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Train to Tracks: Lagos - The Blue Line

Executive Summary

- NIAF provided technical support to Lagos State Government which facilitated the construction of the Blue Line. Phase One of the Blue Line will formally be commissioned by the end of 2015 and is estimated to service 300,000+ passengers per day. The Blue Line, when complete, will provide urban rail transport over 35 km of densely populated land, between Okokomaiko and the Marina.
- Formal urban mass transit systems are rapidly expanding in newly industrialising countries in Asia and Latin America. Efficient transport systems allow cities to function more effectively by reducing the transaction costs (time and money) involved in the daily economic activity of residents.
- Delays in project delivery, cost overruns and the forecasted benefits to Lagos State have resulted in evolving and increasing NIAF support to LAMATA.
- NIAF provided strategic and operational support to Phase One and Two of the Blue Line, and instituted far reaching reforms in Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA). NIAF led reforms in LAMATA will continue to have an impact in the planning, construction and financing of Phase 3 of the Blue Line.

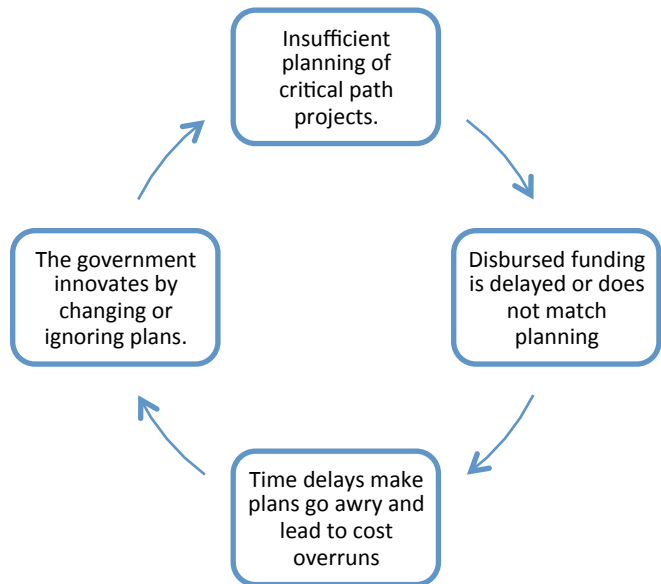


The Blue line is expected to start carrying passengers by Dec 2015

The Challenge

- The Blue Line is mainly funded through the internally generated revenues of the Lagos State Government. As such, the programme is dependent on unpredictable financial flows and the timely disbursement of state funds by Lagos State Government. The uncertainty around funding makes it difficult to manage contractors and ensure the timely completion of critical projects.

- Technical expertise on urban rail development and delivery is limited in LAMATA. Preparatory work for World Bank funding and/or investment from the private sector is not always feasible in the context of LAMATA’s capabilities.
- Lagos has planned the development of 7 lines for a state-wide rail network. The Blue Line has been delayed due to financing and planning issues. Time delays have an inevitable cost implication; and innovations to compensate for cost overruns and time delays are often technically ill planned and require further revisions.
- Changes in the Lagos Transport Plan with the advent of bus mass transit have made the original Operation and Maintenance Contract for the Blue Line unsustainable. This means that further funding or guarantees are required from the government to attract a private sector counterpart to operate and maintain the Blue Line.



The circle of challenges faced when working on the blue line

The NIAF Approach

- In coordination with LAMATA, NIAF supported:
 - Rail Planning – NIAF facilitated the creation of the Rail Planning unit, which set up and planned the construction and prioritisation of the different projects on the Blue Line.
 - Project Management – NIAF led the management of contractors by assisting LAMATA in creating standard SOPs for contractor monitoring and review.
 - Operations and Safety – NIAF helped to create a Rail Safety and Operations unit within LAMATA. The unit covers safety and operations for the 7 different lines planned by LAMATA.
- NIAF deployed long term associates with Nigerian and International experience to LAMATA to better understand the operating environment and to build institutional knowledge and capacity.
- NIAF made good use of the facility model to overcome any critical blockages in the completion of the Blue Line. This included assisting LAMATA in evaluating of locomotives and wagons that the concessionaire will operate and maintain.

Outcomes

- The Blue Line is a flagship rail transit system in Nigeria which will provide a model to be replicated in Lagos and elsewhere in West Africa.
 - 300,000+ people are likely to travel on the Blue Line per day. The Line will decrease journey times and improve the quality of the commute for thousands of Nigerians.
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