



**CENTER FOR FISCAL TRANSPARENCY
& PUBLIC INTEGRITY**

Policy Brief: Aletheia PI:

**Enhancing Transparency and Integrity
in Public Procurement Practices**

Executive Summary

Public procurement in Nigeria, which accounts for an estimated 10–25 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP),¹ is a critical function of government expenditure but remains severely compromised by corruption, inefficiency, and inadequate oversight. These deficiencies contribute to inflated contract costs, abandoned projects, and widespread erosion of public trust, thereby undermining value for money and national development objectives. Despite the legal foundation provided by the Public Procurement Act of 2007 and Nigeria's commitments under the Open Government Partnership, persistent implementation gaps continue to limit effective enforcement and transparency. The Aletheia Procurement Integrity (Aletheia PI) platform, developed by the Centre for Fiscal Transparency & Public Integrity (CeFTPI), exemplifies the potential of data science to address these challenges. The platform analyses procurement data. Aletheia PI detects anomalies indicative of corruption, such as non-competitive bidding, collusive practices, favouritism, and abnormal pricing; it supports fraud investigations and reveals systemic patterns. The platform aligns with global best practices in open contracting and risk-based monitoring, as advanced by organisations including the Open Contracting Partnership and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. To maximise the role of technology in curbing procurement irregularities, this policy brief recommends that Law enforcement agencies integrate data-driven platforms such as Aletheia PI into investigative protocols to prioritise high-risk procurements, identify patterns of fraud, and strengthen evidence gathering. Collaboration with civil society organisations like CeFTPI is essential for capacity-building in data analytics and the interpretation of risk indicators, enabling more proactive and efficient anti-corruption operations. Citizens and civil society organisations should advocate for greater public access to procurement data and tools like Aletheia PI to enhance monitoring and accountability. Active engagement through reporting irregularities, participating in oversight mechanisms, and demanding transparency reforms will amplify pressure for systemic improvements and ensure that technological innovations serve broader public interests. Policymakers should prioritise policies that mandate the adoption of e-procurement systems and data analytics tools, including integration of platforms such as Aletheia PI with national procurement portals. This includes allocating resources for tool development, ensuring methodological transparency, and promoting interoperability to facilitate evidence-based reforms. Strengthening the implementation of the Public Procurement Act through mandatory risk-based monitoring and open data standards will further institutionalise technology as a core component of procurement integrity in Nigeria.

¹ Unini C. (2025). Contract Splitting, Price Inflation Up To 300 Per cent" As ICPC Warns Procurement Corruption Takes 10 To 25 Per cent Of GDP. TheNigeriaLawyer. <https://thenigerialawyer.com/contract-splitting-price-inflation-up-to-300-percent-as-icpc-warns-procurement-corruption-takes-10-to-25-percent-of-gdp/>

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Background

According to the World Bank, public procurement accounts for a significant share of global economic activity, with governments worldwide expending approximately US\$9.5 trillion annually on contracts for goods, works, and services, equivalent to about 12 per cent of global GDP.² This process is vital for democratic governance, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development, as it facilitates efficient resource allocation and service delivery. At the national level, particularly in developing countries, public procurement often accounts for 15 to 22 per cent of GDP. It helps foster economic growth, job creation, and improved public services through value-for-money outcomes.³ To ensure these benefits, the World Bank mandates that borrowing countries adhere to its Procurement Framework for financed projects, which emphasises transparency, fairness, and efficiency, thereby influencing national governments, including states and local entities in federal systems, to adopt or align with public procurement laws and regulations as a condition for accessing loans and technical support. However, the World Bank and other reputable institutions, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Transparency International, have identified persistent weaknesses in public procurement systems globally, including corruption vulnerabilities that affect up to 20-30 percent of procurement value through fraud, bid rigging, and lack of competition; opacity in processes leading to inefficiencies and delays; inadequate oversight mechanisms; and challenges in attracting qualified suppliers, particularly in less developed markets.⁴⁵ These issues highlight the need for ongoing reforms to enhance integrity and performance, a challenge that this policy document has demonstrated an innovative approach to solving through the introduction of Aletheia. This procurement integrity platform addresses the challenges that are acutely manifested in emerging economies.

Public procurement is a crucial driver of Nigeria's economy, accounting for a substantial portion of government spending. However, systemic corruption evident in opaque processes, conflicts of interest, and poor execution erodes efficiency and public confidence. Global estimates indicate that 57% of foreign bribery cases involve procurement, a vulnerability mirrored in Nigeria through inflated contracts and uncompleted projects.⁶ The Public Procurement Act 2007⁷ established the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP)⁸ and standards for competitive bidding, transparency, and civil society observation. State-level laws align with this framework, emphasising

² World Bank. (n.d.). Project procurement framework. Retrieved February 11, 2026, from <https://www.worldbank.org/ext/en/what-we-do/project-procurement/framework>.

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2019). Corruption in Nigeria: Patterns and trends. Second survey on corruption as experienced by the population. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/corruption/nigeria/Corruption_in_Nigeria_2019_standard_res_11MB.pdf.

accountability and value for money.⁹ Nigeria's Open Government Partnership (OGP) commitments further promote open contracting and citizen engagement, supporting Sustainable Development Goal 16, which emphasises the importance of strong institutions.¹⁰

Nigeria's ratification of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2004 underscores its international commitment to preventive anti-corruption measures, particularly those enshrined in Article 9, which concerns public procurement and the management of public finances.¹¹ This article obliges States Parties to establish systems based on transparency, competition, and objective criteria in decision-making, including the public distribution of procurement procedures and contract awards, the advance publication of participation conditions, and the implementation of domestic review mechanisms. Furthermore, Article 5 of the UNCAC calls for effective, coordinated policies that encourage societal participation.¹²

Despite these advancements, gaps in oversight and enforcement remain. Initiatives like the Transparency and Integrity Index (TII) by the Center for Fiscal Transparency and Public Integrity in the 2025 edition show that the overall performance of 575 MDAs assessed was poor as only six institutions exceeded 50% (the benchmark for adequate openness), with over 500 scoring below this threshold, more than 400 between 10% and 36%, approximately 100 below 10%, and nine at zero.¹³ This reflects systemic non-compliance with disclosure obligations, including in procurement. Also, BudgIT's 2021 tracking revealed that 35% of monitored projects were unstarted, and many had been abandoned.¹⁴ In January 2025, EFCC Executive Chairman Ola Olukoyede stated that procurement and contract fraud account for more than 90 per cent of corruption and fraud cases in Nigeria's public sector.¹⁵ This assessment aligns with the agency's establishment of a dedicated Fraud Risk Assessment and Control Directorate to proactively monitor procurement processes, given their role in over 90 per cent of public corruption cases and the need for a technologically based solution.

Statement of the Problem

Between 2016 and 2020, public spending averaged only 11.8% of GDP,¹⁶ despite the country facing an estimated \$3 trillion infrastructure gap. Procurement corruption exacerbates the issue: experts estimate that approximately \$18 billion is lost annually to fraud and financial crimes in public contracts.¹⁷ Typical schemes include outright bribery or kickbacks to skew tenders, bid-rigging and collusive bidding, and deliberate contract inflation (artificially high pricing).¹⁸ These practices undermine competition, drive up costs, and result in substandard or

⁴ Transparency International. (n.d.). Corruption risks in public procurement. Retrieved February 11, 2026, from <https://knowledgehub.transparency.org/guide/topic-guide-on-public-procurement/4899>

⁵ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2016). Preventing corruption in public procurement. https://baselgovernance.org/sites/default/files/2020-03/oecd_preventing_corruption_in_public_procurement_2016.pdf

unfinished projects. In practice, procurement graft reduces value for money. For example, a 2023 audit of federal projects found that 352 contracts were left uncompleted or abandoned, resulting in a waste of roughly ₦99 billion that could have been used to deliver vital infrastructure.¹⁹ Procurement malfeasance is widespread and systemic, directly resulting in wasted budgets and unmet basic needs.

Compounding the fraud problem is weak institutional oversight. Despite the 2007 Public Procurement Act and the establishment of the Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP), enforcement is hindered by limited capacity and politicised institutions. Many government agencies manage procurement with too few qualified officers and rely on under-trained or inexperienced staff.²⁰ In turn, oversight bodies (including anti-graft agencies and the courts) struggle to investigate and sanction corrupt contracts in a timely way.²¹ Conflicts of interest and other apparent rule breaches often go unchecked because regulatory bodies lack the resources or independence to investigate every violation thoroughly.²² In practice, this means procurement rules are routinely flouted: project awards may be steered to well-connected firms, low bids are set aside without recourse, and contractors can substitute inferior materials without penalty. The result is an environment of uneven enforcement where cheating the system carries little risk.^{23,24,25} According to Yakubu's in-depth examination in *The Shadow State: Public Sector Corruption in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences, and Reforms*, corruption undermines the foundations of governance by manifesting in diverse forms such as bribery, embezzlement, extortion, favoritism, nepotism, illicit enrichment, and trading in influence, often categorized into petty corruption at lower administrative levels and grand corruption involving high-ranking officials. The author elucidates the root causes, including institutional weaknesses, opacity in processes, and deficient leadership, which exacerbate economic distortions, infrastructural decay, impoverished public services, and diminished societal trust. Yakubu further delineates sector-specific corrupt practices across the political, bureaucratic, and electoral domains, while highlighting the private sector's complicit role in perpetuating fraud through unethical collaborations with public entities.²⁶

The ethical dimension of these failures is profound. Procurement breaches routinely involve flagrant conflicts of interest and abuse of public office. Analysts note that patronage networks and personal interests often influence the awarding of contracts.²⁷ For example, officials might secretly own or favour a winning bidder or quietly accept subcontracts as kickbacks. Yet weak enforcement means these ethical violations are seldom punished. High-level cases (such as inflated road contracts or phantom equipment deals) often languish in court or end with token sanctions. In effect, the rules exist on paper but lack practical enforcement. This double standard deters honest procurement officers and disheartens the public, reinforcing the impression that the system cannot police itself. All these problems feed a chronic failure to

¹⁹UNODC (2019). Corruption in Nigeria: patterns and trends. Second survey on corruption as experienced by the population. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/statistics/corruption/nigeria/Corruption_in_Nigeria_2019_standard_res_11MB.pdf

²⁰<https://library.procurementmonitor.org/backend/files/Simplified%20Version%20OF%20THE%20PUBLIC%20PROCUREMENT%20ACT%202007.pdf>

²¹<https://bpp.gov.ng/>

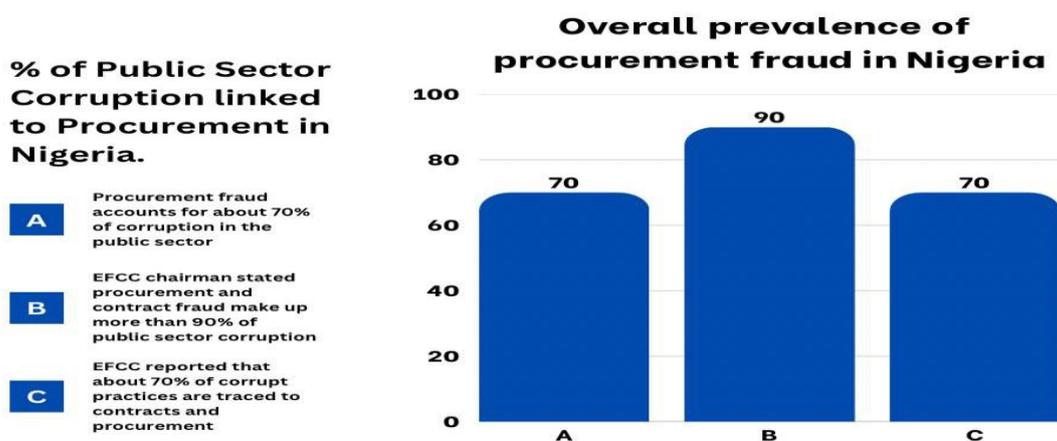
²²Public Procurement Act 2007 (Nigeria)

²³Open Government Partnership (OGP): Nigeria's

deliver value. Billions of naira appropriated for public works disappear into thin air. Tracka's recent monitoring found that of the 1,404 federal projects tracked (September 2023–2024), only 51% were completed; the rest were either not executed or abandoned.²⁸

These interconnected challenges, including collusion, weak oversight, disengaged citizens, endemic ethical lapses, and squandered projects, make it clear that formal reforms alone have not been sufficient to address these issues. Studies show Nigerians overwhelmingly believe procurement corruption is unacceptable, even while assuming “everyone does it”.²⁹ This suggests space for grassroots pressure. In practice, observers argue that complementing top-down rules with bottom-up vigilance is essential. For example, Nigeria's Open Government Partnership initiatives have launched portals that enable citizens to monitor tenders, and civil society groups, such as BudgIT and its Tracka units, are increasingly tracking projects. However, these efforts are still in their infancy, and the government and NGOs acknowledge that ordinary people must be better informed and empowered to utilise them.³⁰ Reclaiming public trust in procurement will require a citizen-led approach alongside institutional reform, mobilising community watchdogs, the media, and parliamentary oversight to deter malpractice that formal mechanisms alone have so far failed to stamp out.

Table 1: Prevalence of Procurement Fraud



Procurement fraud accounts for approximately 70% of total corruption in Nigeria's public sector and affects around 60% of all procurement processes, driven by weak oversight, political interference, and lack of transparency.³¹ These alarming figures highlight how deeply entrenched the problem is across public spending. Procurement fraud accounts for 90% of public-sector corruption investigated by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.³²

Commitments. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/members/nigeria/>

¹¹ unafei.or.jp/publications/pdf/RS_No101/No101_22_VE_Vlassis_2.pdf

¹² https://track.unodc.org/uploads/documents/UNCAC/Review-Mechanism/next-phase-preparation/Draft_Question_Flow_select_articles_-_next_phase_-_ENG.pdf

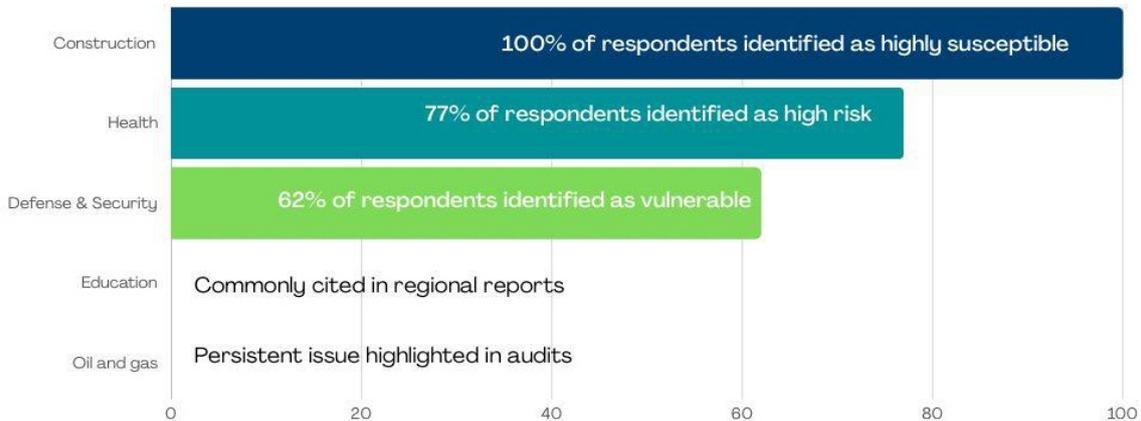
¹³ TII 2025. <https://www.fiscaltransparency.org/transparency-and-integrity-index-2025/>

¹⁴ BudgIT: Tracka 2021 Constituency Projects Report. <https://yourbudgit.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Tracka-2021-Constituency-Project-Report.pdf>

¹⁵ Adyanju A. (2025). Over 90% of Nigeria's Public Sector Corruption Tied to Procurement and Contract

Table 2: Sectors with Highest Prevalence

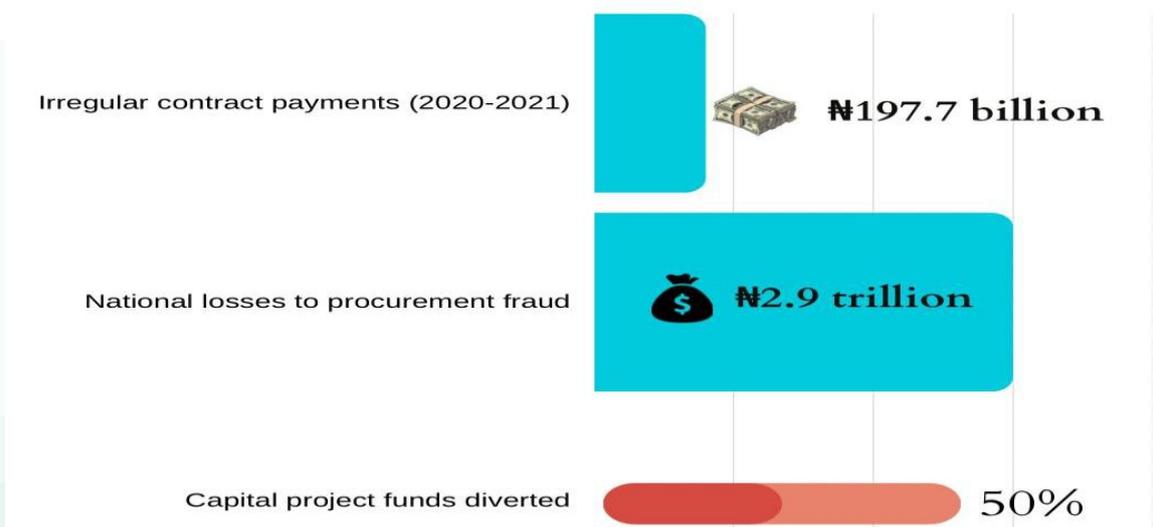
Sectors with the Highest Prevalence of Procurement Fraud



The construction sector shows the highest vulnerability to procurement fraud, followed by health, defence and security, education, and oil & gas, due to large contracts, single-sourcing, and opportunities for inflated costs or ghost projects.³³ These sectors consistently suffer the most from bid rigging, over-invoicing, and unexecuted contracts.³⁴

Table 3: Financial Losses and Economic Indicators

Key Audit Finding: Financial losses and Economic impact.



Fraud – EFCC. <https://neusroom.com/over-90-public-corruption-procurement-fraud-efcc/>

¹⁶Chatham House: Tackling Judicial Bribery and Procurement Fraud in Nigeria.

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2024/10/tackling-judicial-bribery-and-procurement-fraud-nigeria/03-what-nigerians-think-about>

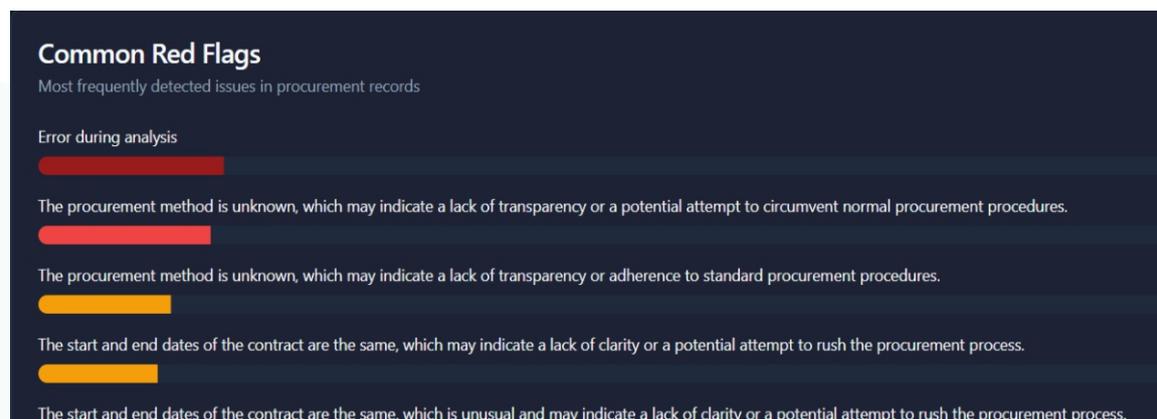
¹⁷Ibid

¹⁸Ibid

Nigeria loses an estimated \$18 billion annually to procurement fraud, with ₦197 billion in irregular payments recorded in 2021–2022 alone, including massive sums wasted on abandoned or ghost projects and over \$16 billion in unaccounted commonwealth funds; these losses are reflected in the country's stagnant Corruption Perceptions Index score of 26/100.³⁵³⁶ The economic impact severely undermines development and public trust. Advanced AI-driven audit systems, data analytics for fraud detection, and digital procurement technologies are urgently required to reduce these financial leakages and improve accountability.

Aletheia Procurement Integrity (Aletheia PI)

Developed by the Centre for Fiscal Transparency & Public Integrity, Aletheia PI is a secure, data science-oriented platform dedicated to promoting integrity in public procurement. Hosted at <https://dspfi.fiscaltransparency.org/>, the platform is a login-protected, data science-driven system that analyses procurement processes, identifies corruption risks, and enhances transparency. It processes procurement records to detect anomalies and generate actionable insights for stakeholders, including government agencies, law enforcement, and policymakers. Aletheia PI demonstrates substantial capacity to address procurement vulnerabilities through data analytics and risk-based monitoring. The platform identifies red-flag indicators, such as single-source awards, supplier concentration, repeated single-bidding, geographic clustering of contracts, or unusual pricing patterns, which are commonly associated with collusive practices, favouritism, and corruption. Automated risk scoring and visualisation tools enable early detection of irregularities, shifting oversight from reactive audits to proactive prevention.



Source: Aletheia PI Dashboard

¹⁹International Center for Investigative Reporting (2025). N99bn wasted on abandoned projects, Tracka's Report reveals. <https://www.icirnigeria.org/n99bn-wasted-on-abandoned-projects-trackas-report-reveals/#:~:text=Tracka%2C%20a%20public%20accountability%20unit,either%20abandoned%20or%20left%20uncompleted>

²⁰Adeniran A., Raifu I.A., Alikor P.A. (2024). Imperative of human resources in effective public procurement: Challenges and prospects in Nigeria. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/imperative-of-human-resources-in-effective-public-procurement-challenges-and-prospects-in-nigeria/#:~:text=In%20Nigeria%2C%20insufficient%20capacity%20in,This%20deficiency%20has>

²¹Ibid

This capability equips law enforcement agencies with prioritised intelligence to target high-risk tenders or suppliers, uncover collusive bidding rings, detect conflicts of interest, and support evidence-based prosecutions and asset recovery.³⁷ For policymakers, aggregated insights reveal systemic trends, including sectoral vulnerabilities (such as recurring issues in infrastructure or health contracts) and cross-entity similarities in practices, thereby highlighting gaps in existing oversight and informing targeted reforms, such as stricter competition requirements or mandatory e-procurement adoption.

The platform aligns with global best practices, drawing parallels to initiatives by the Open Contracting Partnership and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Comparable AI-enhanced platforms elsewhere further illustrate the transformative potential of such technologies. In Ukraine, the ProZorro e-procurement system, integrated with the AI-powered Dozorro tool developed by Transparency International Ukraine, monitors tenders in real time using machine learning algorithms trained on expert-reviewed data.³⁸ Dozorro flags irregularities, including unfounded winner selections, groundless disqualifications, and participant conspiracies, resulting in a 298 per cent increase in collusion detection and a 26 per cent rise in identifying unfair supplier practices compared to traditional methods.³⁹ In Brazil, the Alice tool, deployed by the Comptroller General (CGU), automates analysis of bids and contracts against 40 risk categories, generating tailored alerts for preventive audits and reducing audit timelines from over 400 days to approximately eight days, while contributing to operational savings of 1.3 billion Brazilian reais and suspension of suspicious tenders valued at 9.7 billion Brazilian reais.⁴⁰ These examples demonstrate how AI-driven platforms can scale oversight, detect patterns at volume, and yield measurable reductions in corruption risks.

In Nigeria, policymakers can leverage data analytics, artificial intelligence, and open-source intelligence (OSINT) to track fraud patterns and strengthen procurement systems. Data analytics enables the systematic examination of procurement datasets, such as those from the Bureau of Public Procurement portal, to identify recurring anomalies, including abnormal price deviations, supplier dominance in specific sectors, or geographic biases in award decisions, thereby revealing structural vulnerabilities. Artificial intelligence extends this capacity through machine learning models that predict corruption risks by learning from historical irregularities, automating anomaly detection, and prioritising cases for investigation. OSINT complements these approaches by cross-referencing public records, corporate registries, social media profiles, and media reports to uncover hidden relationships, beneficial

²²Ibid

²³Ibid

²⁴BusinessDay. (2024, March 22). *Nigeria loses \$18bn annually to financial crimes and corrupt procurement processes – CSEA*. Retrieved from BusinessDay.

²⁵Brookings Institution. (2023). *Can we change the narrative on corruption in public procurement in Nigeria?* Retrieved

ownership details, or conflicts of interest involving officials and suppliers, information often absent from official procurement data alone. Integrating these technologies into national frameworks, such as mandatory disclosure under the Public Procurement Act of 2007 and alignment with Open Government Partnership commitments, would facilitate evidence-based policy design, enhance interoperability between systems, and support preventive measures.

Policy Recommendations

For the Bureau of Public Procurement (Federal and Sub-national)

1. Establish formal partnerships with CeFTPI to integrate Aletheia PI into routine procurement oversight, compliance reviews, and performance monitoring at both federal and state levels.
2. Use Aletheia PI risk indicators to strengthen pre-award and post-award due diligence, especially for contracts that show signs of limited competition, price inflation, or repetitive vendor patterns.
3. Institutionalise data sharing arrangements between procurement entities and Aletheia PI to improve the completeness, timeliness, and quality of procurement records across jurisdictions.
4. Embed platform insights into procurement audits, contractor blacklisting processes, and periodic sectoral risk assessments.
5. Support the rollout of compatible e-procurement and open contracting systems that allow seamless integration with Aletheia PI analytics tools.

For Law Enforcement Agencies

1. Integrate Aletheia PI into investigative protocols to prioritise high-risk procurement cases using automated red-flag indicators.
2. Collaborate with CeFTPI for specialised training on risk scoring and anomaly interpretation.
3. Use platform outputs to strengthen evidence gathering, target collusive practices, and enhance asset recovery efforts.

from Brookings.

²⁶Yakubu, U. (2025). *The shadow state: Public sector corruption in Nigeria - Causes, consequences, and reforms* [Kindle version]. Safari Publisher. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FVY3QPTZ>

²⁷Ibid

²⁸Ibid

²⁹Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP). (2023). *Annual Report 2020*. Retrieved from BPP.

³⁰DailyTimesNGR. (2025, February 1). *FG disburses 2.4 bn for projects, but sites remain abandoned*. Retrieved from DailyTimesNGR

³¹Natsa T.R. (2024). *Procurement fraud accounts for 70% of total corruption in public sector- Report*. The Cable News. <https://businessday.ng/news/article/procurement-fraud-accounts-for-70-of-total-corruption-in->

For Policymakers

1. Draw on Aletheia PI's systemic trend data when reviewing the Public Procurement Act and related regulations, particularly in areas such as competition thresholds, disclosure requirements, and digital procurement mandates.
2. Promote interoperability between Aletheia PI and national and sub-national procurement portals to improve data coverage and consistency.
3. Allocate resources for platform expansion and embed its insights into national and state anti-corruption and public financial management strategies.

For Civil Society and the Public

1. Advocate for expanded public access to anonymised Aletheia PI dashboards, summary reports, and sectoral risk briefs.
2. Partner with CeFTPI to validate findings and amplify high-risk cases through public advocacy and community engagement.
3. Support citizen monitoring of public contracts and create channels for reporting irregularities at the local level.

For Academia

1. Access Aletheia PI datasets through formal partnerships to conduct empirical research on procurement risks, corruption drivers, and institutional performance.
2. Produce peer-reviewed studies that test the platform's methodologies and contribute to evidence-based reforms.
3. Incorporate platform insights into teaching, case studies, and comparative governance research.

public-sector-report/

³²Oluwafemi A. (2025). Olukoyede: Procurement-related fraud accounts for 90% of public sector corruption. The Cable News. <https://www.thecable.ng/olukoyede-procurement-related-fraud-accounts-for-90-of-public-sector-corruption/>

³³See a study by the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) on Procurement Corruption in the Public Sector and Associated Money Laundering in the ESAAMLG Region in 2019, https://www.esaamlg.org/reports/Report_procurement.pdf

³⁴Agbo E. (2026). Nigeria drops two places to 142nd in 2025 corruption ranking, trails 33 African countries. Premium Times. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/855542-nigeria-drops-two-places-to-142nd-in-2025-corruption-ranking-trails-33-african-countries.html>

³⁵Duja Consulting (2025). Forensic Audit Techniques for Detecting Procurement Fraud in Africa's Public Sector. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/forensic-audit-techniques-detecting-procurement-fraud-sgd0f>

For the Media

1. Develop structured partnerships with CeFTPI to access curated Aletheia PI datasets, briefings, and technical support for investigative reporting.
2. Use the platform to identify systemic procurement risks, unexplained contract variations, and patterns of vendor concentration.
3. Produce evidence-based stories that explain procurement trends to the public in clear, accessible language.
4. Participate in capacity-building programmes on data journalism, procurement analysis, and anti-corruption reporting.
5. Promote sustained public debate on procurement integrity by tracking high-risk sectors and following up on enforcement outcomes.

³⁶Ibid

³⁷See Center for Fiscal Transparency & Public Integrity. (2025, September). The Center attends a session on digital tools for transparency in procurement at COSP11. <https://www.fiscaltransparency.org/the-center-attends-a-session-on-digital-tools-for-transparency-in-procurement-at-cosp11>

³⁸Transparency International Ukraine (2018). DOZORRO Artificial Intelligence to Find Violations in ProZorro: How It Works - Transparency International Ukraine

³⁹Ibid

⁴⁰Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2024). Robot Alice - Bid, contract and notice analyser. OECD Observatory of Public Sector Innovation. <https://oecd-opsi.org/innovations/robot-alice-bid-contract-and-notice-analyser/>

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