

Table 12.3		Selected Economic Indicators, 1980–2009	
Years	Real GDP (in billions)	GDP % Growth	Inflation Rate % (CPI)
1980	64.2	4.2	9.97
1985	28.4	9.7	7.44
1990	28.5	8.2	7.36
1993	21.4	2.2	57.17
1995	28.1	2.5	72.84
1997	36.2	2.7	8.53
1999	34.8	1.1	6.62
2000	46	5.4	6.93
2001	48	3.1	18.87
2002	59.1	1.55	12.88
2003	67.7	10.3	14.03
2005	112.2	5.4	17.86
2007	165.9	6.45	5.38
2008	207.1	6	11.58
2009	173	5.6	11.54

Source: World Bank. Recent data compiled by Evan Litwin and Mukesh Baral.

Perhaps Obasanjo’s greatest economic achievement was paying off most of Nigeria’s heavy foreign debt (see Table 12.4). On taking office in 1999 he promptly undertook numerous visits to Europe, Asia, and the United States to urge the governments of those countries to forgive most of Nigeria’s obligations. After persistent international lobbying, along with progress on economic reforms during Obasanjo’s second term, Nigeria eventually secured an agreement for a substantial reduction of the country’s debt. In June 2005, the Paris Club of official creditors approved a package of debt repayments, repurchases, and write-offs that reduced Nigeria’s external debt by 90 percent.

President Yar’Adua vowed to continue President Obasanjo’s reforms, promising to declare a “state of emergency” on the power sector in particular, in order to address this most basic infrastructural need. He also pledged to be the “rule of law” president to crack down on corruption. Yet neither of these goals was achieved, and the president also hobbled the EFCC’s anticorruption efforts and relied on a number of corrupt figures to run his government, including one under investigation for money-laundering in Britain. President Jonathan removed some of these figures on taking office, but others remain in his administration as well.

Social Welfare The continued decline in Nigeria's economic performance since the early 1980s has caused great suffering. Since 1986, there has been a marked deterioration in the quantity and quality of social services, complicated by a marked decline in household incomes (see Table 12.5). The SAP program and subsequent austerity measures emphasizing the reduction of state expenditures have forced cutbacks in spending on social welfare.

Budgetary austerity and economic stagnation have hurt vulnerable groups such as the urban and rural poor, women, the young, and the elderly. Life expectancy is barely above forty years, and infant mortality is estimated at more than 80 deaths per 1,000 live births. Nigeria's provision of basic education is also inadequate. Moreover, Nigeria has failed to develop a national social security system, with much of the gap filled by family-based networks of mutual aid. Moreover, most Nigerians do not have access to formal sector jobs, and roughly 70 percent of the population must live on less than a dollar per day, while 92 percent of Nigerians live on less than two dollars per day.

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Table 12.4 Nigeria's Total External Debt (millions of US\$ at current prices and exchange rates)

Years	Total Debt/GDP	Total Debt Service/ Exports
1977	8.73	1.04
1986	109.9	38.03
1996	88.97	14.79
1997	78.54	8.71
1999	83.76	7.54
2000	68.18	8.71
2001	64.67	12.9
2002	51.55	8.13
2003	51.16	5.96
2007	5.2	1.79
2008	5.55	0.67
2009	4.53	0.81

Source: World Bank. Recent data compiled by Evan Litwin and Mukesh Baral.

Table 12.5 Index of Real Household Incomes of Key Groups 1980/81–1986/87, 1996, 2001 (Rural self-employed in 1980/81 = 100)

	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87	1996*	2001*
Rural self-employed	100	103	95	86	73	74	65	27	32
Rural wage earners	178	160	147	135	92	95	84	48	57
All rural households	105	107	99	89	74	84	74	28	33
Urban self-employed	150	124	106	94	69	69	61	41	48
Urban wage earners	203	177	164	140	101	101	90	55	65
All urban households	166	142	129	109	80	80	71	45	53

*Estimated, based on 1980/81 figures adjusted for a 73 percent drop in per capita GDP from 1980 to 1996, and an 18 percent increase in per capita GDP from 1996 to 2001. The Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) lists annual household incomes for 1996 as \$75 (N 6,349) for urban households and \$57 (N 4,820) for rural households, suggesting that the gap between urban and rural households is actually 19 percent closer than our estimate.

Sources: National Integrated Survey of Households (NISH), Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) consumer price data, and World Bank estimates. As found in Paul Collier, *An Analysis of the Nigerian Labour Market*, Development Economics Department Discussion Paper (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1986). From Tom Forrest, *Politics and Economic Development in Nigeria* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 214. 1996 data from FOS *Annual Abstract of Statistics: 1997 Edition*, p. 80.

Health care and other social services—water, education, food, and shelter—remain woefully inadequate. In addition to the needless loss of countless lives to preventable and curable maladies, the nation stands on the verge of an AIDS epidemic of catastrophic proportions. The government has made AIDS a secondary priority, leaving much of the initiative to a small group of courageous but underfunded nongovernmental organizations. The Obasanjo administration began providing subsidized anti-retroviral medications in 2002, but the UN estimates that these are reaching only about 17 percent of Nigerians who are HIV positive.

Society and Economy

Because the central government controls access to most resources and economic opportunities, the state has become the major focus for competition among ethnic, regional, religious, and class groups.¹¹

Ethnic and Religious Cleavages

Nigeria's ethnic relations have generated tensions that sap the country's economy of much-needed vitality.¹² The dominance of the Hausa-Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba in the country's national life, and the conflicts among political elites from these groups, distort economic affairs.

Government ineptitude (or outright manipulation), and growing Islamic and Christian assertion, have also heightened conflicts.¹³ Christians have perceived past northern-dominated governments as being pro-Muslim in their management and distribution of scarce resources, some of which jeopardized the secular nature of the state. These fears have increased since 1999, when several northern states instituted expanded versions of the Islamic legal code, the *shari'a*. For their part, Muslims feared that President Obasanjo, a born-again Christian, tilted the balance of power and thus the distribution of economic benefits against the north, and such fears are again on the rise under President Jonathan, also a Christian. Economic decline has contributed to the rise of Christian and Muslim fundamentalisms, which have spread among unemployed youths and others in a society suffering under economic collapse. Disputes have sometimes escalated into violence.

Since the return of democracy in 1999, many ethnic-based and religious movements have taken advantage of renewed political freedoms to organize to press the government to address their grievances. Some mobilization has been peaceful, but many armed groups have also formed, at times with the encouragement or complicity of the mainstream political movements. In the oil-producing regions, these militias live off the pay they receive in providing security for oil "bunkering": illegal criminal networks (often including individuals in the oil industry, political leaders, and the military) that tap into pipelines, siphon oil, and resell it on the black market.

Youths from the Niger Delta minorities, primarily the Ijaw, have occupied Shell and Chevron facilities on several occasions to protest their economic marginalization. One spectacular incident on an offshore oil platform in 2002 saw a group of local women stage a peaceful takeover using a traditional form of protest: disrobing in order to shame the oil companies and local authorities. Some of these protests have ended peacefully, but since 2003 the number and firepower of the militias have increased, making the region increasingly militarized. The government has periodically responded to these incidents and other disturbances with excessive force.

In the Niger Delta, the struggle of the minority communities with the federal government and multinational oil corporations has been complicated by clashes among the minority groups themselves over control of land and access to government rents. Ethnic-based mobilization, including the activities of militias and vigilante groups, has increased across the country since the transition to civilian rule. Political leaders have sometimes built alliances with such groups and are increasingly using them to harass and even kill political opponents. These practices have reached a dangerous threshold in the Niger Delta, where an ethnic militia attacked a state capital in late 2004 and forced the flight of the governor. Since that time, a host of new militant groups have arisen, engaging in oil bunkering and kidnapping to make money, and occasionally attacking oil installations. The largest such group, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), has repeatedly threatened to drive out foreign oil interests if their demands for a greater share of oil revenues are not met. The activities of MEND and other militants have forced more than a quarter of Nigeria's onshore oil operations to shut down through persistent attacks on offshore and onshore installations. President Yar'Adua initiated an amnesty program for the militias in 2009 that lowered the number of attacks, but his sickness and death limited the implementation of the program.

These divisive practices overshadow certain positive aspects of sectional identities. For example, associations based on ethnic and religious affinities often serve as vehicles for mobilizing savings, investment, and production, such as informal credit associations. Sectional groups such as the Igbo *Ohaneze* or the Yoruba *Afenifere* have also advocated more equitable federalism and continued democratic development.

Gender Differences

Although the Land Use Act of 1978 stated that all land in Nigeria is ultimately owned by the government, land tenure in Nigeria is still governed by traditional practice, which is largely patriarchal. Despite the fact that women, especially from the south and Middle Belt areas, have traditionally dominated agricultural production and form the bulk of agricultural producers, they are generally prevented from owning land, which remains the major means of production. Trading, in which women feature prominently, is also controlled in many areas by traditional chiefs and local government councilors, who are overwhelmingly male.

Women's associations in the past tended to be elitist, urban based, and mainly concerned with issues of trade, children, household welfare, and religion.¹⁴ The few that did have a more political orientation have been largely token appendages of the male-dominated political parties or instruments of the government. Women are grossly underrepresented at all levels of the governmental system; only 8 (of 469) national legislators are women.

Reflecting the historical economic and educational advantages of the south, women's interest organizations sprouted in southern Nigeria earlier than in the north. Although these groups initially focused generally on nonpolitical issues surrounding women's health and children's welfare, they are now also focusing on explicit political goals, such as getting more women into government and increasing funds available for education.

Northern groups also showed tremendous creativity in using Islam to support their activities, which was important considering that tenets of the religion have been regularly used by Nigerian men to justify women's subordinate status. Women's groups in general have been more dynamic in developing income-generating projects to make their organizations and constituents increasingly self-reliant, compared with male-dominated NGOs that depend heavily on foreign or government funding.

Nigeria in the Global Economy

The Nigerian state has remained comparatively weak and dependent on Western industrial and financial interests. The country's acute debt burden was dramatically reduced in 2005, but Nigeria is still reliant on the developed industrial economies for finance capital, production and information technologies, basic consumer items, and raw materials. Mismanagement, endemic corruption, and the vagaries of international commodity markets have squandered the country's economic potential. Apart from its standing in global energy markets, Nigeria has receded to the margins of the global economy.

Nigeria and the Regional Political Economy

Nigeria's aspirations to be a regional leader in Africa have not been dampened by its declining position in the global political economy. Nigeria was a major actor in the formation of the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)** in 1975 and has carried a disproportionately high financial and administrative burden for keeping the organization afloat. Under President Obasanjo's initiative, ECOWAS voted in 2000 to create a parliament and a single currency for the region as the next step toward a European Union-style integration. The lackluster results of past integration efforts do not bode well for success.

Nigeria was also the largest contributor of troops to the West African peacekeeping force, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (known as ECOMOG). Under Nigerian direction, the ECOWAS countries dispatched ECOMOG troops to Liberia from 1990 to 1997 to restore order and prevent the Liberian civil war from destabilizing the sub-region. Ironically, despite military dictatorship at home, Nigerian ECOMOG forces invaded Sierra Leone in May 1997 to restore its democratically elected government. Nigeria under President Obasanjo also sought to mediate crises in Guinea-Bissau, Togo, and Ivory Coast, and in Darfur (Sudan), Congo, and Zimbabwe outside the ECOWAS region.

Because it is the largest economy in the West African subregion, Nigeria has at times been a magnet for immigration. At the height of the 1970s oil boom, many West African laborers, most of them Ghanaians, migrated to Nigeria in search of employment. When the oil-based expansion ceased and jobs became scarce, Nigeria sought to protect its own workers by expelling hundreds of thousands of West Africans in 1983 and 1985. Many Nigerians now flock to the hot Ghanaian economy for work and to countries across the continent, including far-off South Africa.

Nigeria and the Political Economy of the West

Shortly after the 1973–1974 global oil crisis, Nigeria's oil wealth was perceived by the Nigerian elite as a source of strength. In 1975, for example, Nigeria was selling about 30 percent of its oil to the United States and was able to apply pressure to the administration of President Gerald Ford in a dispute over Angola.¹⁵ By the 1980s, however, the global oil market had become a buyers' market. Thereafter, it became clear that Nigeria's dependence on oil was a source of weakness, not strength. The depth of Nigeria's international weakness became more evident with the adoption of structural adjustment in the mid-1980s. Given the enormity of the economic crisis, Nigeria was compelled to seek IMF/World Bank support to improve its balance of payments and facilitate economic restructuring and debt rescheduling, and it has had to accept direction from foreign agencies ever since.

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

The West African regional organization, including 15 member countries from Cape Verde in the west to Nigeria and Niger in the east.

THE U.S. CONNECTION



Much in Common

Since the 1970s Nigeria has had a strong relationship with the United States. Most of Nigeria's military governments during the Cold War aligned their foreign policies with the West, although they differed over South Africa, with Nigeria taking a strong anti-apartheid stance. Beginning with the Second Republic constitution, Nigeria closely modeled its presidential and federal systems on those of the United States, and Nigerian courts will occasionally turn to American jurisprudence for legal precedents. Since President Carter's visit to Nigeria in 1978, Washington has supported Nigerian efforts to liberalize and deepen democratic development.

Overwhelmingly, however, the key issue in U.S.-Nigerian relations has been oil. The United States buys roughly 8 percent of its petroleum imports from Nigeria, and has repeatedly pushed Abuja to increase production of its "sweet crude," the especially high quality oil Nigeria offers. Nigeria also discovered massive gas reserves off its coasts that it has begun to export in recent years as well. Nigeria's military governments used America's oil addiction to force it to moderate its pressure on Abuja to democratize. The civilian governments

since 1999 have also largely ignored U.S. complaints over declining election quality, and the Yar'Adua administration cultivated ties with China after the United States suspended high-level diplomatic relations over the farcical 2007 elections. Shortly thereafter, the Bush administration welcomed President Yar'Adua to Washington. President Jonathan, however, came to office in part with the help of U.S. pressure, and he has cultivated close ties with the Obama administration.

Nigeria and the United States also share strong societal ties. Since the 1960s, Christian Nigerians have been avid consumers of American Pentecostalism, sprouting thousands of new churches over the years and infusing them with a uniquely Nigerian flair, such that many of these churches are now opening satellites in the United States and around the globe. In addition, a growing number of Nigerians have migrated to the United States, such that nearly 300,000 are now U.S. citizens. Since 2000, this diaspora has begun to exercise some influence over U.S. policy, and they have also used their financial resources to support development projects and exercise political influence in Nigeria.

In addition to its dependence on oil revenues, Nigeria remains dependent on Western and Chinese technology and expertise for exploration and extraction of its oil reserves. The United States is now turning toward Nigerian oil to diversify its supply base beyond the Middle East, which should improve Nigerian government revenues but may not significantly alter the overall dependency of the economy.

Nigeria remains a highly visible and influential member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), selling on average more than 2 million barrels of petroleum daily (although militancy in the Niger Delta has reduced this figure) and contributing approximately 8 percent of U.S. oil imports. Nigeria's oil wealth and its great economic potential have tempered the resolve of Western nations in combating human rights and other abuses, notably during the Abacha period from 1993 to 1998.

The West has been supportive of the return of Nigerian leadership across Africa. Together with President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, President Obasanjo was instrumental in convincing the continent's leaders to transform the OAU into the African Union (AU) in 2002, modeled on European-style processes to promote greater political integration across the continent. The AU's first item of business was to endorse the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), through which African governments committed to good governance and economic reforms in return for access to Western markets and financial assistance. NEPAD remains a central element in Nigerian and South African foreign policy.

Despite its considerable geopolitical resources, Nigeria's economic development profile remains harsh. Nigeria is listed very close to the bottom of the UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI), 142 out of 174, behind India and Haiti. Gross national product (GNP) per capita in 2001 was \$300, less than 2 percent of which was recorded as public expenditures on education and health, respectively.

Summary

Nigeria built an interventionist state on the massive earnings from the 1970s oil boom. Instead of delivering prosperity, however, the oil revenues have been mismanaged and fostered corruption. Repeated development plans have been promised over the years but have been poorly implemented. Nevertheless, Nigeria remains an important oil producer, which gives it some voice in regional and global politics. Yet the failure to deliver broad-based economic growth at home has raised ethnic and religious divisions, particularly in the oil-producing regions of the Niger Delta.

SECTION 3

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY-MAKING

Focus Questions

What is the “National Question,” and how have Nigerians tried to resolve it?

What is prebendalism, and how has the “Big Man” problem played out in the civilian governments since 1999?

What have been some of the challenges and/or benefits for Nigeria in having parallel *shari'a* courts alongside the secular legal system?

The rough edges of what has been called the “unfinished Nigerian state” appears in its institutions of governance and policy-making. What seemed like an endless political transition under the Babangida and Abacha regimes was rushed through in less than a year by their successor, Abdulsalami Abubakar. President Obasanjo thus inherited a government that was close to collapse, riddled with corruption, unable to perform basic tasks of governance, yet facing high public expectations to deliver rapid progress. He delivered some important economic reforms over his eight years as president, but he gradually succumbed to the “Big Man,” prebendal style of corrupt clientelist networks, and tried to change the Constitution to allow himself to stay in power indefinitely. The Nigerian public, however, rejected his ambitions, providing his political opponents, civil society, and the media a strong base to mobilize and force him to leave in May 2007. President Yar'Adua, like Obasanjo, came to power without a client network of his own and immediately set out to build one. President Jonathan also took office without much of a network, and quickly turned Nigeria's massive state resources to the task of getting himself elected in 2011.

Organization of the State

The National Question and Constitutional Governance

After almost five decades as an independent nation, Nigerians are still debating the basic political structures of the country, who will rule and how, and in some quarters, if the country should even remain united. They call this fundamental governance issue the “national question.” How is the country to be governed given its great diversity? What should be the institutional form of the government? How can all sections of the country work in harmony and none feel excluded or dominated by the others? Without clear answers to these questions, Nigeria has stumbled along since independence between democracy and constitutionalism, on the one hand, and military domination on the other. The May 2006 rejection of President Obasanjo's third-term gambit, and the fact that most elites insisted on a constitutional solution to the crisis over President Yar'Adua's incapacitation and death suggest, however, that Nigeria may have turned a corner in terms of a growing respect for constitutional rule.

Since the amalgamation of northern and southern Nigeria in 1914, the country has drafted nine constitutions—five under colonial rule and four thereafter. Nigerian constitutions have suffered under little respect from military or civilian leaders, who have often been unwilling to observe legal and constitutional constraints. Governance and policy-making in this context are conducted within fragile institutions that are swamped by personal and partisan considerations.

Federalism and State Structure

Nigeria's First Republic experimented with the British-style parliamentary model, in which the prime minister is chosen directly from the legislative ranks. The First Republic was relatively decentralized, with more political power vested in the three federal units: the Northern, Eastern, and Western Regions. The Second Republic constitution, which went into effect in 1979, adopted a U.S.-style presidential model. The Fourth Republic continues with the presidential model: A system with a strong executive who is constrained by a system of formal checks and balances on authority, a bicameral legislature, and an independent judicial branch charged with matters of law and constitutional interpretation.¹⁶

Like the United States, Nigeria also features a federal structure comprising 36 states and 774 local government units empowered, within limits, to enact their own laws. The judicial system also resembles that of the United States, with a network of local and appellate courts as well as state-level courts. Unlike the United States, however, Nigeria also allows customary law courts to function alongside the secular system, including *shari'a* courts in Muslim communities.

In practice, however, military rule left an authoritarian political culture that remains despite the formal democratization of state structures. The control of oil wealth by this centralized command structure has further cemented economic and political control in the center, resulting in a skewed federalism in which states enjoy nominal powers, but in reality are highly dependent on the central government. Another aspect of federalism in Nigeria has been the effort to arrive at some form of elite accommodation to moderate some of the more divisive aspects of cultural pluralism. The domination of federal governments from 1960 to 1999 by northern Nigerians led southern Nigerians, particularly Yoruba leaders, to demand a “power shift” of the presidency to the south in 1999, leading to the election of Olusegun Obasanjo. Northerners then demanded a shift back to the north in 2007, propelling Umaru Yar'Adua, a northern governor, into office. This ethnic rotation principle is not formally found in the constitution, but all the major political parties recognize it as a necessity. Moreover, the parties practice ethnic rotation at the state and local levels as well.¹⁷

A central issue in both the 2009–2010 crisis over Yar'Adua's incapacitation and the 2011 election of President Jonathan, a southerner from the Niger Delta, is that Jonathan's ascension has broken the ethnic rotation principle. Northern factions argued that under this rule the presidency should have stayed with them for two terms until 2015. These factions were unable, however, to unite and block Jonathan from winning the PDP nomination and election in 2011. Consequently, northern groups are certain to demand rotation of the presidency back to their region in 2015.

This informal norm of ethnic rotation has built upon an older, formal practice, known as “federal character.” Federal character calls for ethnic quotas in government hiring practices, and was introduced into the public service and formally codified by the 1979 constitution, although the armed forces have long observed such quotas. Although this principle is regarded by some as a positive Nigerian contribution to governance in a plural society, its application has also intensified some intergroup

rivalries and conflicts. In recent years, there have been calls for the use of merit over federal character in awarding public sector jobs. The establishment of the ethnic rotation principle—a “power shift”—by the end of the Obasanjo years, however, was a tremendously positive development in moving toward addressing the national question. Some critics have argued that a power shift is antidemocratic, meaning that it is antimajoritarian and encourages elite bargaining at the expense of public votes. Yet it also encourages elite accommodation and introduces greater predictability in the system, reducing the perception that control of political offices is a zero-sum game. President Jonathan’s breaking of this principle through his election in 2011 raised significant tensions in the PDP primaries and was partly responsible for the election riots that killed 800 people, but has yet to produce a major north-south clash, as feared. Nonetheless, northern factions are certain to demand that principle dictates that it is their turn to succeed the southerner Jonathan when his term in office ends.

The Executive

Evolution of the Executive Function

In the Second Republic, the earlier parliamentary system was replaced by a presidential system based on the American model. The president was chosen directly by the electorate rather than indirectly by the legislature, based on a widespread belief that a popularly elected president could serve as a symbol of national unity. The framers of the Second Republic’s constitution believed that placing the election of the president in the hands of the electorate, rather than parliament, would mitigate a lack of party discipline in the selection of the executive. The Second Republic’s experiment with presidentialism lasted for only four years before it was ended by the 1983 coup.

The Executive under Military Rule

The leadership styles among Nigeria’s seven military heads of state varied widely but, in general, under military administrations, the president, or head of state, made appointments to most senior government positions.¹⁸ Since the legislature was disbanded, major executive decisions (typically passed by decrees) were subject to the approval of a ruling council of high-level military officers, although by Abacha’s time this council had become largely a rubber stamp for the ruler. Although the military became increasingly repressive, nearly all the juntas spoke of making a transition to democracy in order to gain legitimacy.

Given the highly personalistic character of military politics, patron-client relationships flourished. The military pattern of organization, with one strongman at the top and echelons of subordinates below in a pyramid of top-down relationships, spread throughout Nigerian political culture and subcultures.

Having been politicized and divided by these patron-client relationships, the military was structurally weakened during its long years in power. Under Babangida and Abacha, the military was transformed from an instrument that guarantees national defense and security into a predatory apparatus, one more powerful than political parties. Over four decades after the first military coup of January 1966, most Nigerians now believe that the country’s political and economic development has been profoundly hampered by military domination and misrule. While there have been reports of coup plots on a number of occasions during the Fourth Republic, the military establishment has so far remained loyal and generally within its constitutional security roles.

President Obasanjo paid close attention to keeping the military professionally oriented—and in the barracks. U.S. military advisers and technical assistance were invited to redirect the Nigerian military toward regional peacekeeping expertise—and to keep them busy outside of politics. So far, this strategy has been effective, but the military remains a threat. Junior and senior officers threatened coups over the farcical 2007 elections and the refusal of Yar'Adua's advisors to hand power to Jonathan in 2009–2010. So long as civilian leaders continue the corrupt politics of their patronage networks and fail to deliver broad-based development, the military will loom in the background as a possible alternative to civilian rule.

The Fourth Republic: The Obasanjo, Yar'Adua, and Jonathan Administrations

President Obasanjo's first six months in office were marked by initiatives to reform the armed forces, revitalize the economy, address public welfare, and improve standards of governance. The president sought to root out misconduct and inefficiency in the public sector. Soon, however, familiar patterns of clientelism and financial kickbacks for oil licenses resurfaced. Obasanjo proposed an anticorruption commission with sweeping statutory powers to investigate and prosecute public officials. Delayed in its establishment, the commission had little impact. A second anticorruption commission, however, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), has since its founding in 2003 had an impressive record of indictments.

Nonetheless, a major impediment to reform came from the ruling party itself. The PDP is run by a collection of powerful politicians from Nigeria's early governments, many of whom grew rich from their complicity with the Babangida and Abacha juntas. With a difficult reelection bid in 2003, these fixers again delivered a victory for the president and the PDP, accomplished through massive fraud in a third of Nigeria's states and questionable practices in at least another third of the country.

After the 2003 election President Obasanjo appeared convinced that he needed to build his own prebendal network if he were to govern and if he were to pursue his ambition to stay in office past two terms. He and his supporters soon moved to gain control of the PDP, offering benefits for loyalty, and removing allies of rival Big Men in the party. The president then signaled the EFCC to investigate his rivals, arresting some and forcing others to support his plans. When Obasanjo's third-term amendment was quashed by the National Assembly in May 2006, the president then had himself named "Chairman for Life" of the PDP, with the power to eject anyone from the party, even his successor as president.

Not surprisingly, President Yar'Adua spent his first year in office trying to gain control over the PDP. He halted many of the last-minute privatizations of state assets into the hands of Obasanjo loyalists and replaced the chairman of the EFCC. The Yar'Adua administration also did nothing to prevent the National Assembly from instigating a series of investigations into the Obasanjo administration that unearthed massive corruption, including the discovery that more than \$10 billion had been sunk into the power sector that had produced no results. President Yar'Adua also assisted many of the PDP governors—twelve of whom had their elections overturned by the courts—to retain their seats in rerun elections. By 2009, Yar'Adua had greater control of the PDP, and Obasanjo was on the decline. Yar'Adua's incapacitation later that year and death thereafter, however, reversed Obasanjo's fortunes; and he threw his support behind Goodluck Jonathan at the key moment when Yar'Adua loyalists were preventing him from becoming acting president.

With Obasanjo's support, Jonathan moved to build other alliances to gain influence in the PDP, particularly with the powerful state governors. Their support,