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RESEARCH

Examining the 2021 Constituency Projects

FROM THE **SDGs** LENS



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Examining the 2021 Constituency Projects

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The Interactive is a civic technology organization using interactive media, research and technological tools to influence practices and policies that empower vulnerable and underserved groups.

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All statistics referenced in this document are from official documents of the Nigerian government as produced by the Ministry of Finance and its Budget Office.

Dataphyte and The Interactive certify that all analyses and interpretations are based on facts and accurately represent our views on issue-based budgeting and development centred interventions of governments among others. The information can consequently be used as a reference for research and advocacy as we have, to the best of our ability, verified information in this document. However, we take no responsibility or liability for errors and will not be liable for actions taken because of the information provided in the report.

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as Global Goals, are a set of 17 integrated and interrelated goals to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that humanity enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030.

Zonal Intervention Projects (ZIP) were introduced in 1999 during the Obasanjo led administration. ZIP, otherwise called constituency projects, are projects executed by the Federal ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) based on the submission of the Federal legislatures at both chambers of the national assembly.

This report reviews the relevance of the federal government's Intervention Projects, especially the 2021 ZIPs, with a focus on the relevance of this year's projects to the key socio-economic needs of the populace.

The aim of the report is to appraise in real terms how the 2021 ZIPs met the underlying goals of providing grassroots empowerment interventions or of supplementing infrastructural development to underserved communities across the country.

Despite the huge budgetary commitments to the projects, various social accountability initiatives including Tracka¹, UDEME², Follow the Money³, Budeshi⁴, Constrack⁵ have reported myriads of untraceable projects, abandoned projects, uncompleted projects, poorly implemented projects and so on.

President Buhari had lamented that there was little to show for over one trillion Naira budgeted for constituency projects⁶ of the National Assembly members in the last 10 years. Likewise, the ICPC admitted an estimated N2 trillion was spent on constituency projects in Nigeria since the year 2000⁷ without commensurate development at the grassroots.

One of the major problems with the Zonal Intervention Projects is the heavy investments in projects that add little or no sustainable impact to the community or projects that clearly lack inclusion in the choice of beneficiaries.

A National Summit on Diminishing Corruption in the Public Sector held in 2019 had called for the scrapping of the ZIP owing to the mismanagement of funds and minimal outcomes to the targeted beneficiaries.

Soft projects are so-called because the results or outcomes are intangible or transient in value to individual beneficiaries or communities. Besides, such projects satisfy a few individuals, who are largely linked to the politicians doling out the 'empowerment' benefits, rather than the general populace who would have benefited equally from infrastructure projects.

The Summit recommended that if the ZIP implementation must continue, the intervention should focus only on tangible and physical infrastructure projects such as construction projects as against soft projects such as the so-called empowerment projects, which are heavily prone to corruption.

Following these observations, Dataphyte carried out a comparative analysis of hard projects (infrastructure, works and construction) and soft projects (training, distribution of equipment, gifting of goods, and cash handouts) in the 2021 zonal intervention budget document.

An analysis of the 1,884 projects in the 2021 ZIP shows that most of these projects are what we have categorised as **soft projects**.

Soft projects are so-called because the results or outcomes are intangible or transient in value to individual beneficiaries or communities. Besides, such projects satisfy a few individuals, who are largely linked to the politicians doling out the 'empowerment' benefits, rather than the general populace who would have benefited equally from infrastructure projects.

Soft projects include training, cash grants, and goods and supplies. The mid to long term impacts of such projects are difficult to determine or measure. As such, the results are characterised as opaque⁸. Based on project categories, a total of ₦64.78 billion out of the allocated N100 billion will be spent on soft projects. This means that more than 3 out of every 5 Zonal Intervention Projects approved by the federal legislature for the year 2021 are soft projects. The implication of this is that 65 percent of the projects do not benefit members of the communities equally, as capital projects do.

Besides, it is difficult to trace and measure the impact of those soft projects across the constituencies of the lawmakers. This defeats the purpose of the zonal interventions and lends disservice to investments in the grassroots.

Hard projects are those whose outputs are unique tangible products. These projects have enduring gains as everyone or at least a good number of people in that community benefit from these projects. It contains projects categorized into constructions and works. Hard projects generally have a developmental impact on the entire community.

This report made use of the data from the 2021 Zonal Intervention Projects document published by the Budget Office of the Federation. The data, which describes project items to be implemented, was segmented into fourteen sustainable development goals (SDGs) themes.

The sustainable development themes include the goal to enhance food security, alleviate poverty, and provide access to finance, health, water, and justice.

Other goals include offering entrepreneurship services, improving the quality of education, and providing amenities such as electricity and housing.

The SDGs also seek to offer solutions to environmental challenges, security issues and bridge the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) gap. To determine the potentials of the projects to ensure sustainability, the projects were categorised into soft and hard projects.

Soft projects are those whose outputs are not tangible assets. In this case, they include training, supply, goods, services, and grants. Their community development potentials are limited as the benefit is contained to a few individuals.

Hard projects are those whose outputs are unique tangible products. These projects have enduring gains as everyone or at least a good number of people in that community benefit from these projects. It contains projects categorized into constructions and works. Hard projects generally have a developmental impact on the entire community.⁹



Background

Background

The ZIPs, commonly referred to as constituency projects are supplementary development projects implemented alongside the regular capital projects of the various MDAs. The implementation of these projects rests mainly on the Department of Programmes at the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (OSGF).

The primary aim of the ZIP is to bring development closer to the constituents at the grassroots. As a result, numerous projects are earmarked for a far-reaching impact on the people. The successful implementation of the projects is expected to improve the lives and living conditions of grassroots citizens.

A sum of ₦100 billion is voted for the Zonal Intervention Projects. This sum is split in the ratio of 6:4 between the two chambers of the National Assembly. Members of the Senate House are entitled to 60% of the ZIP projects' total value. The House of Representatives members appropriate the remaining 40% for their constituencies. Each legislator is therefore required to design projects with the sum allocated to them.

Communities at the grassroots, mostly rural areas, have a dire need of social and economic infrastructure, due to their prolonged neglect by the government over the years.

Seventy percent of the country's population are rural dwellers. This population produces 90% of Nigeria's food and agricultural products, wholly depending on rainfall. Yet they remain impoverished, and their young ones are distant from economic opportunities, which worsens their living standard.¹⁰

Only 33.3% of rural dwellers live in proper housing facilities¹¹ (one, two and three-room apartments). Forty-two percent of them don't have access to clean water and sanitation facilities and the rural areas account for the bulk of the nation's 10 million out of school children.¹²

Identifying the need for grassroots development, the ZIP was introduced to bridge this gap

The paucity of development resources in the rural areas hinders sustainable development of these places,¹³ and continued neglect of this large segment of the population lowers the country's chances of attaining the SDGs by 2030.

This is why Zonal Intervention Projects were designed originally for the provision of decent housing, road constructions, construction and equipment of schools and hospitals. It focuses on providing electricity to the people and providing economic opportunities to rural communities.

In broad terms, the zonal intervention projects aim at providing the infrastructural facilities and social services that will improve the living conditions of the people at the grassroots, especially those in rural communities.

Analysis of the Zonal Intervention Projects by Project Categories

Overall, the 2021 ZIP has a total of 1,884 projects under seven categories. These are training, goods, works, construction, supply, grants and service.

Brief description of each of the seven is given below:

01

Construction

The projects that fall under this category were designed to provide new infrastructural facilities. They involve the design, building, and construction of various infrastructures in the host communities.

02

Works

The projects under this category involve the renovation and repairs of already existing facilities. These projects are meant to refurbish worn-out facilities. Others in this category are the construction and maintenance of light facilities such as boreholes.

03

Services

Projects in this category include those that provide intangible goods to individuals. These include scholarships, medical services, and other technical services designed to uplift people's lives.

04

Training

Projects under this category are those that seek to empower individuals through various programs. These programs include capacity building in different areas of the economy, entrepreneurship training, and skills development training.

05

Supply

Projects in this category are those that involve the provision of consumable items to individuals. The items are categorized as consumables, as such items are used up directly by the individuals. Such items don't offer any economic benefits but satisfy the immediate needs of the benefactors.

06

Goods

Projects which involve the provision of non-consumable items are categorized under this category. The provision of these items offers some economic benefits to the recipients.

07

Grants

These are projects that are channeled towards providing funds for business development to individuals. These projects proposed to provide start-up capital to individuals to enable them to set up their businesses.

... Analysis of the 2021 ZIP by Project Categories

Broad Categories

These are further divided into two main categories, namely soft and hard projects. Of the seven categories, only projects related to *works* and *construction* are classified as **hard projects**. The rest five are grouped under soft projects.

Total Sum Allocated by Project Categories

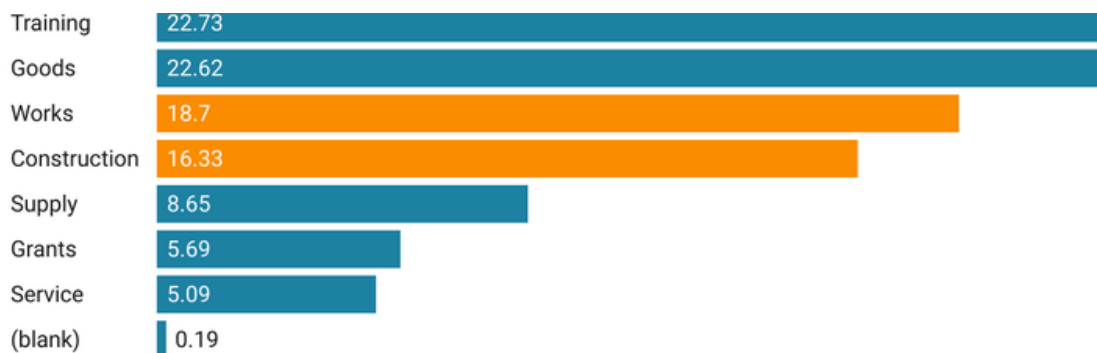


CHART 1

Amount in Billion Naira

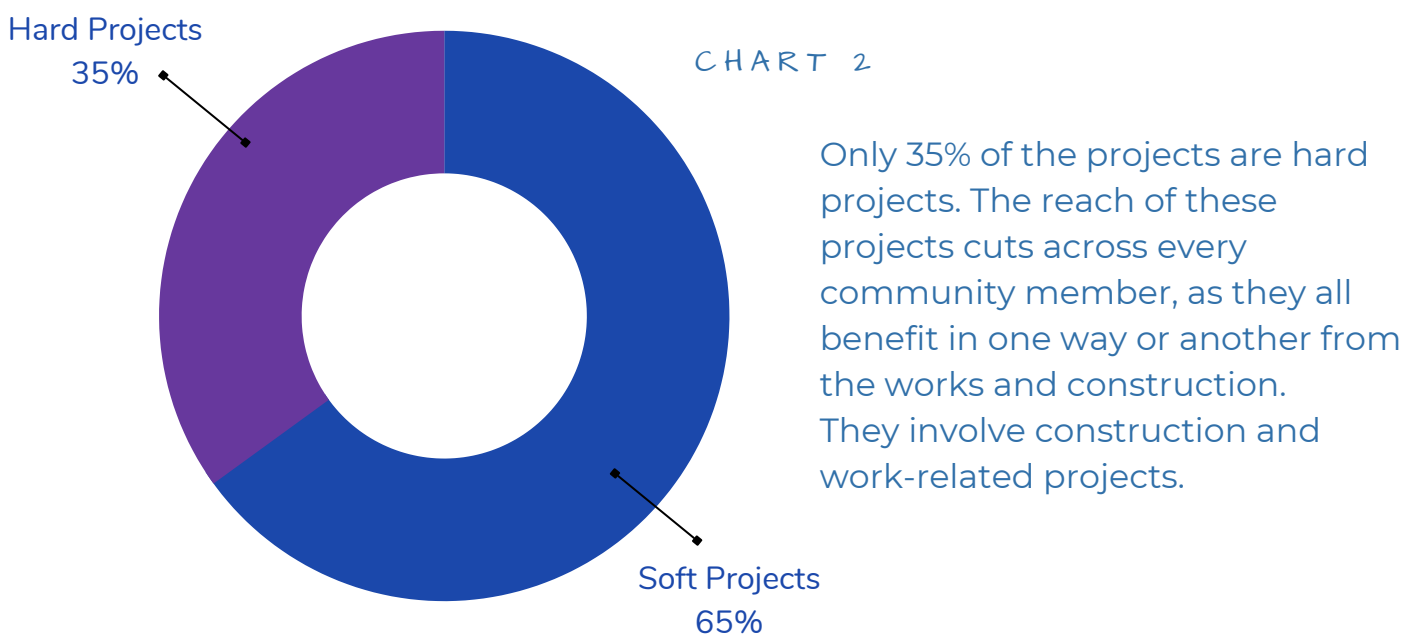
23%

Training projects made up 22.75% of the total as the highest amount of the total. Total training is to cost N22.73 billion in the 2021 ZIP.

Training activities which accounted for most of the soft projects do not benefit everyone in a particular community or discipline as only a few selected individuals will take part in the project. Likewise are projects related to the provision of consumable and non-consumable items, services, and grants.

Training projects made up 22.75%, with the highest amount of the total. Total training is to cost N22.73 billion in the 2021 ZIP. Provision of non-consumable goods is worth N22.62 billion as recorded in the projects.

2021 ZIP Category: Soft versus Hard Project



The 2021 ZIP is to embark on various works projects worth N18.69 billion. These projects are mostly refurbishment, installation, and provision of capital services. The ZIP budget put plans in place to construct infrastructural facilities worth N16.33 billion.

However, Dataphyte observed that N8.65 billion is to be spent on the supply of consumable items. Grants are also to be provided to individuals. These grants are worth N5.69 billion, while N5.09 billion is meant to provide services to individuals.

Further analysis of the 2021 ZIP shows that most of these are soft projects, amounting to N64.78 billion out of the total N100 billion. This means that 65% of the 2021 ZIPs are soft projects.

On the other hand, only 35% of the projects are hard projects. The reach of these projects cuts across every community member, as they all benefit in one way or another from the works and construction. They involve construction and work-related projects.

Analysis of SDG Themes



Analysis of the Zonal Intervention Projects based on 14 SDG Themes

The 1,884 zonal intervention projects (ZIP) could also be categorised or differentiated by the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) that each project may attain upon completion.

2021 ZIP: Number and Amount budgeted for Projects based on 14 Sustainable Development Goals

Entrepreneurship prioritised over other SDGs in the 2021 Zonal Intervention Projects

SDG Themes	Amount (N'bn)	Number of Projects
Entrepreneurship	28.0	527
Environment	11.2	188
Access to Electricity	10.8	168
Quality Education	8.9	188
Women Empowerment	8.0	154
Food Security	7.8	136
Access to Health	6.1	124
Poverty Alleviation	4.7	69
Access to Water	4.3	115
Access to Finance	4.0	81
Housing	2.5	63
ICT	2.1	31
Security	1.1	26
Access to Justice	0.6	14

CHART 3

28%

When these 14 distinct SDGs disaggregated the projects, the result showed that the legislators committed about a third of the N100 billion ZIP fund to entrepreneurship alone.

Projects geared towards founding and support of small businesses were 527 out of the 1,888 ZIPs for the 2021 year. The federal legislators also committed N28 billion to entrepreneurship, the highest part of the N100 billion earmarked for all the projects.

Conversely, the least amount of money and the least number of projects were budgeted to improve the people’s Access to Justice. Only 14 projects, worth less than N600 million, were proposed to be carried out throughout the country in 2021.

Also, an analysis of the zonal intervention projects by these 14 themes of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) show that access to finance has more of its projects defined as soft, while more housing projects are hard projects.

All of the projects approved under the access to finance are categorised as soft projects. Likewise, women empowerment, entrepreneurship, poverty alleviation and agricultural projects complete the first five top SDG themes with the highest value of soft projects.

Housing has 98.8% of all of its projects as hard projects. It leads with the highest value of projects classified as hard. With an 89.3% composition, environmental projects placed second in the ranking of hard projects. Projects under access to justice, access to water and electricity complete the top five project types in the hard project category.

2021 ZIP: Analysis of SDGs Themes by Broad Categories

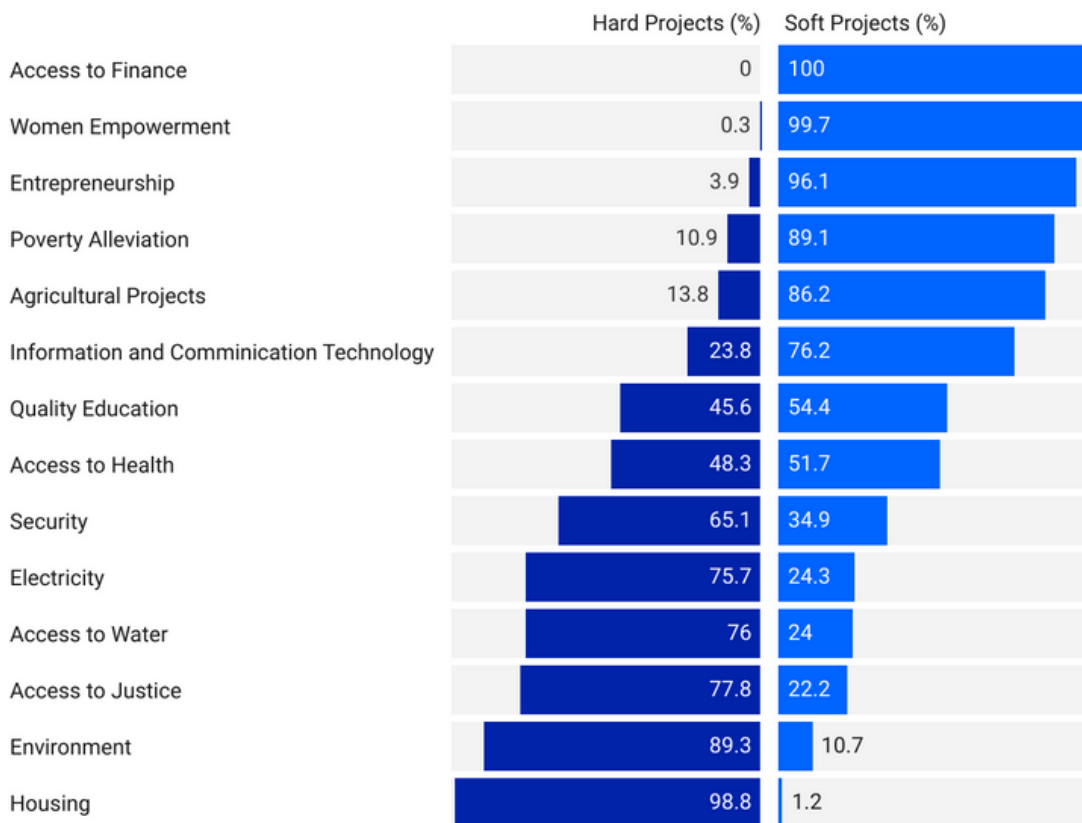


CHART 4

Analysis of the 14 SDGs Project Categories

Food Security



01 Food Security

The 2021 Zonal Intervention Program identified some projects aimed at improving food security at the grassroots. A total of 136 projects amounting to N7.78 billion were proposed in the 2021 ZIP. These projects cut across various sectors of the economy to improve food security. A review shows that most of the projects related to food security involve the provision of non-consumable items. These items are not directly consumed but serve as agricultural inputs for further food production. This category accounts for 44.49% of the total amount budgeted towards food security.

Close to the provision of goods is supplies. These are consumables meant to provide succour to the people. These include the provision of agricultural produce to the less privileged. A total of N1.37 billion was proposed for the supply of consumables to the less privileged at the grassroots.

Food Security Allocation by Project Category (Billion)

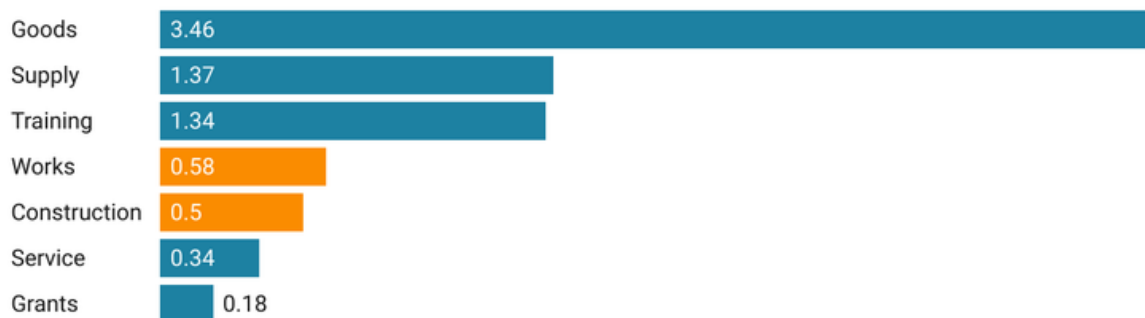


CHART 5

The ZIP recognized the importance of skill enhancements and training in new methods. To boost food production, N1.34 billion was intended to be spent on training to enhance farmers' agricultural skills.

Some capital projects were also approved to improve food security. These include construction and work on crucial projects such as market stalls and refurbishing processing plants. These took 6.4% and 7.43% of the total amount spent on food security, respectively. Other projects are the provision of grants and other agricultural services.

Poverty Alleviation



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

02 Poverty Alleviation

The members of the National Assembly approved sixty-nine projects to alleviate poverty among their constituents. These projects, worth N4.7 billion, are meant to improve the living standards of the people at the grassroots.

Poverty Alleviation Allocation by Project Category (Billion)

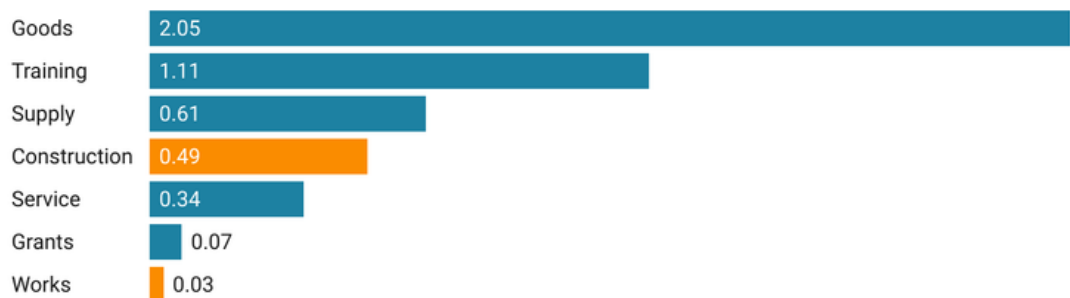


CHART 6

A bulk of these projects covers the provision of goods to the people. These non-consumable items make up 43.62% of the total project value in this category. These are the empowerment of the people with productive resources such as motorcycles, sewing machines, grinding machines, and other items that constituents can use to generate income. Some people with physical challenges were also given.

A total sum of N1.1 billion was budgeted for training. This training covers skill acquisitions, capacity building, and empowerment programs. There are avenues to provide for those who can't afford through the supply of consumable items. The other projects include construction, provision of services, grants, and various works within some communities.

Enterprenuership



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

03 Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship projects were fully captured in the Zonal Intervention Program approved by the NASS. The sum of N27.94 billion was approved to be spent on 527 entrepreneurship-related projects. Most of these projects fall under the training of youths and women in various entrepreneurship ventures.

Entrepreneurship Allocation By Project Category (Billion)



CHART 7

The entrepreneurship programmes also entail providing non-consumable items worth N9.85 billion to some constituents. These are meant to facilitate the productive ability of the people to make them independent.

Other projects were identified, such as providing grants worth N718.5 million to individuals to start up various enterprises. Construction of training centres in multiple communities and other construction activities were also earmarked. These construction activities made up 2.4% of entrepreneurship projects.



Access to Finance

Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

04 Access to Finance

The 2021 ZIP also contains projects aimed at providing small businesses with the needed capital for their development. The cost of the 81 projects here sums up to N3.99 billion.

Access To Finance Allocation By Project Category (Billion)



CHART 8

The majority of the access to finance projects involve the provision of grants to various individuals. Grants made up 91% of the total cost of projects aimed at creating access to finance. The grants were meant to be made available to individuals after adequate training, and cuts across at least twelve sectors of the economy. Training is also to be provided to people in some specific activities. This takes 5.06% of the total amount. Other projects are the supply of consumables and provision of services.

Women Empowerment



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

05 Women Empowerment

A total of 154 projects have been designed to empower women in various communities. Women empowerment projects, meant to be implemented in various communities across the country add up to N8.008 billion.

Women Empowerment Allocation By Project Category (Billion)



CHART 9

A review of the 2021 ZIP shows that 60% of the projects proposed for women empowerment are training projects. This will gulp a sum of N4.79 billion. Thus, training and capacity building account for 3 in every 5 projects designed to empower women.

N1.17 billion is to be spent on purchasing good items for women. This made up 14.6% of the entire budget for women empowerment. Goods identified include hairdressing equipment, grinding and knitting machines, amongst others.



Access to Health

Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

06 Access to Health

To bring some succor to the health challenges faced by the people, a couple of projects were earmarked under the ZIPs to address healthcare issues. One hundred and twenty-four projects worth N6.1 billion are to be carried out to improve health sector.

Access To Health Allocation By Project Category (Billion)

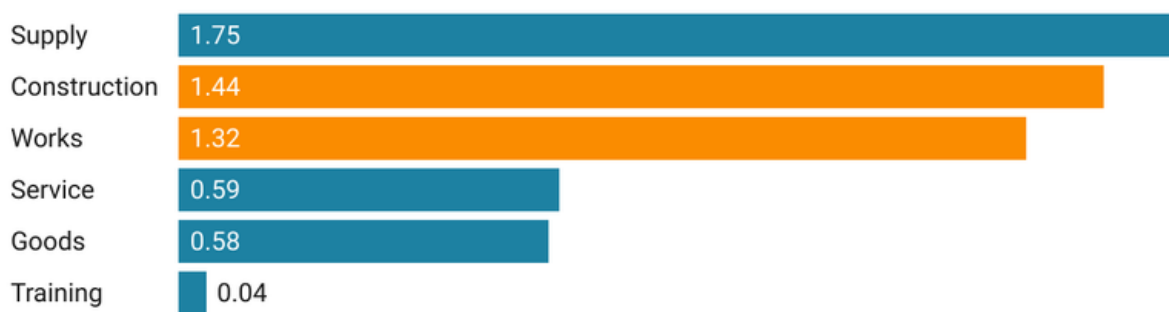


CHART 10

The supply of medical consumables makes up a bulk of these health projects. A total of N1.74 billion, 28.6% of the sum to health projects, is intended to provide medical consumables within the year. However, 23.7% of the sum is to be spent on the construction of medical facilities in various communities. Furthermore, works, which include rehabilitation of existing facilities cost N1.32 billion.

There are also projects aimed at providing medical services in some communities. A fraction of the sum to health projects, making up 9.73%, is to be spent on providing free medical outreaches at some selected communities within the year. Other projects include the provision of grants and training of medical personnel.

Quality Education



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

07 Quality Education

To improve the quality of education, 188 projects totaling N8.86 billion were approved under the ZIP. The provision of goods items to aid teaching and learning took the bulk of the projects. The sum of N2.79 billion, which is 31.56% of sim, is to be spent on providing essential educational goods.

Quality Education Allocation By Project Category (Billion)

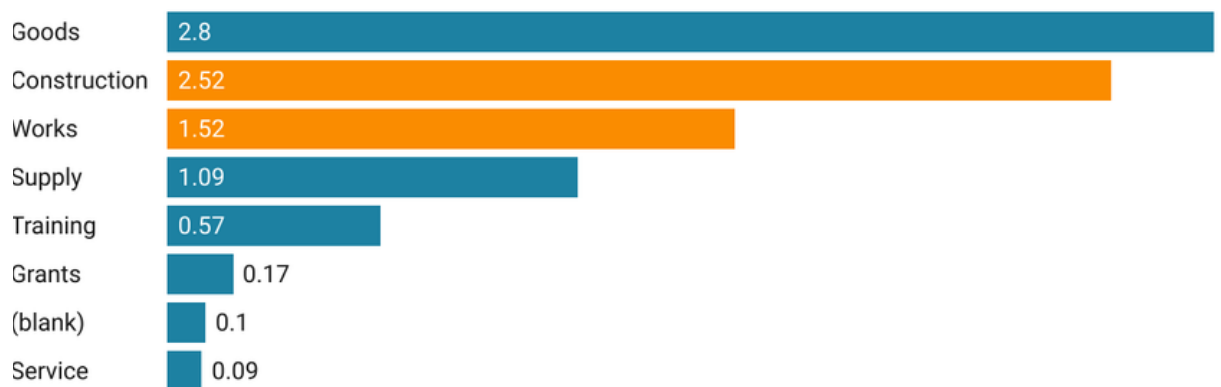


CHART II

Various construction projects of classrooms and administrative blocks were highlighted under educational projects. These projects took 28.47% of the sum on educational services. Aside from the construction of school buildings, some debilitated structures were identified to be improved in the respective state. These rehabilitation works will gulp N1.52 billion. Other projects include the supply of educational consumables, training of teachers, and provision of grants.

Access to Water



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

08 Access to Water

Considering the importance of water and sanitation facilities to human existence, 115 water and sanitation projects summing up to N4.312 billion are to be executed under ZIP. Of these projects, 56.3% were allocated for various work projects.

Access To Water Allocation By Project Category

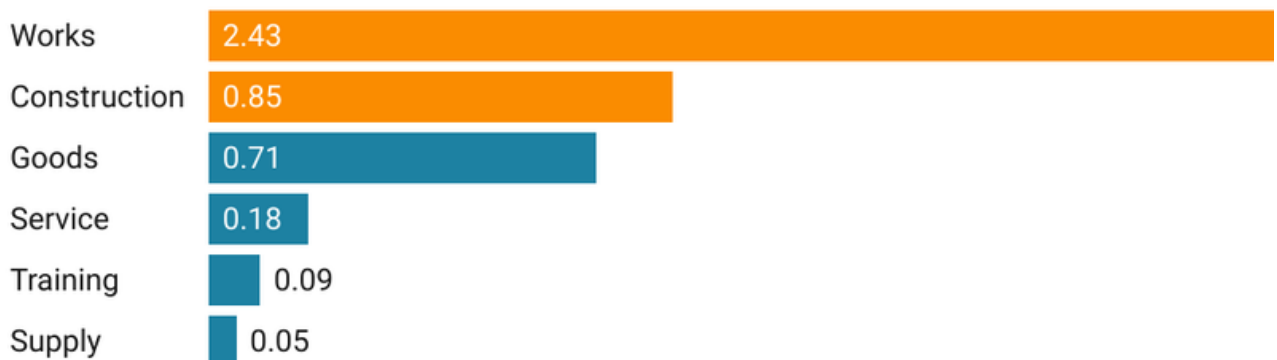


CHART 12

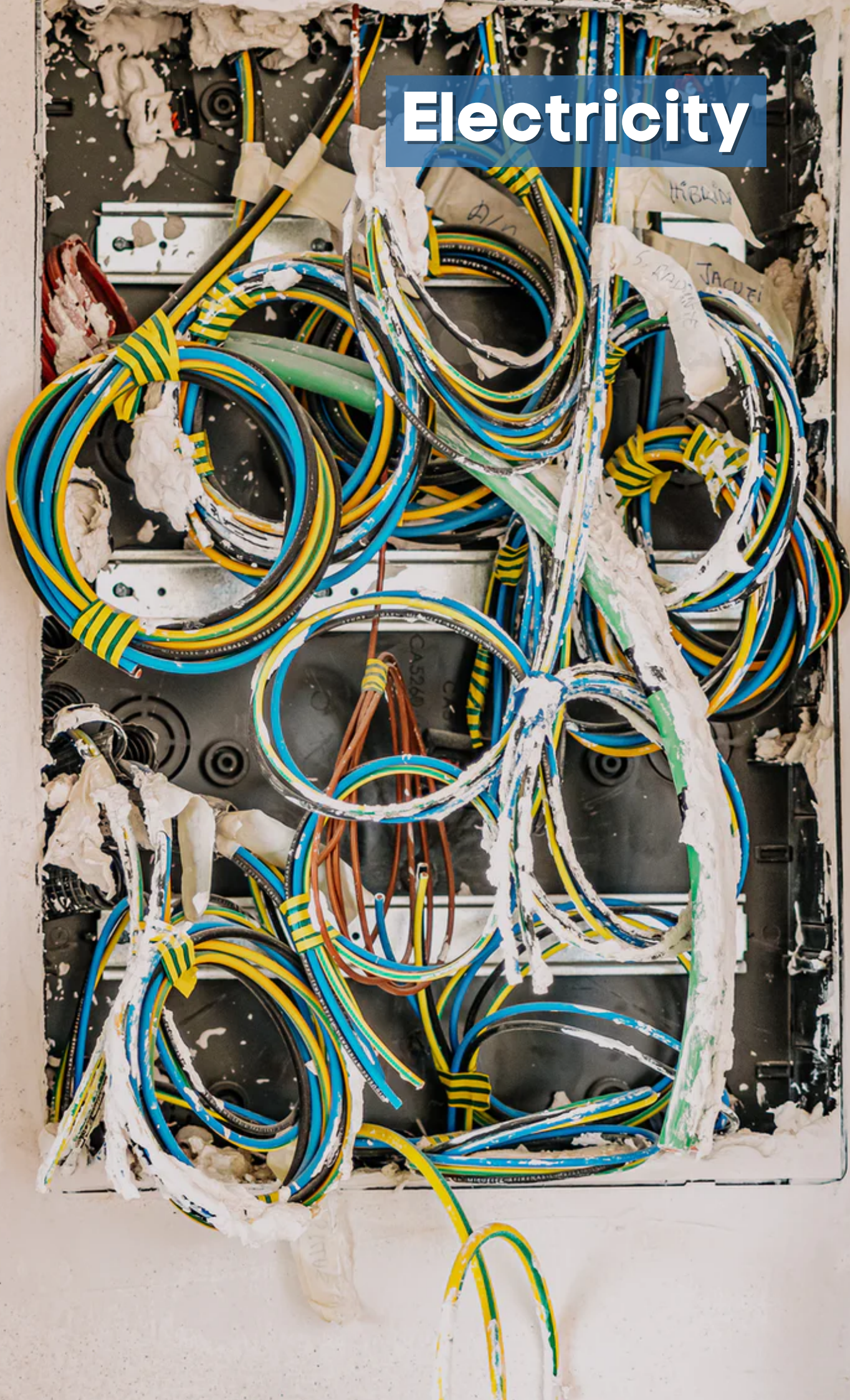
These light constructions involve the provision of boreholes in different communities across the country.

The 2021 ZIP identified construction projects worth N847.5 million under the water and sanitation category. These projects are meant to provide better water and sanitation facilities across the country. Others include the provision of consumable and non-consumable items and training.

Three out of every four projects under this section are hard projects. Soft projects only account for 24%, while hard projects comprise 76% of the total water and sanitation projects.

If effectively implemented, these development projects will see most communities having access to water facilities and better sanitary facilities.

Electricity



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

09 Electricity

One hundred and sixty-eight zonal intervention projects were dedicated to improving electricity coverage across the country. These electrification projects are worth N10.84 billion in all, and 51.4% of this total was committed to works, mainly light constructions related to the installation of solar electricity options.

Electricity Allocation By Project Category (Billion)

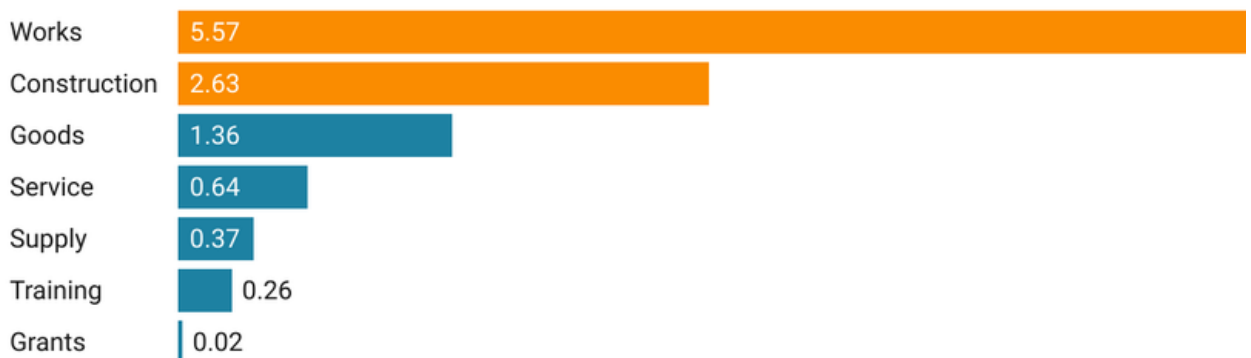


CHART 13

Major construction projects are also to be carried out to expand electricity coverage. These projects are geared towards addressing the electrification challenges and are expected to cost N2.63 billion. Other projects include the provision of consumable and non-consumable items, training, and provision of grants.

Three of every four electricity projects are hard projects. These projects involve installing solar-powered street lights in various communities, installing transformers, and constructing hybrid street lights. These hard project made up 76%, while soft projects completed the remaining 24%.

HOUSING



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

10 Housing

Housing projects totaling 63 are to be executed across the country. These projects are worth N2.48 billion in all. Most of these projects fall under the construction of town halls and the renovation of existing ones. Construction projects 54.6% of the total amount, whereas renovation projects covered 44.2%.

Housing Allocation By Project Category (Billion)



CHART 14

Soft projects made an insignificant 1.2% portion of the total housing projects. Of these 63 housing projects, 26 town halls will be built and renovated, and 17 palaces will be refurbished. Thus, constructing town halls in various communities and renovation of the palace of some traditional rulers appears to take precedence over the housing needs of the constituents.



Security

Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

11 Security

Twenty-six security projects worth N1.11 billion are to be carried out. A breakdown of security projects showed that 38.5% of them are work-related projects, training makes up 32.4%, and construction 21.8%. The provision of consumable and non-consumable items makes 3.6% each.

Security Allocation By Project Category (Billion)



CHART 15

Projects such as the construction of police outposts and the construction and furnishing of some security stations form part of the 65% security hard projects. However, soft projects comprise 35% of the entire security projects. Most of them involve training and capacity building of security personnel and sensitization of community members on security matters.

Environment



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

12 Environment

Environmental projects are aimed at preserving and renovating the environment and making it healthy to the people. Projects such as the construction of erosion control boxes, construction and rehabilitation of roads, culverts and drainages make up 89% of the environmental projects.

Environment Allocation By Project Category(Billion)



CHART 16

The 188 environment development projects under the ZIP are worth N11.17 billion. By category, construction projects are to take N5.15 billion and works projects N4.83 billion. Other projects include the rendering of services, which accounts for 5.4%, the provision of consumable and non-consumable items, accounting for 2.3% and 2%, respectively.

Access to Justice



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

13 Access to Justice

Fourteen projects were earmarked to improve the people's access to justice. These projects include construction projects worth N279.6 million, works-related projects amounting to N173 million, training to the tune of N85.2million and N44.26 million meant to provide non-consumable items.

Access To Justice Allocation By Project Category (Million)

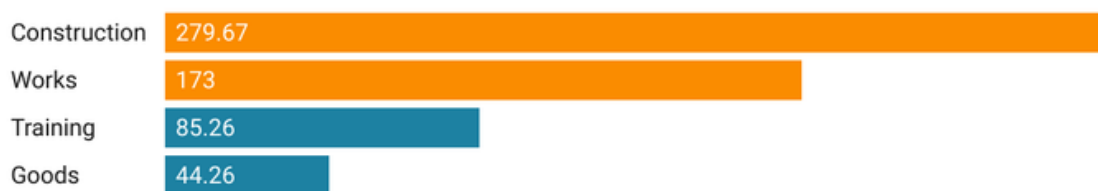


CHART 17

All these projects amount to N582.19 million.

The rehabilitation of courthouses, construction of a jetty in selected communities are some of the projects that made up 78% of hard projects under this section. Access to justice soft projects consist of training, capacity building, and sensitization seminars to be held at selected communities. These projects made up 22% of the entire projects in this section.

Information and Communication Technology



Analysis of the 14 SDGs by the 7 Project Categories

14 Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

To address the ICT gaps at the grassroots community level, the 2021 ZIP proposed 31 projects, amounting to N2.118 billion. Based on category, 41.7% of the projects focus on carrying out adequate training of citizens. This is to equip them with the relevant skills in ICT to boost their performance.

ICT Allocation By Project Category (Billion)

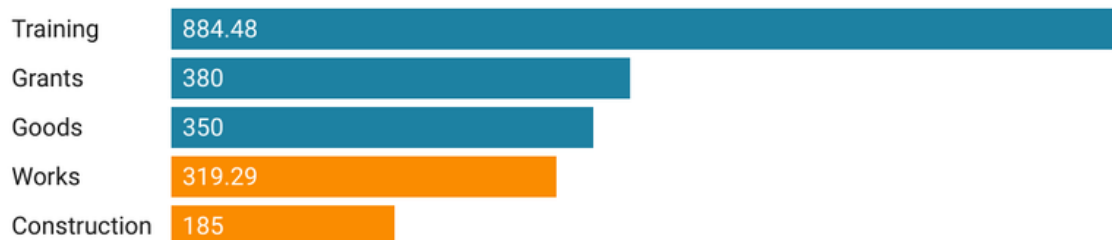


CHART 18

Grants are meant to be provided are worth N380 million, computers worth N350 million are delivered to some individuals. Other projects include construction and works.

ICT projects are mostly soft projects. Analysis showed that 76% of all ICT proposed projects are soft projects. These soft projects involve training and capacity building, and provision of grants. However, the construction and maintenance of WIFI infrastructure, furnishing and installing ICT centers, and constructing a mini-computer market form part of the 24% hard projects.

CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

The 2021 Zonal Intervention Projects cost N100 billion, spread over 1,884 projects. These projects are been carried out through training and capacity building of individuals in various skills and the provision of consumable and non-consumable goods. Other channels through which these projects will be executed are constructions and rehabilitation works and providing grants to individuals.

The breakdown shows that 64.78% of these projects can be categorized as soft projects. Thus, 1220 projects worth N64.78 billion will directly benefit only certain members in the respective communities.

With the remaining 664 infrastructural projects, worth N35.22 billion, there is the possibility that they would benefit the generality of people in the communities upon completion. Besides their inclusiveness and capacity to reduce inequality, the infrastructural intervention projects, which involve tangible works and construction, may be easily tracked and accessed for impact in the various communities.

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