Fletcher D-Prize

Governance and Infrastructure Challenges
2013-2014

The Problem

A country that suffers from poor governance and/or severe infrastructure problems has essentially zero chance to develop effectively. Though traditionally a role solely for the public sector, fixing infrastructure and fighting corruption are missions increasingly and successfully taken up by NGOs and social entrepreneurs. There are two infrastructure and governance challenges:

1. Interventions that Improve Provision of Public Services and Rate Public Officials

   The provision of public services in less-developed countries is rife with problems such as corruption, and staff absenteeism. For example, Sub-Saharan African countries average a 2012 Corruption Index score of 33, whereas the 10 least corrupt countries in the world averaged over 87.\(^1\) Corruption at the local level is particularly problematic in these countries and directly harm the poor.

   Over the past decades, several countries have successfully increased transparency and accountability in government offices. Organizations like I Paid a Bribe create an online platform where people can share stories of corrupt officials and public offices at the local level. Increased transparency enables greater accountability.

   **THE CHALLENGE:** We will award $10,000-$20,000 to a social entrepreneur who can improve transparency of the implementation of public services, or also report data on the performance of public elected officials. The three month pilot should create a proof of concept for just one area of corruption in a public department, with data that is actually viewed by at least 10,000 people, and be able to scale to a country-wide program within two years, with data that is actually viewed by at least one million individuals. A winning idea should also consider how the data will be used, and will have a clear vision for how data will drive decisions.

   D-Prize is particularly interested in corruption related to the provision of quality of elected officials (e.g. rating public officials), or key infrastructure such as the building of roads (e.g. a road monitoring system), police services (e.g. police corruption report), justice services (e.g. corrupt judge reporting), education (e.g. reporting of teacher attendance), health (e.g. reporting of doctor and nurse job attendance), etc.

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\(^1\) [http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results](http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results)
2. Improve Road Infrastructure with Effective Mapping & Monitoring

Transportation infrastructure is a necessary component of development, yet transport costs are especially high in sub-Saharan Africa.\(^2\) Transportation on dirt roads can be two times more costly than on paved roads, and only 19\% of roads in sub-Saharan Africa are paved. This impacts everything from the price of goods being exported to local food prices. Poor transport infrastructure also makes intra-continental trade far more expensive – the cost of trucking a 24 ton container from Maputo to northern Mozambique is nearly 2.5 times higher than that of shipping the same container from Dubai.\(^3\)

Roads are a proven building block of economic growth, enabling trade and human movement to occur within countries and across countries. Over the past 50 years, World Bank infrastructure projects have generated a higher social rate of return in transport than in any other sector.\(^4\) Paved roads are a proven solution, particularly in Africa, where road travel is the dominant mode of transportation.

**THE CHALLENGE:** We will award $10,000-$20,000 to a social entrepreneur who can create a simple road-construction mapping and monitoring system. The three-month pilot should establish proof-of-concept protocols for just a few roads, but be scalable to a whole country within two years – and should result in at least a 25\% improvement in miles of high-quality road completion within the entire country.

Every year, tens of billions of dollars are spent by developing world governments and international donors on road-building. Lack of transparency about how funds are used leads to the misuse and disappearance of resources, resulting in extremely low road completion rates. Often times, the companies responsible for the road construction cut corners in order to lower costs and boost profits. This results in poor road construction quality and necessitates frequent rebuilding, sometimes after as little as one year.

The monitoring system would use a small number of local engineers to a) establish target road completion calendars, b) potentially improve the procurement process, c) verify the existence and quality of road construction, and d) correct problems when discovered.

**Ready to Apply?**

Find instructions at: [http://fletcher.tufts.edu/D-Prize/Apply/Application](http://fletcher.tufts.edu/D-Prize/Apply/Application)

Email questions to Nicholas Fusso at nicholas@d-prize.org.

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\(^4\) Ibid.