the programme”.



**AIG PUBLIC LEADERS PROGRAMME 2021 SUCCESS STORY: ENGINEER
OLUMAYOWA IDOWU**



AIG Public Leaders Programme, alumni, Engr. Olumayowa Idowu received an excellence award from the Director General of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Salihu Abdulhamid Dembos, in recognition of his contribution to the development of ICT/Engineering related activities in the organisation.

In a message to the Foundation, Olumayowa expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to be part of the Public Leaders Programme. His capstone project led to the creation of NTA's first mobile application, which aids the transmission of NTA programming on mobile devices.



AFFILIATE UPDATE

Nigeria Solidarity Support Fund (NSSF) Launches the WeNaija Literary Contest

APPLY NOW



To apply, visit: www.nigeriasolidarityfund.ng/literary-contest
ENTRY CLOSES: DECEMBER 26, 2022

Terms and conditions apply



The 2022 WeNaija Literary Campaign themed “Righting our Story” is a writer's contest that seeks to create an image through the written content of how the vision of a healthier Nigeria should be. This can be expressed as poetry, short stories, flash fiction or non-fiction prose. Participants can write about the gaps in the health sector or their dream of what the health sector should be to transform health outcomes in Nigeria. Entry is free.

To find out more about the contest, please click [here](#)

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