

Project management as a tool for eradication of institutionalised national corruption by a servant leader ¹

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In a number of countries, the quandary exists that they are rich and blessed with many natural resources yet a high percentage of their nationals live in squalor and poverty. Indeed, there are some countries that are oil-rich, some of the leading global producers and exporters of oil and natural gas, yet a high percentage of their citizens are considered some of the poorest in the world.

Their legislators are about the highest paid in terms of total income and take-home wages, yet their civil servants and workers are among the lowest paid in the world.

The sharp contrasts and apparent incompatibilities contained in the foregoing statements; comprising extremities of wealth and poverty, seem to be mutually exclusive in a country, but sadly are true.

The political elites have so institutionalised their theft, corruption and dubious practices that their nations cannot progress and develop as well governed and developed nations are doing until debilitating institutionalised criminal acts in high places are eradicated.

The objective of this paper is to suggest how project management could be used as a tool for corruption eradication. This presupposes that the conducive political environment will exist. Without the appearance of a servant leader, not mired in the ills, who is desirous of cleaning out the stealing and robbery in their various forms, the tool of project management cannot go to work on its own.

Some aspects of national lives which, this writer suggests, propagate and perpetuate structured corruption and exploitation of people will be reviewed and analysed in the subsequent paragraphs. Accordingly, these paragraphs will discuss the following:

- Total income of the legislators
- Total income of other professionals and workers in government service.
- Going forward: Suggested solutions; these will include initiating and implementing a project for the review and rationalisation of incomes of politicians, public servants, university lecturers, etc.
- Conclusion

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This analysis will start with the unacceptable disparity in the total incomes between the political elites and other professionals.

Total Incomes

Examination of some Issues on the total income of the legislators

It is completely unacceptable that legislators should take home such total incomes that make them among the highest paid globally when millions of their nationals, even highly educated people, are starving to death. It is a sorry situation in which politicians elected to serve the people have become overlords sucking dry the wealth of their countries while the people that they are supposed to represent live in abject poverty and many die of hunger.

Experiences of Other professionals

- Many workers have not received their salaries for months.
- Local hospitals and health clinics are run down and short of medicines. As a result, those who can do so, find their way out of the country.
- Medical doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, engineers, IT specialists leave the country in droves mostly because their salaries are not being paid. The country has become a veritable recruitment ground of highly qualified professionals who are being paid cheap salaries overseas.
- Many of these nationals work in menial jobs overseas with the consolation that their incomes are better than what their colleagues at their home countries earn.

Comments

This underlines the crying need for a servant leader who will identify with people in their sufferings and deprivations to rebuild their country to become an egalitarian nation. A nation in which everyone is given equal opportunities. A nation where there is an equitable distribution of wealth among the people. A nation where efforts are made to rebuild and equip hospitals. A nation where professors, university lecturers, and other professionals are paid deserving salaries. A national where the financial chasm in the differences in incomes between the legislators and other professionals is filled and a level playing field is implemented by a national incomes adjustment team. A nation that provides jobs for its youths; jobs that are harnessed for the sustainable development of the country to meet the needs of the nation.

Going forward: Suggestions for Initiating and implementing a project for the Review and Rationalisation of total incomes of politicians, public servants, university lecturers, etc.

Defining and identifying some of the problems of the country is one face of the coin, the other face, which constitutes a silver bullet for solving the problems, is implementing an appropriate solution. This writer would suggest that a project to review and rationalise the total incomes of all persons in politics, public services including universities, should be instituted.

Project owner and initiator: It is clear from this foregoing analysis that politicians guilty of the various acts of corruptions and exploitations reviewed in this write-up cannot carry out such a national clean-up. Therefore, are not fit to serve as the servant-leader to eradicate high-level entrenched corruption.

Project Objective: To review, rationalise and harmonise the total incomes of all nationals in the services of their country.

Project team members: These are to be chosen from all national, professional and tribal groups. Representatives of the various religious groups should be included.

Project Duration: Six to Nine months

Necessary Conditions for success

- The project team should be empowered to work independently and not answerable to politicians but to the President's executive office.
- Politicians should also be members of the project team so that they will be duly represented as well as other professionals.
- Funding for the project activities should be agreed, approved and made available to officers who will account for its use.
- The team should not be made to approach the legislative houses for any approval.

Conclusion

Success will be attained when the nation decides to work effectively for the eradication of the criminal activities that are destroying the nation. Projects could also be set up to research and provide solutions to other areas that resources are being stolen which damage the country.

About the Author



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Dr. O. Chima Okereke, Ph.D., MBA, PMP is the Managing Director and CEO of Total Technology Consultants, Ltd., a project management consulting company working in West Africa and the UK. He is a visiting professor, an industrial educator, a multidisciplinary project management professional, with over 25 years' experience in oil and gas, steel and power generation industries. For example, On December 26th 2013, he completed an assignment as a visiting professor in project management; teaching a class of students on Master's degree in project management in the Far Eastern Federal University, Vladivostok, Russia. In August and September 2013, he conducted an innovative, and personally developed training programme for seventy-six well engineers of Shell Nigeria to enhance the efficiency of their operations using project and operations management processes.

Before embarking on a career in consulting, he worked for thirteen years in industry rising to the position of a chief engineer with specialisation in industrial controls and instrumentation, electronics, electrical engineering and automation. During those 13 years, he worked on every aspect of projects of new industrial plants including design, construction and installation, commissioning, and engineering operation and maintenance in process industries. Chima sponsored and founded the potential chapter of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, acting as president from 2004 to 2010.

Dr. Okereke has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Electrical Engineering from the University of Lagos, and a PhD and Masters in Business Administration (MBA) degree from the University of Bradford in the UK. He also has a PMP® certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI®) which he passed at first attempt. He has been a registered engineer with COREN in Nigeria since 1983. For many years, Total Technology has been a partner for Oracle Primavera Global Business Unit, a representative in Nigeria of Oracle University for training in Primavera project management courses, and a Gold Level member of Oracle Partner Network (OPN). He is a registered consultant with several UN agencies. More information can be found at <http://www.totaltechnologyconsultants.org/>.

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