

Public Debt Integrity Series

# Parliamentary oversight and Chinese loans in Africa: The case of Ghana and Nigeria

**Ghana | Nigeria**

13

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# Executive summary

China is a major source of infrastructure finance in Africa, and this has manifested in Chinese loans to countries on the continent. Although sustainable debt is not necessarily antithetical to development, experts are worried about an overreliance on Chinese loan finance. In a democratic context, parliamentary oversight can mitigate such an outcome and ensure accountability in the delivery of loan agreements.

Using Nigeria and Ghana as cases, this paper investigates parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans. While it identifies party-centred responses in parliament, executive push and dependence on Chinese development finance as the challenges of parliamentary oversight, the paper recommends open and timely access to information, strengthening non-state actors, civil societies and media freedom, amplifying alternative voices, bolstering local knowledge, and alternate leadership. It concludes that strengthening parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans will require the involvement of non-state actors.

**KEYWORDS: CHINESE LOANS, PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT, DEBT-TRAP, GHANA, NIGERIA.**

# Introduction

Africa-China relations have attracted significant interest. China surpassed the US as the continent's largest trading partner in 2009 (Usman, 2021) and Chinese loans have become vital and commonplace in Africa's development discourse. Chinese loans to Africa (hereafter CLA) increased from less than USD 1 billion in 2000 to over USD 170 billion in 2022 – that is, a total of 1,243 loans by 39 Chinese lenders going to 49 African governments and regional institutions (Moses, Hwang Jyhjong, Engel and Bien-Aimé, 2023). Chinese lenders galloped from 3 to over 30 banks and other lenders (Acker and Brautigam, 2021). Put together, CLA equal 64% of the World Bank's USD 264.15 billion sovereign loans over the same period (Moses, Hwang, Engel and Bien-Aimé, 2023). All these have attracted media and academic interest. But while much of the interest focused on the sustainability question or whether there is a so-called 'Chinese debt-trap' (Al-Fadhat and Prasetyo, 2024), a term that is highly contested and has been debunked (Brautigam and Rithmire, 2021; see also Chen, 2020), little or no work have discussed the parliamentary oversight of CLA, especially with at least 15 parliament buildings in Africa being built or refurbished by China (Ncube, 2023). Using the case of the Nigerian and Ghanaian parliaments, this paper contributes to this less known dimension of CLA.

In addition to their significant Chinese debts, Nigeria and Ghana offer useful cases for interrogating parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans for at least 2 reasons. First, they offer examples of how countries with different historical relationship with China have navigated contemporary Chinese loans. For example, while Ghana established diplomatic relations with China in 1960, making it one of the first in Africa (Idun-Arkhurst, 2008), Nigeria's pro-West foreign policy at independence limited its interaction with Beijing and diplomatic relationship was only established in 1971 (Seteolu and Oshodi, 2018). Indeed, while China had reportedly supported the secessionist Biafra forces during Nigeria's civil war in 1967-70 (Seteolu and Oshodi, 2018), Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first republic president, welcomed Chinese guerrilla warfare instructors to Half Assini training camp in 1964-66 (Ogunsanwo, 1974). Second, the 2 countries allow us to interrogate how their parliaments engage instances of cash and resources repayment of Chinese loans.

In this paper, I set out to achieve 2 main goals: (a) highlight the role of the Nigerian and Ghanaian parliaments in Chinese loans agreements and ascertain elements of their oversight, and (b) identify the main challenges and offer recommendations to strengthen parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans. Four means can be used to ascertain the extent of parliamentary oversight of CLA. First is to analyse the depth of parliamentary sessions as for example recorded in the Hansards to unpack the debates that guided the institution's approval or rejection of Chinese loans. A second approach is to focus on visits by MPs to project sites funded by Chinese loans and analyse the attendant commentaries. A third approach is to gauge parliamentary oversight through the lens of non-state actors like the media, civil societies and experts. A fourth approach is to analyse the responses of the executive arm of government to the parliamentary oversight. While capable of standing alone,

the 4 are by no means mutually exclusive. This paper partly focuses on number 1, 2 and 3 for practical reasons.

Although existing loan data for both countries will be accessed, this paper adopts a qualitative strategy that analyses the subject relying on media reports, Hansards, personal experience, and other relevant materials. Structurally, the rest of the paper is divided into 4 sections. The next section discusses CLA. This is followed by a section that discusses parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans in Ghana and Nigeria. The next section offers 5 recommendations for strengthening parliamentary oversight. This is followed by a conclusion.

## Chinese loans to Africa (CLA) in brief

Africa's Chinese debt is estimated at 10% of the total external debt owed by the continent – with about 90% of African countries owing 35% to private creditors and 39% to multinational institutions (Development Reimagined, 2023). The 10% estimated Chinese debt at the continental level is lesser than Chinese share of the external debt for Nigeria and Ghana which stands at 7% for the 2 countries (Olander, 2024; van Wyk, 2024). Nonetheless, Chinese lending to the continent does not happen in a vacuum. It happens within a complex context that varies across time, governments and countries. Broadly speaking, CLA are driven by the interplay of 3 realities that explains China's internationalisation: "Chinese domestica", "Chinese internationa" and "Chinese Africana" (Oshodi, 2012 and 2013). Chinese domestica relates to the local events and processes within China that propel or challenge the country's rise. Chinese internationa is the international context within which China acts in collaboration, competition or conflict with other actors beyond and within Africa. As Usman (2021) aptly puts it, "For many countries, from Asia to Africa to parts of Europe, China has become the most important economic partner." Chinese Africana represents the actual manifestations of Chinese performance, projections and politics in Africa, an example being Chinese loans. Disconnecting CLA from Chinese domestica and Chinese internationa limits, if not obfuscates, a holistic grasp of the phenomenon.

Chinese loans are provided by more than 40 lenders (Wu and Chen, 2024). Often led by state-owned lenders such as the Export-Import Bank of China (Exim Bank), China Development Bank (CDB), and Chinese commercial banks, these loans to Africa have been used to finance infrastructure projects like airports, roads, bridges, railways, dams, stadiums, and telecommunications. However, the phrase 'Chinese loans' simplifies the complexities and differences in numerous agreements and arrangements between Chinese and African (as well as, more recently, Western) actors following the launch of a Common Framework for Debt Treatment. Nonetheless, CLA generally falls into 2 broad categories: resource-backed loans (RBLs) and non-resource backed loans (NRBLs). Where it is resource-backed, it means that African countries use their resources as some sort of collateral. The RBLs are collateralised with the proceeds of the resources such oil, copper and bauxite. This often occurred in tandem with a purchase contract with a Chinese national oil company or SOE serving as off-taker for the minerals. This was what happened in the 'Angolan model' (Corkin, 2013).

Bode (2024) and others have argued that China prefers the resource-backed loans – or what is referred to as the “collateralised loans” (Ghanaweb, 2023) – to the NRBLs. Three reasons may explain this. First, it shields China from debt payment defaults. Second, it allows China to escape the allegation of unsustainable debt or what has been dubbed debt trap. In this case, it can be argued that there cannot be a trap if there are resources to pay for the debt. Third, it helps China avoid Western intrusion and multilateral engagements in its loans as could be the case with the Common Framework that brings together parties from the Paris Club and Chinese representatives. As Bode (2024, page 8) notes: “the deep mutual distrust between China and the Western countries, further fuelled by rising geopolitical tension between them, complicates and slows down negotiations on official debt restructuring.” A counterargument can be made that despite the RBLs in Angola, for example, the country took part in the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative that also involved the Paris Club and Chinese debt relief (Suckling and Fourie, 2020).

Beyond the so-called debt-trap discourse, there are other perspectives. For example, aside from China’s debt relief to African countries and supposed concerns for debt sustainability (Acker, Brautigam and Huang, 2020), some have argued that “China did not cause African debt distress in most cases, but it is key to finding a solution” (Vines, Butler and Jie, 2022, page 2). Not to be in doubt, as Acker and Brautigam (2021, page 1), frankly put it, like other lenders, “Chinese banks are interested in the profits available in emerging and frontier markets.” Yet, others have pushed back against the debt-trap discourse maintaining that “what is crucial to avoid in any forecasting is an undertone that African countries have spent badly, are too ‘indebted’ to creditors, in particular, China, or that they are ‘risky’ investment destinations.” Furthermore, “It is also crucial to avoid oversimplified, generalised analysis that underplays African agency and legitimate needs for debt for development, and ignores the continent’s strong growth prospects compared to the global average” (Development Reimagined, 2023; see also Chen, 2020; and Brautigam and Rithmire, 2021). Given these contestations about the impact and potentialities of CLA, one important question is raised: do African countries have any agency in Africa-China loans relations? Indeed, one institution with the capacity to demonstrate such agency is the parliament through their oversight function. The next section discusses the extent to which the parliaments in Ghana and Nigeria perform this role.

## Parliamentary oversight in Ghana and Nigeria

Prior to interrogating parliamentary oversight in Ghana and Nigeria, a general conceptual and contextual illumination is important. On the conceptual point, parliamentary oversight is used to mean accountability, wherein the accountability relationship, to borrow Wang’s (2005, page 1) bifurcation, is both to “the executive (horizontal accountability) and to the electorate (vertical accountability)” with respect to Chinese loans. On the contextual point, parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans does not exist in a vacuum. In an earlier work, 2 points were highlighted to explain how African states and non-state actors have responded to China and Chinese actions (Oshodi, 2015). The first is the ‘point of exit’ of African governments, and the second is ‘point of



engagement' of non-state actors. For the points of exit, I argued that African governments, because of their reliance on Chinese loans, tend to shy away from or overlook deleterious Chinese activities, such as maltreatment of local citizens or environmental pollution, so as not to irritate Beijing. In the face of this state withdrawal, non-state actors have stepped in to engage and call out Chinese government and companies for such activities. The (post-)COVID-19 devastation of African economies and the infrastructure deficit in many African countries makes the quite simplistic binary of 'exit' and 'engagement' useful for the current interrogation of CLA and how state institutions can be limited in their responses.

Having said this, 3 important points must be stressed in locating parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans in Nigeria and Ghana. First, Nigeria-China and Ghana-China relations have been cordial. In Nigeria, since the Olusegun Obasanjo administration (1999-2007), virtually all serving Nigerian presidents have visited China. Second, the cordiality has not only manifested in the exchange of top official visits, but it is also revealed in their significant Chinese debts. Between 2000 and 2023, Nigeria received 25 loans from China for projects in the energy, ICT, water, transportation, and service sectors. In addition to these sectors, Ghana's 57 received Chinese loans resulted in defence and military, education and agriculture projects. Third, the loans were received by governments formed by the major political parties in both countries. In Nigeria, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) was in power between 1999 and 2015 and the All Progressives Congress (APC) between 2015 and 2024. In Ghana, the New Patriotic Party (NPP) formed the government in 2001-09 and 2017-24 while the National Democratic Congress (NDC) was office in 2000 and 2009-17.

Unlike in Nigeria, where the oil-for-infrastructure policy with China initiated by the Obasanjo government was cancelled by his successor from the same party (the PDP), Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (Seteolu and Oshodi, 2018), the case was different in Ghana where the parliament led the deliberation. For example, the NPP opposition in parliamentary led debates and protested the NDC's decision to take a Chinese Development Bank (CDB) loan that was to have the country's petroleum as collateral. It was argued that the NDC government in doing so would have breached the Petroleum Revenue Management Act (PRMA) 2011, "which stipulates that Ghana's oil cannot be collateralised for more than ten years" (Aidoo, 2016, page 63). While that deal failed, the table turned when the NPP got into power and initiated the USD 2 billion RBL 'Master Project Support Agreement' (MPSA) or Sinohydro deal. The deal stipulated that China provided infrastructure (like roads, bridges, interchanges, railways, rural electrification, hospitals and clinics) in exchange for collateralised bauxite revenues. The NPP received similar pushback from NDC MPs and environmental groups but despite opposition to the Sinohydro deal, the agreement was signed in 2018, and it has proceeded with the delivery of some infrastructure. But while there is yet to be any bauxite transfer to Sinohydro, in 2023, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced in that as of 2022, USD 619 million of Ghana's USD 1.9 billion debt to China is "collateralised debt" tied to cocoa, bauxite, oil and electricity (Ghanaweb, 2023).

An important point that can be deduced from the Ghanaian example is that parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans can be political. In this case, rather than reflect a bipartisan engagement that prioritises national interests, debates and engagements tend to be based on party lines in parliament. In Ghana, it is expected that opposition parties are likely to challenge the loans while



ruling parties are supportive. As illustrated in the NDC-NPP tit for tat on Chinese loans for major infrastructure projects, it is rare to find ruling parties' MPs leading a probe of Chinese loans in both countries. Perhaps, the most publicised in Nigeria happened in the House of Representatives, the lower chamber of the bicameral parliament. Hon. Ben Rollands Igbakpa (PDP) sponsored a motion in the plenary session on the floor of the house in May 2020 to probe Chinese loans to Nigeria from 2000 with the aim of accessing their viability, regularising and renegotiating in the interest of the citizenry (Abuh, 2021). Although the probe covered a period under the PDP (2000-15) and ruling APC (2015-20) governments, the motion was unanimously supported. The House Committee on Treaties, Protocols and Agreement's probe led by Hon Ossai Nicholas Ossai (PDP) swung into action. The committee invited the Minister for Transportation, Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi, who was a former PDP member that decamped to the APC, to answer questions about Chinese loans and the projects for which they were granted in full media glare. Discussions focused on issues like local content, cost and clauses in the loan agreement. Not only were there obvious tensions between Ossai and Amaechi but the minister was quoted to have said: "we may not get the loan because of you Chairman, because of the committee you set up against the China loan. That contract is for Lagos to Calabar [railway] which is the whole of the south, we may not get that loan" (Akinwale and Orizu, 2020; see also Igwe, 2020).

Although video of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon Olufemi Hakeem Gbajabiamila (APC), walking into the committee session to douse the tension between the minister and committee chairperson soon surfaced (Channels TV, 2020), the probe nonetheless underscores 3 important developments. First, and initially at least, it suggests that parliamentarians are capable of probing a government even when it is one formed by their party. Indeed, it is commendable that Speaker Gbajabiamila agreed to a PDP member chairing the committee for the bipartisan probe. Second, that information about Chinese loans is limited even in the parliament, an institution that is meant to approve the loan agreement between Nigeria and China. There appears to be a gap between the information the committee had and what the minister presented. Indeed, it is interesting that not only were some of the loans in question contracted during the administration of the Goodluck Jonathan (PDP), but the agreement was also approved by the country's legislature (Igwe, 2020).

Third, and perhaps the more troubling point, is that a serving minister could threaten parliamentarians that a probe could lead to Nigeria losing the infrastructure. This appears to explain why such public probes or hearings on Chinese loans are more like an aberration in Nigeria – even though Chinese loans are elemental to the country's infrastructural development in the last 20 years. It could be argued that because the Nigerian parliament failed to exact its oversight prior to the finalisation of the loan agreement, its belated decision to probe can be disruptive for project timelines and repayment schedules. Such argument limits parliamentary oversight. Oversight can be before, during, or even after a loan agreement has been signed. After his encounter with the committee, Amaechi doubled down: "We are having a problem with the Ibadan-Kano rail because of the reaction of the committee of the National Assembly," adding that the "Chinese are asking how do they know that Nigeria wants to pay back when a committee of the National Assembly is questioning us about the terms of the agreement. There is an impact. We have not got the loan since that time" (Baiyewu, 2021). Lamenting that Nigeria was about to receive a new Chinese loan

at about the time the parliament initiated a probe, he blamed the parliament: “So, Ibadan-Kano rail, I will hang it on the National Assembly” (Baiyewu, 2021).

Following Amaechi’s warning, Speaker Gbajabiamila’s intervention, and later a visit to the PDP national headquarters by Chinese officials Wu Baocai and Li Ineijian, the public probe was discontinued (Oshodi, 2022). Although media reports portrayed Amaechi as a pro-Chinese politician, a rumour that haunted his unsuccessful presidential ambition (van Staden, 2022), the minister’s warning, strengthens the ‘point of exit’ argument wherein African governments are careful not to irritate China, a country that is now a major financier of many infrastructure projects in Africa. In a sense, this reluctance or fear of irritating China was buttressed by a Ghanaian senior minister, Yaw Osafo-Maafo. He was reported to have warned that arresting and prosecuting a Chinese national, Aisha Huang, popularly known as ‘Galamsey Queen’ involved in illegal mining, could jeopardise Ghana’s chances of accessing Chinese finance (Nyabor, 2019). The difference between the Ghanaian minister and the Nigerian minister’s warnings is that the latter appreciated the parliament for ensuring that the probe was stopped. Amaechi reportedly said: “But I must be grateful to both the Senate President and the Speaker for intervening. They intervened to stop the young man (Ossai), the honourable member who actually chaired the committee, and that helped a bit” (Baiyewu, 2021). Emphasising the role of the 2 principal officers of the Nigerian parliament, Amaechi stated: “I complained, they listened to the complaint and stopped the committee” (Baiyewu, 2021).

In addition to sittings, debates and visits to projects sites, however, parliamentary oversight (used in this paper to mean both the institutional and individual actions of MPs) of Chinese loans has materialised in one unique way, what could be termed ‘letters-as-oversight.’ Letters-as-oversight is a tendency for both ruling and opposition parties in parliament to write to foreign actors to either support or oppose the idea of Chinese loans. For example, in 2018, minority NDC MPs in the Ghanaian parliament wrote a letter to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, as a newspaper report puts it, “to stop the deal because they claim it’s ‘illegal’ even though the same political grouping helped to pass the agreement in parliament before the house went on recess late last month” (Owusu, 2018). In 2016, Hon Gbajabiamila, when he was House Majority Leader, wrote a counter-letter to China’s President Xi Jinping. This was in response to an earlier letter from a member of the opposition party, Ayo Fayose (PDP), to the Chinese leader about China’s loans to Nigeria. While Fayose’s letter criticised the Nigerian government for its recklessness, Hon Gbajabiamila’s letter noted that the latter’s action amounted to “economic sabotage and subversion” (Ovuakporie and Agbakwuru, 2016; Seteolu and Oshodi, 2018, page 277).

# Strengthening parliamentary oversight

Parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans is weak in Nigeria and Ghana. This is a result of the whip system in parliament and the importance Chinese development finance in both countries. However, this section highlights 5 interconnected recommendations for strengthening the oversight functions of the parliament in a systemic rather than an institutional context. This means that non-state actors will have to support parliamentary oversight from outside.

## 1. Open and timely information.

Parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans is enriched in a context where MPs and other stakeholders have access to open and reliable information in a timely manner. At the time of writing, for example, typing “China” or “Chinese” into the search function in Hansard section on the Ghanaian and Nigerian parliaments’ website returned zero results. That MPs themselves do not have adequate information about the subject upon which they are meant to perform oversight is troubling. Parliament is expected to have access to information on the Chinese loans and agreements they themselves approved. Given that media information can be limited and/or slanted, one way to strengthen oversight and citizen education on Chinese and other debt is to create a field on loans on the online portal for the Ghanaian and Nigerian parliamentary websites. In its current form, unlike the online Ghanaian Hansard<sup>1</sup> that is well populated, the Nigerian one<sup>2</sup> is a particularly difficult jungle for accessing relevant information on Chinese loans. The challenge is not only with the Hansard. In Nigeria, it was following “statements and reports credited to several persons on the subject of loans obtained from China” that the Debt Management Office (DMO) “considered it necessary to provide a sequel to its press release on the same subject dated September 11, 2018” (DMO, 2020). Information about Chinese or other loans must be publicly accessible and not periodically released by the DMO to address statements or reports.

## 2. Support for non-state actors, civil society organisations and media freedom.

Non-state actors – like civil societies, media and individuals – are crucial for parliamentary oversight. This paper has demonstrated that what is considered parliamentary oversight may indeed be party politics more than holding China and the Nigerian government accountable. Given this situation, civil societies must be equipped with the necessary tools for monitoring and sustaining effective parliamentary oversight. This can happen where the Fourth Estate is not only free to hold MPs and legislators accountable for their poor oversight, but when they themselves are

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.parliament.gh/docs?type=HS>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://nass.gov.ng/documents/hansard>

knowledgeable about the mechanics of Chinese loans and financing in Africa. Thus, periodic exposure of the media and civil societies to state-of-the-art research and datasets on CLA is overdue. This will equip these non-state actors to be knowledgeable enough to interrogate the actions of MP. Personal experience with training journalists on reporting China appears to suggest that this is particularly relevant.

### 3. Amplifying alternative and critical voices in parliament.

The political balance between the ruling and opposition parties in parliament shapes the current oversight of Chinese loans in Ghana and Nigeria. This is because the whip system in each parliament ensures that party members that do not support the party's position and the executive or cabinet are whipped into line by verbal warning or removal from position or committees. This suppresses the function of the parliament as a platform for accountability. Where the president belongs a party that does not have the majority in parliament, there is a likelihood that the oversight will be stronger than when the ruling party dominates the parliament. In a case where the opposition holds a small number, then it is the media's responsibility to ensure that their voices are amplified, especially where there is an executive push or interest to suppress voices as it appears in the Ossai case. To recall, even Speaker Gbajabiamila, who wrote a letter to President Xi Jinping in support of Chinese loans to Nigeria and publicly intervened in Hon Ossai's questioning of Amaechi, was himself motivated by media reports of the maltreatment of Nigerians in China during the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, the then Speaker, in April 2020, allowed himself to be recorded publicly criticising a Chinese diplomat for the treatment of Nigerians in Guangzhou (Oshodi, 2020 and 2023). It is in this same sense that the media becomes a powerful tool in foisting parliamentary oversight.

### 4. Bolster local knowledge on Chinese loans beyond the parliament.

The availability of local knowledge of Chinese loans in Ghana and Nigeria is crucial. This would mean narrowing the gap between the town and the academe, between policy and theory. This calls for a deeper relationship between MPs, media, civil societies, and the existing expert pools like the Nigeria Africa-China Research Group (NiACReG)<sup>3</sup> and the Accra-based Afro-Sino Centre of International Relations (ASCIR).<sup>4</sup> University centres – like the Institute of Nigeria-China Development Studies (INCDS) at the University of Lagos and the Centre for Asian Studies at the University of Ghana among others – offers important knowledge platforms within Nigeria and Ghana. All these networks and centres could strengthen the knowledge system within parliament and beyond.

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<sup>3</sup> See <https://niacreg.wordpress.com/2023/07/08/14/>

<sup>4</sup> See <https://ascir.org>

## 5. Co-chair or alternative leadership system.

In many ways, parliaments in Ghana and Nigeria are an extension of the executive. The Nigerian National Assembly is particularly susceptible to executive hijack, a possibility exemplified in the Amaechi-Ossai case. Parliaments will have to redesign the current winner-takes-all system where the party with the majority MPs shapes oversight. The Hon Ossai example, where a PDP MP was allowed to lead the probe in an APC-dominated House of Representatives, is commendable although the outcome of the process was truncated. To achieve this type of alternate leadership system, the appointments and leadership system in parliament will have to be adjusted in a manner that empowers alternative voices and opposition. This will ensure that ruling parties with the majority in parliament do not suppress opposing voices. However, a balance must be reached in designing this arrangement so that opposition parties do not politicise the newfound power in parliament.

## Conclusion

This paper discussed parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans to Africa (CLA) using the examples of Ghana and Nigeria. It shows that parliamentary oversight in each country appears to have been driven more by party interests than by cross-party consideration to ensure transparency, accountability and value for money. Chinese loans are significant in Nigeria and Ghana, and this appears to have not only increased Chinese influence but nurtures a tendency for members of the executive arm and their party members in parliament to avoid if not shield public probes into Chinese loans. Yet, the quality of information available to MPs is suspect, further weakening their oversight capability. With the main finding that parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans remains weak, the role of the African parliament as a tool for checking Chinese influence appears dimmer with the deepening relationship between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and parties in Africa, including in Nigeria and Ghana. This type of party-to-party exposure to China, which includes training coupled with diplomatic visits, can influence the extent of parliamentary oversight. In any case, China, it will appear, has mastered its relationship with major political parties in Ghana and Nigeria, an expression of the cordial relationship with national governments since the start of the Fourth Republics in the 2 countries, i.e. Ghana beginning in 1993 and Nigeria in 1999. This is not to say that parliamentary oversight of Chinese loans is a lost cause, it only needs to be strengthened. Strengthening it will require the buy-in of non-state actors as highlighted in the recommendation.

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## Annex 2: About the author

Abdul-Gafar Tobi Oshodi lectures in the Department of Political Science, Lagos State University (Nigeria) and holds a PhD in Social Sciences from KU Leuven (Belgium). His research straddles international relations, comparative politics and development studies – with strong bias for Africa-China relations.

He is a recipient of several fellowships including from the American Council of Learned Societies (2020-2021), Merian Institute for Advanced Studies in Africa (2022-2023), Centre for East Asian Studies, University of Turku (2023), and African Peacebuilding Network (2023-2024). He co-founded the Nigeria Africa-China Research Group (NiACReG).

## Annex 3: Table 1: Chinese loans to Nigeria, 2000-2023

SN	Year	Loan item (project)	Sector	Lender	Amount
1	2002	Ogun State, Papalanto Gas Power Project 335(MW)	Energy	SEPCO III (Shandong Electric Power Construction Corporation III)	\$114.9M
2	2002	Ondo State, Omotosho Gas Power Plant Project (335MW)	Energy	CMEC (China Machinery Engineering Corporation)	\$114.8M
3	2002	ALCATEL Nigerian Local Government Rural Telephony Project	ICT	Alcatel-Lucent Shanghai Bell Co., Ltd.	\$77.6M
4	2002	ZTE Nigerian Local Government Rural Telephony Project	ICT	ZTE (Zhongxing Telecommunication Equipment Corporation)	\$82.3M
5	2006	Nigerian Communications Satellite (NIGCOMSAT)	ICT	CHEXIM	\$200.0M
6	2010	Public Security Communication System Project	ICT	CHEXIM	\$399.5M
7	2010	Nigerian Communications Satellite (NIGCOMSAT) - Replacement Project	ICT	CHEXIM	\$20.1M
8	2010	Railway Modernisation, Idu - Kaduna, Project 1 (187km)	Transport	CHEXIM	\$500.0M
9	2012	Abuja Light Rail Project (78km)	Transport	CHEXIM	\$500.0M

10	2013	ICT Infrastructure Backbone Project	ICT	CHEXIM	\$100.0M
11	2013	Zungeru Hydropower Plant (700MW)	Energy	CHEXIM	\$984.3M
12	2013	Airport Expansion (4 Terminals)	Transport	CHEXIM	\$500.0M
13	2016	40 Parboiled Rice Processing Plants	Industry & Trade/ services	CHEXIM	\$325.7M
14	2017	Enugu Housing (72 Units)	Industry & Trade/ services	ICBC	\$42.5M
15	2017	Lagos-Ibadan Railway, Modernisation, Project 2	Transport	CHEXIM	\$1.3B
16	2017	Abuja-Keffi-Makurdi Road, Rehabilitation and Upgrade (227km)	Transport	CHEXIM	\$460.8M
17	2017	Lafia Bypass Road and Dualization of 9th Mile (Enugu) - Otukpo - Makurdi Road (268.5km)	Transport	CHEXIM	\$845.8M
18	2017	e-Border and e-Prison Solutions Procurement and Installation	ICT	CHEXIM	\$175.5M
19	2018	National ICT Infrastructure Backbone, Phase II Project	ICT	CHEXIM	\$347.4M
20	2018	Rolling Stocks and Depot Equipment Purchase, Abuja Light Rail	Transport	CHEXIM	\$157.0M

21	2018	Water Supply System, Greater Abuja	Water, sanitation, waste	CHEXIM	\$381.1M
22	2019	Lekki Deep Water Port	Transport	CDB	\$629.0M
23	2019	Airport Expansion (4 Terminals), Incremental Project	Transport	CHEXIM	\$208.9M
24	2019	Airport Expansion (4 Terminals), Ancillary Project	Transport	CHEXIM	\$183.6M
25	2023	Lagos-Kano Railway (1400km), Kaduna-Kano Section (200km)	Transport	CBD	\$973.0M

Source: Compiled from Boston University Global Policy Center Chinese Loans to Africa Database

## Annex 4: Table 2: Chinese loans to Ghana, 2000-2023

S/N	Year	Loan item (project)	Sector	Lender	Amount
1	2000	Volta Lake Resettlement Township Electrification Project under the Upper West Electrification Project (USD Seller's Credit)	Energy	CWE (China International Water & Electric Corporation)	\$6.4M
2	2000	Volta Lake Resettlement Township Electrification Project under the Upper West Electrification Project (RMB Seller's Credit)	Energy	CWE (China International Water & Electric Corporation)	\$19.6M
3	2003	Accra-Kumasi Road, Ofankor-Nsawam Section Rehabilitation and Expansion (17.4km)	Transport	CIDCA	\$21.7M
4	2003	Purchase of Yaxing Buses (400 Units)	Transport	CHEXIM	\$18.6M
5	2003	Armed Forces and Police Barracks (40 Units)	Defence & Military	CIDCA	\$3.9M
6	2006	Upper West Electrification Project, SHEP-4, Phase 1 (Supply and Installation of Equipment)	Energy	CWE (China International Water & Electric Corporation)	\$81.0M
7	2006	National Communication Backbone Infrastructural Project, Phase I	ICT	CHEXIM	\$30.0M
8	2007	Bui Hydropower Project (400MW) (CL Part, Total 749.6mn)	Energy	CHEXIM	\$306.0M

9	2007	Bui Hydropower Project (400MW) (CommL Part, Total 749.6mn)	Energy	CHEXIM	\$292.0M
10	2007	Ghana-China Technical and Economic Cooperation	Public Admin.	CIDCA	\$3.6M
11	2007	Dedicated Security Information System, Phase I	Public Admin	CHEXIM	\$30.0M
12	2008	University of Ghana Legon ICT-Enabled Distance Learning System, Phase I	ICT	CHEXIM	\$8.3M
13	2008	Purchase of Ghana Armed Forces Equipment	Defense & Military	Poly Technologies Inc.	\$100.0M
14	2008	UN Peacekeeping Operations in Darfur, Sudan	Defense & Military	Poly Technologies Inc.	\$60.0M
15	2008	Purchase of 46m Patrol Boats (2 Units)	Defense & Military	Poly Technologies Inc.	\$39.9M
16	2009	E-government Project Data Centre and Wide Area Network (WAN), Phase 1	ICT	CHEXIM	\$30.0M
17	2009	Ghana-China Economic and Technical Cooperation	Others	CIDCA	\$5.8M
18	2010	NES - Upper West Regional Electrification Project	Energy	CWE (China International Water & Electric Corporation)	\$76.5M
19	2010	Water Supply System, Kpong	Water/ Sanitation/ Waste	CHEXIM	\$260.0M
20	2010	Purchase of Goods for the Ghana Armed Forces	Defense & Military	Poly Technologies Inc.	\$85.0M



21	2011	E-government Project WiMax Network Upgrade, Phase 2 (Concessional Loan)	ICT	CHEXIM	\$30.0M
22	2011	E-government Project WiMax Network Upgrade, Phase 2 (Commercial Loan)	ICT	CHEXIM	\$127.5M
23	2012	Upper West Electrification Extension	Energy	CWE (China International Water & Electric Corporation)	\$162.0M
24	2012	Northern Region Rural Electrification	Energy	ICBC	\$102.0M
25	2012	Western Corridor Gas Infrastructure Project, Jubilee Oil Field	Energy	CDB	\$850.0M
26	2012	Bui Hydropower Project (400MW) (Loan 1)	Energy	CHEXIM	\$75.3M
27	2012	Bui Hydropower Project (400MW) (Loan 2)	Energy	CHEXIM	\$76.2M
28	2012	University of Ghana Legon ICT-Enabled Distance Learning System, Phase 2	ICT	CHEXIM	\$31.9M
29	2012	Cape Coast Kotokuraba Market Project	Industry & Trade/ Services	CHEXIM	\$31.7M
30	2013	Integrated National Security Communications Enhancement Network (ALPHA) Project, Phase 1	ICT	CDB	\$150.0M
31	2013	Accra One-stop Center for Public Services	ICT	CHEXIM	\$0.7M

32	2013	Dedicated Security Information System, Phase 2	ICT	CHEXIM	\$123.4M
33	2016	Rural Electrification Programme CWE - Electrification of 1,033 communities in Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Volta and Western Regions - Phase 1 (495 communities) under Self-Help Electrification Programme (SHEP) Phase V	Energy	ICBC	\$88.1M
34	2016	Self-Help Electrification Programme (SHEP) in Five Regions HUNAN	Energy	ICBC	\$85.0M
35	2016	BOC contributes \$84.5 million to \$470 million syndicated loan for Sankofa Gas Project	Industry & Trade/ Services	BoC and other Lenders	\$84.5M
36	2018	Accra Inner City Roads (84km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$79.9M
37	2018	Kumasi Inner City Roads (100km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$80.8M
38	2018	Tamale Interchange Project	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$39.1M
39	2018	PTC Roundabout Interchange Project, Takoradi	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$57.8M
40	2018	Adenta-Dodowa Dual Carriageway (14km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$71.4M
41	2018	Sunyani Inner City Roads (39km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$49.3M

42	2018	Western Region and Cape Coast Inner City Roads (32.19km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$40.0M
43	2018	Upgrading of Selected Feeder Roads in Ashanti and Western Regions (68km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$45.0M
44	2018	Rehabilitation of Oda-Ofoase-Abirem Road (38km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$34.0M
45	2018	Hohoe-Jasikan-Dodi Pepesu Road (66.4km)	Transport	Sinohydro Ltd.	\$49.3M
46	2018	22 Factories under "One District One Factory" Project	Industry & Trade/ Services	China National Building Materials & Equipment Import and Export Corporation (CBMIE)	\$400.0M
47	2018	Polytechnics, Technical and Vocational Training Centers, Upgrading	Education	CHEXIM	\$119.0M
48	2019	Intelligent Traffic Management System; Road Completion, Accra	Transport	CBD	\$210.7M
49	2019	Integrated National Security Communications Enhancement Network (ALPHA) Project, Phase 2	ICT	CHEXIM	\$199.4M
50	2019	Execution and Completion of the Military Housing Units for the Ghana Armed Forces	Defense & Military	Poly Technologies Inc.	\$100.0M
51	2019	Coastal Fishing Landing Sites, Construction (11 Sites)	Agric	CDB	\$185.6M

52	2020	Electrification of 1,033 communities in Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Eastern, Volta and Western Regions, Phase 2 (582 communities) under Self-Help Electrification Programme (SHEP) Phase V	Energy	ICBC	\$95.4M
53	2020	Purchase of Rolling Stock (35 new Standard Gauge Locomotives and Rolling Stock)	Transport	DEC (Dongfang Electric Corporation)	\$243.6M
54	2020	Ghana Rural Telephony and Digital Inclusion Project	ICT	CHEXIM	\$160.0M
55	2020	ICT-Based Distance Learning Project for National Tertiary Education	ICT	CHEXIM	\$218.5M
56	2020	ICT-Based Distance Learning Project for the Institute of Local Government Studies	ICT	CHEXIM	\$39.0M
57	2022	37 Military Hospital Expansion Project	Defense & Military	China Shipbuilding Trading Company (CSTC)	\$85.0M

Source: Compiled from Boston University Global Policy Center Chinese Loans to Africa Database

# Annex 5: Public Debt Integrity series

## 2025

The role of parliaments in public debt oversight in Africa

This paper is published as part of the “Public Debt Integrity Series”, a joint knowledge building initiative of AFRODAD, the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development, and WFD. The papers in this series research different aspects of the role of parliaments in public debt oversight in Africa. The full list of papers is:

1. Bernard Njiri, Ruth Kendagor, Veronicah Ndegwa, Martin Kabaya, Charles Gichu, Davis Wachira: **Outcomes, constraints and examples in parliament’s role in debt oversight during the different phases of the budget cycle.**
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10. Grieve Chelwa, Paolo de Renzio, Ntazana Kaulule: **Accountability Failures: Investigating the origins of Zambia’s 2020 debt crisis**
11. Sally Torbert, Elena Mondo, Jean-Pierre Degue, Ivy Kihara: **Parliaments’ engagement with civil society, and the public more generally, in public debt management**
12. Jaime Guiliche: **The Role of Parliament in Overseeing Public Debt Management in Mozambique**
13. Abdul-Gafar Tobi Oshodi: **Parliamentary oversight and Chinese loans in Africa: The case of Ghana and Nigeria**

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