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## **Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) and Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The work investigated the impact of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) on the social and economic development of Nigeria. Although this is a multilateral Forum involving African countries, this paper justified its focus on a country by arguing that it is only the concrete cases of individual countries that successes or failures of such platforms can be measured. Using qualitative analysis and, therefore, drawing from secondary sources, and essentially descriptive in nature, the paper was anchored on soft power and neo-liberalist theories. It examined China's role in FOCAC and the nature of the relationship with Nigeria. It interrogated the mutuality of benefits, and the dividends for Nigeria using the socio-economic variables of trade, investment infrastructure and human resource development. It found out that while changes in the socio-economic variables have occurred in the relations between China and Nigeria, data presented showed no mutuality. While expanded market and raw material access were found to be the force driving China-Nigeria engagements, and which she has got abundantly, the critically needed technology transfer from China by Nigeria, is not happening. It was also found out that the rise of Chinese companies in Nigeria has not significantly affected positively the labour market as most of the employments are temporal. Notwithstanding the prima facie inequality between Nigeria and China, the research above all blamed the state of affairs on failure institutions in Nigeria as a sovereign state that make agreements, enforce them in tandem with her developmental agenda. Based on the findings, it recommended, above all, the strengthening of relevant institutions charged with the responsibility of supervising and enforcing national and international rules and regulations that will enhance thorough check of Chinese engagements in the country.

### **Keywords**

FOCAC, Development, Socio-economic development, China, Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) has been considered as one of the most important mechanisms for China-Africa cooperation in recent decades. Since its establishment in year 2000, it has held eight successful FOCAC events. Over these long years of events, the Forum has grown to become the most important framework for strengthening the China-Africa partnership at all levels, including the political, economic, cultural, and security fields. To note, however, is that China-Africa relation did not begin in 2000. In fact, Felesi (1972) dated it back to second and third century AD, when China established trading relationship with Egypt Empire by land. Contemporary relation dates back to 1955 at the Asian-African Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955 which was organized by Egypt, Indonesia, Burma (now Myanmar), Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), India, and Pakistan, and which had as its objectives the promotion of African-Asian economic and cultural relation. What is remembered most of that conference, was its opposition to colonialism and neo-colonialism (Ofodile, 2008) and non-alignment to the then two main ideological divides of the world. China's participation in the conference was as a result of her search for recognition within the international community and formation of political alliances, with

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a view of strengthening international alliances against Capitalist West and Communist Soviet Union (Looy, 2006).

It is right to argue that China's relations with Africa then and now under FOCAC is based on the five principles of peaceful co-existence established in Bandung Conference which, are according to Looy (2006), include mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression; non-interference in the internal affairs of each other; equity, mutual benefit and peaceful co-existence. In fact China's engagements in Africa since the end of colonialism are purely economic. Thus, during the formation of Forum on China-Africa Corporation (FOCAC) in 2000, Chinese Minister Shi Guangsheng made identification of four major areas of interest which forms a new objective in their bilateral relations to include:

- Promotion of trade, investment, technical and economic relations.
- To enhance strong communication in informing technology.
- To increase dialogue and consultation mechanism.
- Consolidation of cooperation within the international and regional economic organizations, to achieve economic development of Africa and China (Onuoha, 2008 cited in Nwachukwu, 2017).

There is no doubt that FOCAC is an economic forum with the objectives, at least theoretically, of achieving equality and mutual benefits between China and African countries in cooperation. This is without prejudice to the fact that economic engagement has its political side. For instance, China's official economic engagements in specific countries are not possible without the recognition of Taiwan as an inalienable part of China. "China's only pre-condition is that African states adhere to a 'one-China policy' which precludes diplomatic relations with Taiwan" (Shelton & Paruk, 2008). Recall also that until about 1982, China supported wars of national liberation in the continent. It was only thence forward that China's global policy shifted to peace and development which was intended to support and advance China's new economic opening and development, shifting China's Africa focus from a largely strategic-political engagement to an economic agenda along with a spirit of 'developing together' (Shelton & Paruk, 2008). This translated into a new Africa policy embedded in commercial interaction and practical economic goals. FOCAC process was built on this platform as an institutionalised instrument for development partnership that in principle is for the mutual development of China and Africa.

In 2013, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was established by China as another important platform for China-Africa Cooperation with the objective of improving connectivity and cooperation on a transcontinental scale. Despite the fact that as of 2022, 52 countries in Africa and the African Union have signed Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation agreements with China, the largest number of countries from any continent in the world (Vanguard, 2022), the transcontinental focus of that relation distinguishes it from FOCAC which is continental focused. This continental focus of FOCAC has led to negative reactions to it as "a high-level closed-door talk among elites with no tangible results". There are question about the true nature of China's involvement in Africa as well as the place of Africa on the table at these event that have held regularly (Vanguard, 2022). However, it has also been observed that the event, whether in ministerial conferences or summits and follow-up actions have led to a deepening of the cooperation between China and African countries. The then Tanzanian President, Mkapa was at inception quoted to have said that FOCAC provided the framework for the construction of a new China-Africa partnership intended to make a positive contribution to the struggle against poverty, disease, indebtedness and globalisation. Thus, for Odoko (2020), measured in all parameters, changes are taking place in this cooperation since the establishment of the Forum.

These contrasting depictions make the discourse of FOCAC worthwhile. In this paper, we have chosen to critically interrogate these depictions from social and economic perspective of Nigeria, an important participant in FOCAC. The paper seeks to investigate the path and the impact of FOCAC meetings, the significance and the opportunities provided by FOCAC as a collaborative platform for China-Africa Cooperation, from the perspective of the socio-economic development of Nigeria from the 2000 summit

held in Beijing to the latest in 2021, held in Dakar. Anchored on Qualitative analysis and essentially descriptive in nature, and drawing from secondary sources, the paper examines China's role in FOCAC and the nature of the relationship and interrogates the mutuality of benefits. It begins by providing historical overview of China–Nigeria relations, and then presents FOCAC, its agenda, processes and mechanisms at the wider continental level. The paper will proceed to evaluate the Socio-economic dividends from the Forum for Nigeria.

### **The FOCAC Framework, Process and Dynamics**

Basic fact about FOCAC is that it is located generally within China's foreign policy framework. Like any other foreign policy framework, the national interest of China is expected to be the driving force and has been described as promoting global harmony to facilitate China's peaceful development. However, the effective pursuit of a country's foreign policy objective demands the taking into account the interest of the other in any bilateral relationship: there must be something in it for the other. Thus the economic issues which are important to the strategic positioning of Africa in China's overall foreign policy must have something in it for Africa and Nigeria in particular. FOCAC is a grand international platform to drive this relationship. The Forum was brought into being in 2000 as a diplomatic platform for consultation and formalization of China-African relations, complementing China's bilateral relations with individual African countries by providing a forum where Chinese and African leaders can set the direction for and consolidate the relationship of going forward (Janson, 2009) while at the same time respecting each other's sovereignty. It is the institutionalisation of political dialogue, economic cooperation and trade between China and Africa with a view to seeking mutual reinforcement and common development. Though China initially did not prioritize having such a forum but the challenges and opportunities coming with the millennium and seeing US, France and Japan adjusting their African policies, made China to realize the importance of this move made by Africans. Hence, since China intends to compete with the West in Africa, it therefore decided to build a permanent cooperation mechanism with Africa known as Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) (Jansson, 2009; Eneka, 2010; Anshan, Haifang, Huaqiong, Aiping, & Wenping, 2012).

Between 2000 and 2021, the FOCAC conference had been held eight times in a three-year interval in both China and African countries. Two important documents were produced following the conference 2000. The first document was the Beijing Declaration while the second was the Programme for China-Africa Cooperation in Economics and Social Development which explained China's investments in Africa, financial cooperation between China and Africa Development Bank Group (ADB), debt relief and cancellation, agricultural cooperation, natural resources and energy, education and multilateral cooperation (Looy, 2006; Janson, 2009). This foundation conference has continued to dictate the content and direction of subsequent ones, namely, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 2003; Beijing, China 2006; Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt, 2009; Beijing, China, 2012; Johannesburg, South Africa, 2015; Beijing, China, 2018 and Dakar, Senegal, 2021. Each conference develops a plan of action and commitments covering the next three years and reflecting the broad spectrum of areas of cooperation between Africa and China. Apparently, almost the entire commitments in all the meetings of the Forum come from China. It is not surprising therefore, that implementation institutions of the Forum are all Chinese as seen in appendix 1. With the exception of a few, they are all part and parcel of Chinese government ministries. It is these institutions that try to increase the effectiveness of FOCAC in its cooperation between China and Africa.

Indeed, Africa's broader role in China's international agenda is yet to be thoroughly explored. Although a multilateral forum, the implementation and realisation of its objectives is bilateral, just like the US-Africa Business Forum, Commonwealth Conference, Franco- African Summit, Euro-African Summit, among others. It is on this premise that this work interrogated the socio-economic developmental impact of FOCAC on Nigeria.

## **Nigeria –China Relations**

China and Nigeria's relationship is not a recent phenomenon. They have engaged each other over the years socially, politically and economically. Politically, China and Nigeria had first official contact in 1960 when Nigeria Government gave China invitation to her independence celebration which China honoured. Zhou Enlai and Late Marshall Chen Yi (vice –premier) presented congratulatory messages lauding Nigeria's victory from colonialism. Nigeria equally reciprocated China's gesture by rallying support for China's United Nations membership and voted against the American anti-China motion on October 8, 1960 (Owoeye, 1986; Rindap, 2015; Nwachukwu, 2017). However, the Prime Minister Tafawa Belewa's government never planned to have an official diplomatic relations with China because it does not intend to turn East due to its pro-west and anti-communist policy in line with the British (colonial master) and other western aliens (Owoeye, 1986 cited in Nwachukwu, 2017). Thus it was only in 1971 that formal political and diplomatic relations between China and Nigeria were formally established with China establishing its embassy in Nigeria on April 1971 in Lagos and Nigeria opening its own in China in October, 1971.

Following this bilateral relations, the China Nigeria relations have boomed from one stage to another (Owoeye, 1986; Chibundu, 2000; Bukarambe, 2005). It led to diplomatic visits by the political elites of China and Nigeria to both countries. The contacts significantly strengthened their political and diplomatic relations and have paved way for mutual understanding and various agreements on different issues of concern to the two countries. Both have engaged each other for a number of reasons, including those spurred by global events. For instance, Nigeria supported resolution that secured China's position in the United Nations Security Council on October 25, 1971 while China supported Nigeria's attempted bid of becoming a permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2015. Nigeria gave China support on her territorial disputes in the Pacific region (Umejei, 2015; Ramani, 2016) as well as recognising the one China policy.

Socially, despite the anti-communist policy of Nigeria first independent government, radical intellectuals who were made up of trade unions and journalists made contacts with their Chinese counterparts. They paid hidden visits to China, seek and got material and financial support. Also, China on its side had unofficial contacts with Nigeria not minding the anti-communist policy strongly upheld by Belewa's government. In 1964, it offered aid and technical support to Nigeria and pledged to respect the independence and territorial integrity of Nigeria. Based on this, the then Minister of the state in the ministry of External Affairs, Alhaji Bamali stated that Nigeria would accept economic aid without strings from countries of the world (Federal Ministry of Information, 1964; Owoeye, 1966 cited in Nwachukwu, 2017). Since then China used aid to attract Nigeria into engaging in international cooperation with her. One is not unaware of such foreign aid being a soft power or power potential for China to penetrate Nigeria and achieve its national interest. However, since the 1990s China has significantly shifted from aid to the provision of official loans with government subsidised interest rates.

## **Theoretical Framework of Analysis**

FOCAC is made operative in national context. As earlier observed, while China may use the Forum as either a strategic partnership or as a way to advance its national interest(s), like every other international cooperation, understanding what is in it for Nigeria, is important. Theories of cooperation hinge on national interest. Nations cooperate to attain goals that are in their interest. This is where the international cooperation hinges on. Such cooperation could be in economic, social, cultural, humanitarian, technological, political, security, etc areas. Joseph Nye's (2004) Soft Power Theory argues that a country can propel or attract another country to itself without the use of force or sanctions. Thus big powers give aid, loans and business incentives to the less developed countries to attract them into engaging in international cooperation with them. The recipient countries willingly accept them and establish cooperation with such big power state.

Constructivism, on the other hand proposes that national interests and cooperation among countries are based on social construct. It argues that mutual international relations which FOCAC claims to represent can only be conducted with harmonized rules and norms. The two parties in relation are supposed to keep to these norms so as to secure cooperation that will be mutually beneficial to the parties (Mughanda, 2011). That FOCAC is founded on the premise of mutual benefit to participants is a theoretical fact that needs empirical evidence to support it. It becomes successful if, according to Liberal Theorists, engaging in such economic development cooperation with developing countries will increase their (developing countries) trade and investment capacity (Hopkins, 2000; Schneider, 2003). These are part of the analytical variables in evaluating what is in FOCAC for Nigeria. One must, however not lose sight of the Neo-liberalism argument that the global cooperation should be based on mutual interdependence and achieving the common interests of all the countries. According to Neo-liberalism, all countries under international cooperation should join hands together to solve common problem(s) that affect all or some of the countries in relations – again a fact embedded in FOCAC. From 2000 to 2021, eight FOCAC summits have been held. Each produced its policy paper that was expected to be implemented before another three years. Leaving aside that of 2024 which will still come, how has the commitments made impacted on Nigeria. To empirically address this question, the variables of, trade, investment infrastructure and human resource development were used.

### **FOCAC and Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria: Empirical Evidence**

The empirical evidence of this work is established using the variables of, trade, investment infrastructure and human resource development.

#### **Trade**

The trade relations between China and Nigeria are seen to be driven by two major areas of concern which were found out by China. They are; the economic structure of Nigeria which depends mostly on the oil and gas sector for many years that calls for the diversification of the economy to achieve sustainable development; and Nigeria as a potential market for China's goods and services (Ogunkola, Bankole&Adewuyi, 2008; Omotere, 2011). The Forum on China Africa Corporation (FOCAC) has brought about some increase in the bilateral trade relations between Nigeria and China. The exports and imports analysis of their trade relations shows that while all the products that come from China are all manufactured products, Nigeria's exports to China are raw materials with mineral fuels, oils and distillation products ranked 1<sup>st</sup> followed by other raw materials. For instance, in 2015 it was reported that out of overall \$307.3 million Nigeria's export to China, \$273.7 million trade value was oil-based, whereas, total cocoa and cotton export – the two biggest China export products following crude oil – were valued at a meager \$0.1 million and \$0.2 million respectively (Raji & Ogunrinu, 2018). Indeed, Nigerian economy is raw material based without exportation of any form of manufactured products to China. The import commodities from China are more diversified finished goods which include electrical, electronic equipment, ceramics, medical apparatus, textile materials, etc

**Table 1: China and Nigeria Trade Summary 2009-2020 (USD M)**

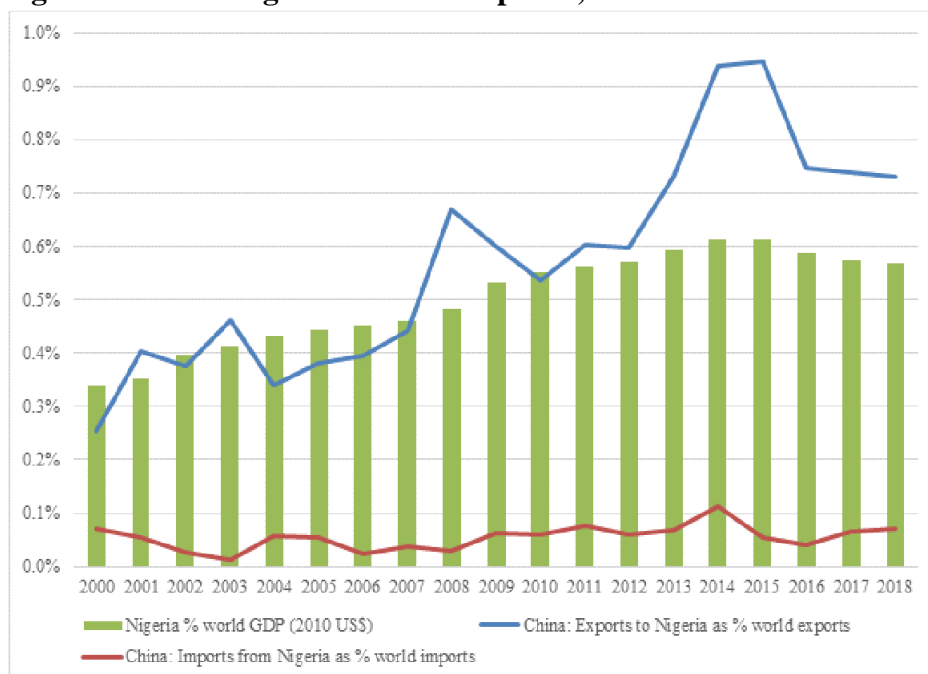
Year	China's Exports	Nigeria Exports
2009	5,999,532	716,921
2010	7,324,399	1,440,809
2011	9,447,757	2,527,022
2012	7,715,361	8,039,724
2013	9,561,454	1,096,903
2014	9,794,923	1,603,076
2015	7,876,937	795,641
2016	7,071,114	497,940
2017	5,393,208	665,200

2018	7,090,498	881,827
2019	12,064,658	1,665,243
2020	2,102,866	106235

Source: UN COMTRADE cited in Trading Economics 2009-2020

The trade pattern between China and Nigeria following FOCAC policies showed from statistical data that there is increase in trade volume in the two countries. The data show that Nigeria trade between 2000 the onset of FOCAC to 2019 is USD 140 million and USD 1,665,243 million respectively, while that of China stands at USD 253 million in 2000 and USD 12,064,658 million in 2019. Their trade relations rose from Naira 530.98 Billion in 2018 to Naira 1.51 Trillion in 2022 (CEIC, 2022). In 2017, a currency swap agreement was signed between Nigeria and China where Nigeria Naira will be exchanged directly with Chinese Yuan at their real value without converting them to Dollar (Raji & Ogunrinu, 2019). It is an agreement that enables the swap of maximum amount of 15 Billion Chinese Yuan (CNY) for 720 billion Naira equivalents to USD 2.5 billion. It is a three year tenure agreement that allows CBN and Peoples Bank of China to do the swap. The reason is to make it easier for Nigerians to import raw materials, spare parts, and machineries to undertake their businesses by taking advantages of available Chinese Yuan liquidity (Onunaiju, 2019). This greatly influenced trade. Presently Nigeria is rated as the highest importer of Chinese goods in Africa. More recent data affirm that the trade volume has remained on the increase. However despite the trade increase, the balance of trade from 2000 to 2022 show that Nigeria has been running into trade deficits: from a trade deficit of 7375 Billion Naira in 2020 to trade deficit of USD 1.8 Billion in 2022. Despite the huge oil, cassava and wood exportations, Nigerian trade has not measured to the volume of Chinese imports into the country (National Bureau of Statistics, 2020 & UN COMTRADE, 2022).

**Figure 1: China-Nigeria Trade Compared, 2000–2018.**



(Source: GDP: World Bank World Development Indicators 2019; Trade: IMF DOTS 2019)

**Table 2: Nigeria and China Trade Complementarities Index**

Year	Nigeria’s TCI with China %	China’s TCI with Nigeria%
2000	33.17	59.37
2001	32.51	59.49

2002	31.99	60.33
2003	31.68	63.33
2004	32.60	63.25
2005	33.18	62.92
2006	33.40	63.36
2007	34.18	61.85
2008	35.31	62.88
2009	35.42	61.34
2010	35.99	61.58
2011	37.20	62.29
2012	36.93	62.26
2013	35.80	62.37
2014	36.84	66.11
2015	34.18	65.48
2016	14.45	54.88
2017	13.08	49.52

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Source: UNCOMTRADE (2018)

Table 2 presents the Nigeria and China trade complementarities index. As it clearly shows, the trade complementarities of Nigeria are actually low. It shows that the trade complementarities between Nigeria's export and China's import are very weak. This indicates that Nigeria's export and China's import to Nigeria do not have adequate correlation.

### Investments

On the side of investments, Chinese companies have gained grounds in Nigeria oil and gas sector. This became actualized through Chinese aid and assistance in upgrading investments in Nigeria. This is evident when China National Offshore Oil Company moved to acquire one sixth of the rights to Nigeria's oil reserves. Nigeria is a leading oil producing country in Africa with more than 80 percent of its revenue emanating from oil and gas. This oil and gas have actually attracted investors to invest more in Nigeria (Taylor, 2007, Egbula & Zheng, 2011). In 2004, to offset Nigeria need of USD 10 billion to bring its oil reserve to 40 billion barrels by 2010, PetroChina, a Chinese company signed an agreement with Nigerian government on the incorporation of the upstream and downstream oil and gas assets. In 2005, PetroChina entered into contract worth of USD 800 million to enable the export of 30,000 barrels per day of oil to China for a period of five years and the contract will be renewed yearly (Konings, 2017). In April, 2006, China was offered four oil exploration licenses by Nigeria government. They are OPL 471, 721, 732 and 298 blocks (Egbula & Zheng, 2011; Rindap, 2015).

China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) took over the contract of deepwater oil block from South Atlantic Petroleum Limited owned by a Nigerian, Theophilus Danjuma as ruled by the Nigeria Court in favour of CNOOC (Taylor, 2007). During the regime of Olusegun, Obasanjo, Chinese investment in Nigeria oil included the 45 percent stake in OPL 246 worth USD 2.7 billion in offshore deep water oil field by CNOOC which the profits are shared between Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and CNOOC in ratio of 70:30, 70 for CNOOC and 30 for NNPC. They started production since 2008 with a peak of 225,000 barrels per day. Also, SINOPEC, a Chinese company entered into a three year oil deal with Nigeria to develop OML 64 AND OML 66 in joint venture with NNPC (Nwachukwu, 2017).

Through FOCAC engagements, China's investment in Nigeria increased. Nigeria has been taking second position for Chinese Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Africa. More than half of China's FDI in West Africa is invested in Nigeria (Ogunkola, et al, 2008; Oyeranti et al, 2010; Adewuyi, et al, 2013). Information has shown that the China's FDI in Nigeria grew from USD75.61 million in 2004 to USD

1.21 billion in 2010. In communication, China Development Bank (CDB) in 2006 supported Reliance Telecommunication (RELTEL) of Nigeria with USD 20 million to enhance it becoming a wireless company and it was facilitated by Huawei Technologies. Again, in 2005, a Chinese Communication Company, ZTE signed deal with NITEL to expand Nigeria's communication network with 10,000 line as a trial in Maiduguri, Borno State. The project was targeted at local telecommunication components and services. China developed and launched the Nigeria first satellite – NIGCOMSAT-1 to expand cellular and internet networks. In 2012, the second satellite was mounted (Nwachukwu, 2017).

**Table 3: Major Chinese Companies in Nigeria**

Company	Active Sector	Engagement in Nigeria
SINOPEC	Oil and Gas	Blocks OML 64,66,29% stake and operating rights to block 2 Nigeria SaoTome Joint DevelopmentZone
CNPC	Oil and Gas	Licenses for OPL 471, 721, 732, 298
SEPCO	Electric Power/Construction	Papalanto Power Plant
CCECC	Construction	Rehabilitation of Alalanto-LagosExpressway, Athletes' village, IkotAkpenden-Okoroette road, LekkiFreeTrade Zone
CNOON	Offshore Oil and Gas	45% Interest in Offshore ExploitationLicenses OML 130
SINOMA	Cement/Engineering/Construction	In collaboration with Nigeria Dangote Group for Cement Production LineEPC project since 2008
HUAWEI	Telecom	Network, Handsets
ZTE	Telecom	CDMA, Handset
CSCEC	Construction	Refinery

**Source: Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) (2020)**

Table 3 is the list of major Chinese companies in Nigeria. The CCECC Company of China built the Abuja All African Game Village with 5000 housing units to accommodate international athletes that took part in the 2000 All-African Games. CCECC equally built the Nigerian Communications Commission building in Abuja which led to Huawei to bring its business into Nigeria. Also, China and Nigeria agreed to revive a 350 moribund Awomama Resort in Oru East Local Government Area of Imo State by Zhuhai Minghong Group Corporation Limited from China. In 2006, the Lekki Free Trade Zone (LFTZ) was established Ibeju-Lekki in Lagos. It has a land mass of about 16500 hectares. It was established on partnership between Lagos state government and Chinese consortium. Its partnership involves China-Africa Lekki Investment Company that owns 60 percent share, Lagos state government (20%), and Lekki Worldwide Investment Ltd, a local private company (20%). Under Chinese ownership are involved; China Railway Construction Corporation, China Civil Engineering Construction Company, Nanjing Jiangning Economic and Technology Development Company, Nanjing Beyond International Investment and Development Company and China Africa Development Fund (CADF) (Taylor, 2007; Momoh, 2009; Nwachukwu, 2017; Adunbi& Stein, 2019).

The Lekki Trade Zone was built to engage in light manufacturing, car assembly, textile production, real estate development and logistics (Lawanson&Agumbade, 2018). By 2018, there were 26 registered companies existing in the zone. The zone has gas power plant that generate its electricity constantly, high security network and low crime rate. In 2015, it generated about 551 employment while in 2018 it increased to 1000 where 86 are Chinese (UNDP, 2015; LFTZ, 2018;Adunbi&Stein, 2019). There was construction of Lekki deep sea port in the Lekki which took off in March, 2018 was completed in 2020. It was worth USD 1.5 billion and 16 metres high (LFTZ, 2018; Vanguard, 2020). In 2016 China signed



USD 1 billion to develop Hi-tech Industrial Park in Ogun – Guandong Zone, (Msimango, 2016). This is located in Igbesa in Ogun state. The aim of this zone is to attract manufacturing companies from China, create employment, transform Nigeria's technology and upgrade local manufacturers. The Chinese companies here engage in the manufacturing of ceramics, furniture, paper and packaging of goods (Adunbi & Stein, 2019).

The Chinese companies also engaged in construction. They have invested in the construction of roads, railways, powers plants, real estates and rehabilitation and maintenance services. Some of the construction companies are CCECC, CGC, SEPCO, etc. In oil and gas, the major Chinese companies that operate with the influence of FOCAC are SINOPEC, CNPC & CNOON that have total investment of USD 713.4 billion. In construction, major Chinese companies are CCECC, CGC, SINOMA and CSCEC with about total investment of USD115.41 billion. CCECC engages in railways, housing, highway and bridges; CGC is in charge of airports and water supply projects like dam; SINOMA is in cement production; while CSCEC is real estate building. Others include; ZTE and Huwaei that invest in telecommunications with total investment of USD 55 billion and SEPCO that takes charge of power sector with USD 40.9 billion investments (Raji & Ogunrinu, 2018). On this, a commissioned study of African Economic Research Consortium cited by Egbula and Zheng (2011) stated that; China has established more than 30 solely owned or joint venture companies in the construction, oil and gas, technology, services and education sectors of the Nigeria.

Between 2000 and 2020, the number of Chinese companies has significantly increased. In 2013, there were 208 registered Chinese companies that focus on oil and gas, construction, telecommunication and manufacturing (Umejei, 2015). In 2019, MOFCOM registered 221 companies while NIPC registered 297 (Adunbi & Stein, 2019) with many of them in oil and gas and engineering, employing more than hundred thousand Nigerians. Appendix 2 shows the list of selected Chinese companies established in Nigeria since 2020. For instance CSCEC in construction employs 121,500, SINOPEC in Oil and Gas employs 373, 375, CNPC also in Oil and Gas employs over 1.67 million, with 80,000 being expatriates, etc (NIPC, 2020). Alone, between 2013 and 2019 over forty new Chinese companies in manufacturing, construction, assembling, hospitality, real estate etc. were established in Nigeria.

### **Infrastructure Development**

The Olusegun Obasanjo regime introduced the oil-for-infrastructure policy where China will provide infrastructure to Nigeria and be paid by Nigeria with oil. Although the regime of Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007 – 2010), reviewed all the oil- for- infrastructure policy to oil for-cash policy, and which did not yield much before his death (Egubula & Zheng, 2011), it laid the foundation huge loans from China for infrastructure. With the quest for oil and gas as the major concern of China in its relations with Nigeria, most of the Chinese loan to Nigeria on infrastructure is exchanged with Nigeria oil. FOCAC and China EXIM Bank loan has been investing in infrastructure in Nigeria ranging from new construction, upgrading and maintenance of existing ones. These infrastructures include roads, railways, power stations and drainages.

In 2006, Nigeria and China negotiated USD 2.6 billion loan for rehabilitation, reconstruction and development of the Nigeria Railway Corporation. These loans always come through China's EXIM Bank. China's CCECC got the award to modernise Nigeria's one-track rail line to a standard gauge rail. In 2017, the EXIM Bank gave Nigeria loan of USD 7.5 billion for the construction of Lagos to Kano and Lagos to Ibadan Rails (Adamu, 2017). These rails have been completed and commissioned in 2021. In 2018, minister of transportation signed a USD 6.68 billion contract with Chinese CCEC for the completion of remaining parts of Lagos-Kano standard gauge railway. Also, Lagos-Calabar railway was signed with USD 11 billion coming from China. The 1400 km rail will link Lagos to Calabar and connect to Port Harcourt, Uyo, and Aba (Wiki, 2018). China has completed the construction of urban light rail transit system in Abuja metropolis in 2018 that is worth USD 500 million financed by China's EXIM

Bank (Raji & Ogunrinu, 2018). Other rail projects in progress include Port Harcourt to Makurdi (463KM), Makurdi to Kuru (1,016 km) with spur lines to Jos and Kafanchan, and Makurdi to Kuru (640 km) contracted in 2011 to China Gezhouba Group Corporation Abuja-Kaduna railway with USD 1.2 billion contracted to CRCC in 2014 and completed. The railway is a section of Lagos-Kano railway which is 186.5km with nine stations (Okolie & Chime, 2013; Chen, 2014; Okonkwo, 2018). These rail projects were attracted under the commitments reached within the FOCAC in various years.

On roads, CCECC built the Etegwe-Tombia road and the Central Senatorial road project in Bayelsa with N1.5 billion. China also constructed a high speed road linking Lagos and Abuja. It also through EXIM bank loan constructed Abuja township road project. In 2018, Nigeria joined Belt and Road Initiative in order to improve its infrastructure for better through Chinese loans from EXIM bank of China. China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC) is expanding the 5.4 km Abuja-Keffi expressway and dualising the Keffi-Akwanga-Lafia-Makurdi road in central Nigeria. The same company is constructing the Trans-Sahara highway in Nigeria. The highway will pass through and connect six African countries of Chad, Nigeria, Algeria, Niger, Mali and Tunisia. The major objective of the highway is to improve development of commercial exchanges through roads and promote regional integration in Africa. While only 15% of the funds came from Nigeria government 85% is from China EXIM bank (Wenfeng, 2019).

Other infrastructural strides courtesy of China through FOCAC are the USD1.5 billion worth Chinese loan airports contract signed by former president Goodluck Jonathan to expand Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt and Kano airports (Adekola, 2013; Msimango, 2015); the NnamdiAzikiwe International Airport runway worth USD 200 million financed by China EXIM Bank has been completed; the USD 2.5 billion worth contract with Shenzhen Energy Group to build a 3000 Mega Watts Power in Nigeria which took off in 2009; the Papalanto power gas turbine plant in Ogun State constructed China SEPCO Company; the 138 MW Power Station in Geregu in Kogi State, Alaoji, Ughelli and Omotosho Power Plants through a 12 years repayable loan facility from China EXIM bank constructed by CMEC. It also developed hydropower plants in Zungeru (Ogunkola, 2008 & Rindap, 2015). China equally agreed building Mambilla hydropower in Plateau state by China CCECC at a cost of USD 5.9 billion loan from China's EXIM Bank and constructing Adamawa state hydropower plant for USD 2.5 billion (Nwachukwu, 2017; Raji & Ogunrinu, 2018). In 2016, China committed to finance solar power in Niger Delta about 300 Mega Watts (Msimango, 2016). The Borno State government in collaboration with China constructed drainage system to wave flood and stop mosquito infestation carried out by Geo Engineering Corporation (GEC) and ECC that are Chinese companies in collaboration with Sky Technical Company Nigeria on amount worth of 6.5 Billion Naira (Nwachukwu, 2017), etc. In 2007 the NIGCOMSTAT-1 was launched at the cost of USD 256 million. Major part of the loan worth USD 200 million was obtained from China EXIM Bank for them (China) to manage it for two years. However, due to some solar problems, the satellite was de-orbited. This led China to construct and mount the second satellite Nig-Comstat-IR from analogue to digital in 2012 at no cost to Nigeria (Rindap, 2015; Nwachukwu, 2017).

Similar huge investments are going on in the agricultural sector. FOCAC helped to secure access to financing aimed at revamping Nigeria's agricultural sector and overall food production. The China-Exim Bank funded the development of sophisticated cassava flour plants in Nigeria (Ubi, 2019). In January 2018, Chinese investors announced huge investment in the energy, agriculture, and infrastructural sectors (Adepegba, 2018). In fact, Nigeria is the second-highest beneficiary of Chinese FDI after South Africa (Egbula & Zheng, 2011).

### **Social Sector**

On the social sector, it is noteworthy that China since 2000 has been investing in Nigeria's medical services through supporting programmes such as rollback malaria and giving out anti-malaria drugs with treated mosquito nets in the year 2002, training medical personnel on the control of illnesses, importing several types of medical machines and other equipment into Nigeria hospitals, N670 million by EXIM bank to train officials and medical personnel from Nigeria to help prevent malaria etc (Ogunkola,

Bankole, & Adewuyi, 2008). As one of the measures reached during the 2006 FOCAC summit to build 30 hospitals in Africa, Nigeria was chosen. Hence, China has wholly constructed Nigeria's Federal Staff Hospital in Abuja by Anhui Construction Engineering Group Company, China with a total finance of USD 12 million (Xinhua, 2013).

Within the framework of the various FOCAC declarations, China has been assisting in training Nigerians in different areas, such as medical personnel, agricultural officials and technicians, awarding scholarship for Nigerians to study in China. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2006 between China and Nigeria Government provided for the training of 50 Nigerian officials and medical personnel on malaria prevention and control with the provision of N670 million. China built a Confucius Institute in Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and University of Lagos where Chinese language is been taught to Nigeria students. The government of China had sponsored some UNIZIK staff and other persons to China to study Mandarin to the levels of Masters' and Doctorate degrees. This will enhance easy teaching of the language (Ogunkola, Bankole & Adewuyi, 2008). With 6800 students, Nigeria is said to be the African country with the largest number of Chinese scholarship. CCECC sent 60 of its Nigerian workers who are university graduates to undergo training in railway technology in China based on the principles of FOCAC (Inegbedion, 2020). In these ways FOCAC has made some impact in the development of human resources in Nigeria.

As noted earlier most Chinese industries established in Nigeria are in the textile industries, foot-wear and rubber production, furniture production, ceramic processing, cement production and household appliances, (Ogunkola, 2008; Okonkwo, 2012 & Rindap, 2015) with little real production of goods and services from raw materials to finished products. In other words, the country's development of critical human resource that would enhance technology transfer has been abysmally low. This is as a result of low local content. Most Chinese companies import all the equipment needed from China including Chinese technicians. The Chinese companies design, select the technology to be used, bring all the equipment from China, install and operate them in most cases (Akongbowa, 2008 & Rindap, 2015). Again, rather than China, it is Nigerian institutions that are challenged to enforce the local content act that was designed to improve substantially, among others, the human resource that will enhance productivity to Nigerian economy.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The significance and the opportunities provided by a collaborative platform such as the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation cannot be overstated. Like other economic power houses of the world, FOCAC, a Chinese initiative has over the last two decades of its existence progressively brought and tied African countries and China together. The interaction between Nigeria and China through the forum has grown to be one of the largest in Africa. Both parties are providing a humongous market structure for each other. Extant literature and empirical evidence show that several Chinese companies are pooling Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) into the Nigerian economy while bilateral trade between the countries have grown overtime. However, as noted by Mthembu-Salter (2009), despite the perceived symbiotic relations that characterize this bilateralism, the complex dynamics underscoring the relationship between Nigeria and China have made scholars to inquire into the mutuality of that relationship. Our findings as to the structure of this relationship from the perspective of Nigeria's socio-economic development, indicates that the obvious benefits accruing to Nigeria stem from Nigeria like many other African countries sustaining the interests and status of China.

Economically, expanded market access is the force driving China-Nigeria engagements. Since the formal establishment of political relations, trade relations between them have grown steadily such that today the trade relationship between Nigeria and China is one of the top in Africa (Ibrahim & Sari, 2019). From historical trading with the West, Nigeria has shifted towards China. This is notwithstanding the fact that the trade balance is to the advantage of China: from a trade deficit of 7375 Billion Naira in 2020 to trade

deficit of USD 1.8 Billion in 2022. Nigeria's exportations have not measured to the volume of Chinese imports into the country. While this trade structure has raised questions, especially with respect to a 'raw materials trap' in the China–Nigeria trade relationships, for the average Nigerian consumer the wide availability of Chinese manufactured products is advantageous and which significantly increased following the FOCAC inauguration in the year 2000. This however is without prejudice to the fact that oftentimes, the large chunks of these products are cheaply-made, low-quality and inferior products (Ogunsanwo, 2008). This not only threatens and displaces Nigerian industries but also effectively displaces workers from such industries, leading to unemployment and thus limiting the capability of persons to afford good and nutritious food (Campbell, 2011). While such allegations of inferior China product in Nigerian market is the failure of the relevant FOCAC institution (General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine) responsible for supervision and inspection of the quality of products before they are shipped to African countries, it is more a consequence of lack of strong institutions that act as checks to what comes into the country. The officers of institutions like customs, SON, NAFDAC in many cases conduct checks on Chinese companies and their imported goods, but they are bribed, hence, they do not enforce the rules and regulations as it affects the Chinese non-compliance to the standards (Oke, Oshinfowokan & Okonoda, 2019).

The development of critical infrastructure is one area where one can point to concrete gains from FOCAC. Most of them are however tied to loans. The ease with which the loans were obtained within the framework of FOCAC engagements has made some persons suspicious of the intents of China. The volume of the loans and till counting has led to fears of Chinese debt trap in Nigeria. These fears may not be unfounded. Nigeria's indebtedness to China stands at USD 3.9 Billion in 2022 which accounts for 83.57 % of Nigeria's bilateral debt (Debt Management Office, 2022). However, the problem is not so much the volume of the loan as the capacity to effectively and efficiently utilise them, and one cannot blame China for that. Weak institutions in Nigeria and ineffective leadership capable of regulating, among other internal factors determine the extent of Chinese relations in Nigeria.

The number of Chinese companies in Nigeria has significantly increased with each employing significant number of Nigerians. This employment generation no doubt has contributed to reducing unemployment in the country. However, China has been accused of not fully engaging local experts (engineers) in its investments in Nigeria. Nigerians are mostly not seen in the managerial positions. Chinese investment companies usually give a close door to Nigerians on technology transfer. They import Chinese experts to carry out sensitive tasks that they do not want Nigerians to learn. Most of the employments are temporal; hence, the workers become unemployed once the contract period is over. They are equally accused of maltreating their Nigerian workers and have very poor working conditions that are against the Nigerian labour laws and laws of International Labour Organization (ILO). They do not respect their Nigeria workers and relieve women of their duties once they become pregnant (Ogunkola et al, 2008; Adewuyi & Oyejide, 2013; Nwachukwu, 2017).

From the above, one can argue that despite all the employment opportunities in Chinese companies in Nigeria, there is no congruence with the number of Nigerians they have fully employed. However, there are rules national and international regulating Chinese relations with Nigeria in all sectors. Nigeria government has been accused of not having proper supervisory and investigatory bodies to monitor the actions of Chinese investments in Nigeria. To make matters worse, Nigeria governments prefer dealing with China than with local entrepreneurs, hence, technology transfer becomes difficult. In the case of loan discussed earlier, the loan collected from China to build infrastructure and other investments are found wanting, and nothing is done about it. In such a case, the blame lies with the victim, Nigeria, for not behaving as equal sovereign entity in relation to China.

One can conclude that while FOCAC has contributed to the socio-economic development of Nigeria, the place of Nigeria on the FOCAC table is paternalistic, as most other African countries. This unequal relationship allows China to draw maximally from the relationship in pursuit of her foreign economic policy agenda. It is also responsible for China doing a lot of illegalities in the country and get away with them, even with Nigerian government protection. Until Nigeria stands up to China as an equal partner and enforce it agreed laws (national and international), the trend of unequal benefit will continue. To this end, Government of Nigeria should strengthen its institutions to the point that it can enforce rules and regulations that will enhance thorough check of Chinese engagement in the country. Although most of Chinese built infrastructure in Nigeria is funded with Chinese loans, it is important to realize that the loans will be paid by Nigeria. There is no way Nigeria will get real value for the loan if it is not involved in the procurement and execution. Accordingly in negotiating the project, China must act as Nigerian partner and as Nigeria's eye. Finally, area that FOCAC is not very active is engagement in SMEs. This should be encouraged through grants and loans without interests from FOCAC platform. This will make them to produce high standard goods and services that will meet international standard. The agricultural sector in which China is investing in Nigeria should be a good starting point. As the second-largest investor in agriculture following the US, China could prove instrumental to Nigeria in terms of assistance for the attainment of economic self-sufficiency and food security (Ubi, 2019). The next FOCAC comes up in 2024. It is strongly recommended that Nigerian government and institutions engage more proactively with Chinese stakeholders in the implementation of the commitments made at FOCAC. Nigeria must recognise that a deeper cooperation with China could play an important part in building a more prosperous country provided she learns to align FOCAC with her own development strategies.

#### **Appendix 1: Implementation Institutions of FOCAC**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Executive Body</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT)	Department of International Liaison of the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen China-Africa entrepreneurial cooperation</li> </ul>
National Development and Reform Commission	Foreign Investment Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishing inter-governmental investment cooperation institutions</li> <li>promote economic and technological relation within FOCAC</li> </ul>
Ministry of Industry and Information	Ministry of Industry and Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responsible for cooperation in information technology.</li> <li>Encourage cooperation between Chinese and African small and medium enterprises</li> </ul>
General Administration of Custom		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance the development of China-African trade</li> <li>Decide on preferential tariff and tariff exemption policy as it concerns less developed countries in Africa.</li> </ul>
State Administration of Taxation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign agreement on taxation to avoid double taxation</li> </ul>
Ministry of Education	Department of International Cooperation and Exchange	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Control cooperation in education,</li> <li>Scholarships for African students &amp;</li> </ul>

Ministry of Science		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional training and human resource development</li> <li>• Initiate China- Africa science and technology partnership plan and conferences</li> </ul>
Ministry of Agriculture		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage the agricultural cooperation between China and Africa</li> <li>• Promote the development of agricultural sector and food security</li> </ul>
Ministry of Health	Department of International Cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take care of health and medical assistance to Africa</li> </ul>
Ministry of Culture		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance cultural and communication cooperation</li> <li>• Organize artistic troupes to Africa and China.</li> </ul>
General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervision and inspection of the quality of products before they are shipped to African countries.</li> <li>• Conduct quarantine training for African officials.</li> </ul>
People's Bank of China		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give financial support to the small and medium enterprises</li> <li>• Conduct seminars on economic and development strategies and</li> </ul>
Export-Import Bank of China (Ex-Im Bank)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports imports, exports, construction of foreign projects, foreign investment, loans</li> <li>• Promote social and economic development of African states</li> </ul>
China-Africa Development Fund		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund Chinese and African enterprises</li> <li>• Implement China-Africa economic and trade policies.</li> </ul>
Bank of China (China owned commercial bank)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support China's investments in Africa</li> <li>• Promotes cooperation with Africa's local banks.</li> </ul>
China Development Bank		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue special loan to the small and medium enterprises in Africa</li> </ul>
Ministry of Environmental Protection		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In charge of environmental protection issues</li> </ul>
Ministry of Land and Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote cooperation on geological issues, mineral resources and energy</li> </ul>

China's National Tourism Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In charge of tourism promotion and signing of tourism agreements between China and Africa</li> </ul>
Ministry of Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take charge of shipping and aviation industries in the forum</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Anshan, Haifang, Huaqiong, Aiping&Wenping (2012).

### **Appendix 2 Other Chinese Companies Registered in Nigeria**

<b>Companies</b>	<b>Year Started</b>	<b>Type of Operation</b>
Wanhao Doors	2013	Manufacturing
MC Lighting	2013	Assembling
H & Y FZE	2013	Trading(human wigs)
Sinotruck FZE	2013	Assembling (trucks)
Loving Homes	2013	Assembling(furniture)
Crown Nature	2013	Manufacturing(clothing)
CCECC	2010	Construction
CRCC	2010	Construction
Rainfield	2013	Manufacturing
Candel	2013	Manufacturing(pesticides)
Cosmos	2013	Manufacturing
Rungas	2014	Manufacturing
Greengrapes	2014	Manufacturing
KKL	2012	Manufacturing
Dabu Pump	2013	Assembling
Hannover Boton	2015	Assembling(sockets and switches)
Ruyat Oil	2015	Manufacturing
New Energy	2015	Manufacturing
St' Nicholas	2014	Services (Hospital)
Engee Pet	2014	Manufacturing
Zhi Jiang Nigeria	2019	Construction
Datang International	2019	Furniture
Huachang Steel and Eng.	2019	Steel Structure
ZCC Construction	2019	Construction
Bollore Transp. & Logistics.	2019	Telecomm. Prod
Golden Dream	2019	Baby Diapers and Insect.
Aslan Nigeria	2019	Furniture
Asia Africa International	2019	Assembling ( trucks)
Yulong Steel Pipe	2019	Steel Pipes
Hidier Power	2019	Assembling Generators
Coral Beach	2019	Real Estate
RWE Africa LPA	2019	LPG Container
CNSS	2019	Assembling (mobile phones)
Jiangsu Geology and Eng.	2019	Construction
PCCM	2019	Spraying accessories
Longrich	2019	Cosmetics
Sunshine Commodity	2019	House wares
Henan	2019	Building Materials

Source: Compiled from UNDP, 2015; LFTZ, 2018; Adunbi& Stein, 2019.

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