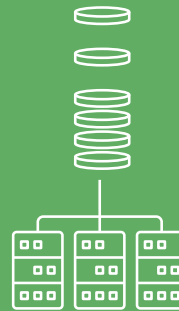


Scenario 3 One Chance

Wealth at the cost of
independence and privacy

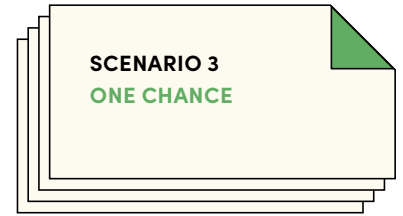


Global tech services
thrive in Nigeria



Nigerian's data
is monetized

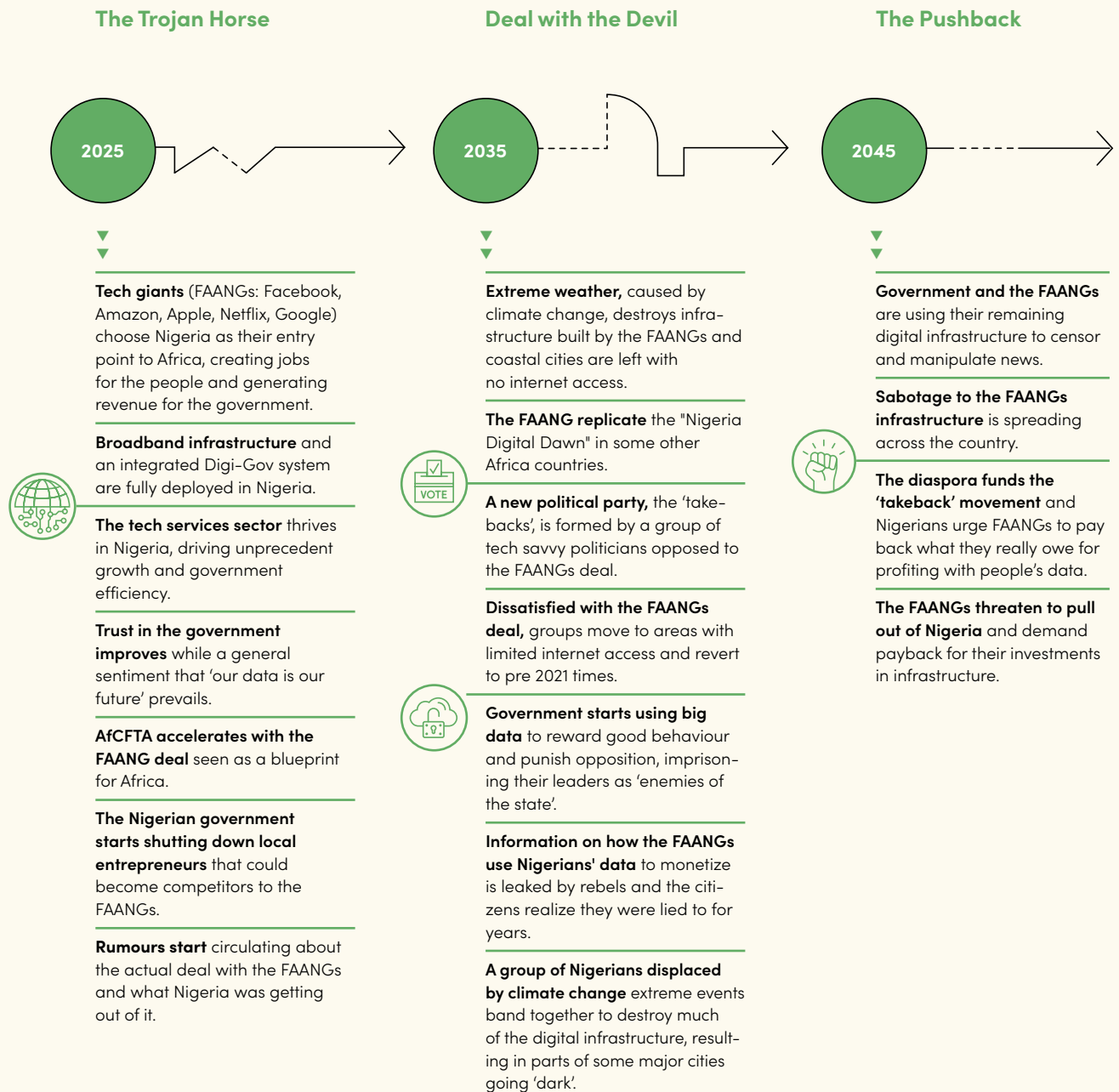
Imagine Futures: Four Scenarios For Nigeria
is a section from the main report **Imagine Nigeria**



→ **In this scenario, Nigeria chooses the easy options, and is seduced and hijacked by tech giants.**

Therefore, the name “One Chance,” a Nigerian expression that refers to the practice of being hoodwinked or tricked. Warnings are usually given to Nigerians not to enter “One Chance” when on a journey or in a business relationship.

Timeline One Chance



2025

The Trojan Horse

The 2020 election of USA President Biden was a turning point for the FAANG group of tech giants (Facebook, Amazon, Apple, Netflix, Google). Under the previous presidency, they were used by Donald Trump to polarize the United States^{1, 2}. To ensure that the FAANGs would not be able to exert that kind of influence again, stricter anti-monopoly regulations were put in place in the USA and EU.^{3, 4}

The FAANGs realized that with doors closing in the West they had to look for other markets to maintain hyper growth. The obvious target was China, but trade tensions with the USA had not yet calmed so they had to find

- attract tech companies to the country.
- Jointly create a proprietary Digi-Gov platform to help accelerate government digital transformation and “share” data to ensure hyper efficient government services.^{12, 13}
- Use their platforms to enhance Nigeria’s tech sector by, for example, giving Nollywood preferential services on Netflix¹⁴ and significantly reducing piracy.
- Enhance “Brand Nigeria” and help uncover new Nigerian talent to create local content.

In exchange for the above, the FAANGs successfully negotiated:

- Rights to all Nigerian citizens’ data (to be ‘shared’ with government) for commercial and research purposes
- Within reason, exclusivity within their various domains e.g., E-commerce for Amazon, Apple would be sole provider of hardware to the service sector, etc.
- Payment of a “concession fee” of US\$30bn per annum (based on future NPV for access to all the above)

The FAANG deal is easily justified; simply formalising the informal economy could increase the tax base by as much as 20% of GDP! After some consideration, the Nigerian Government agreed stating: “After many false starts, this is truly the Africa Rises moment. Today is the day we start standing on our own two feet!”

The official opposition party disagreed, releasing the following statement, “This is a Trojan Horse. The government has decided to not only invite them in, but to serve them burukutu and let them into our bedrooms.” But for the Nigerian government and many in the business and civil society, this was a big win which could provide a basis for structural change and economic transformation.

Now in 2025 the terms are fully operational. The FAANGs have built infrastructure (Loon internet) and equipped SMEs with computers and physical infrastructure such as “Silicon Valley” buildings. The integrated Digi-Gov system has been inaugurated. Mass employment has been created through the need for more workers to satisfy the newly created industries and hundreds of thousands of tech-enabled workers have joined the FAANG workforce, with many

Nigeria was their entry point into Africa, the fastest growing region of the world expected to account for half of global growth.

an alternative.

To ensure their individual and collective survival the FAANGs formed an “arms-length” relationship to use elements of their know-how to create a “closed off” technology/digital system⁵. In the aftermath of the 2023 elections, they approached the Nigerian Government with a deal, whereby they would (as a collective) provide the following:

- Mass digital training in areas such as machine learning, AI, systems thinking, quantum computing, etc.
- Preferential job prospects ahead of candidates from other countries.
- Investments in Nigeria’s physical infrastructure to supply high speed, 100G per sec connectivity to the entire country⁶. Any visits to their collective assets would be “zero rated” (free).^{7, 8}
- Headquarter their Africa and Middle East businesses in Nigeria and help position Nigeri^{9, 10} as the head of “Digital Africa”¹¹ catalysing a new “Silicon Valley” to

more using their new skills in non-competitive, adjacent industries as well as providing offshore outsourcing services. So far the use of data is minimal especially given the main focus on building massive infrastructure. The sceptics have been silenced. It's looking good.

2035 Deal with the Devil

In 2026, a group of engineers trained in the first FAANG cohort realized they could use machine learning and AI to optimize grain yields en masse¹⁵ and revolutionize agriculture. Similar gains have now been seen across various sectors such as manufacturing using automation to reduce errors. With new elections coming up in 2027, the opposition party ran on the premise "Forego the FAANGs" but while there was some initial support, ultimately the GDP growth, unemployment decreases and general sentiment that "our data is our future" won the day.

The Digi-tech platform¹⁶ has created hyper efficient government eliminating much corruption, with the FAANG implementing early warning AI tools for fraud^{17,18} and user error. Even better, with increased efficiencies and more businesses in operation, not only has the tax base swollen, but these extra funds have been invested into primary healthcare, policing, housing, roads and water access.

Gradually, Nigeria realized that data was indeed the new digital oil¹⁹ and "mining" it was not only "easier" but substantially more valuable as it could be reused to improve services. This was especially important given the declining revenue from oil. These incredible gains led to unprecedented "trust in government" levels never seen before in Nigeria with an approval rating of the President of over 78%.

By 2030, Nigeria was hailed as the "epitome of tech and gov"; the results were there to be seen. Since agreeing to the deal with the FAANGs, Nigeria had experienced an annual average growth in GDP of 15%. The President called for an acceleration of AfCFTA since the FAANG deal is now seen as a blueprint for Africa. The motion is overwhelmingly supported. The FAANGs now have a scale option to

replicate the "Nigeria Digital Dawn" across Africa and increase their already swelling coffers of revenue and, more importantly, data.

In 2032, the President won a second term virtually unopposed, although her approval ratings dropped slightly as rumours started to circulate about the actual deal with the FAANGs and what Nigeria was getting out of it.

Meanwhile, the BATs (Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent), realizing the opportunity window was closing, created similar deals with Egypt and Kenya putting these countries on similar trajectories in terms of growth but bringing the "East/West" conflict to the battlegrounds of Africa.

Although a number of Nigerian entrepreneurs create businesses that could become competitors with the FAANGs, the Nigerian government is forced to shut them down or acquire them, because of the deal it has signed. Many move overseas to headquarter in other countries.

Climate change and health crises

This year, 2035, climate change struck with a massive Atlantic storm that flooded half of Lagos and other coastline cities^{20,21}. The infrastructure built by the FAANGs was mostly destroyed and coastal cities left with no internet access. As the floods spread, so has disease, and even the rapid search functions of Google, which have helped identify symptoms and direct aid, have not prevented the deaths of hundreds of thousands. In this crisis, the President decided to delay elections.

A new political party has been formed by a group of tech savvy politicians opposed to the FAANG deal: The Take-back party. They have started to openly question the motives of the FAANGs, backed by some religious leaders.

This message is resonating strongly with many who have grown tired of their dependence on the FAANGs and want to take back their country. Parts of Lagos without internet become desirable locations as those that live there revert to pre 2021 times with limited/no connectivity while it is being rebuilt²². For some, it seems like independence!

2045 The Pushback

In 2036, the President and her Cabinet grew concerned with the groundswell support of the Takebacks. The government realized that the mass data on Nigerian citizens could further be optimized by linking online behaviour to the physical world. This was a form of social engineering to incentivize “good” behaviour through benefits such as reduced taxes, better interest rates on loans, higher access to jobs, preferred treatment with government services. Those with bad behaviour have diminished access to services, and those without a digital history are completely disqualified from any government services²³. The latter narrative was not publicly made but the spread of disease is reason enough for most citizens to agree to (once again) sacrifice and go online to counter death by the disease.

Of course, the Takeback party and its supporters are targeted with questionable ratings and many of them are disallowed from voting. There was uproar but in 2037 the government went a step further and banned Takeback as “enemies of the state”, imprisoning the leaders. The government officially recorded a rebound in approval rating, but many were excluded due to low social scores.

By 2040, the use of the Nigerian data was still lucrative for the FAANGs but, in an ever-increasing push for profitability, they licensed Nigerian data through Application Programming Interface (API) that increases their revenues outside

Nigerians were increasingly viewed only as “streams of data” to monetize.

of Nigeria²⁴.

In 2042, this information was “hacked” by a diaspora-linked group and the information the FAANGs promised they would share with the Nigerian government was found to be incomplete and even censored. The Nigerian populace realised it had been lied to for two decades. Demands for the President to resign grew as evidence emerged that in the run up to the 2035 election, the FAANGs used their data to sway public sen-

timent to ensure the government was re-elected²⁵.

A group of displaced citizens, many of whom moved during the great flood of 2035, banded together to destroy much of the digital infrastructure, resulting in parts of some major cities going “dark”.

Fork in the Road

It is 2045 and the government and the FAANGs are using their remaining digital infrastructure to censor and manipulate news²⁶ and silence rumours that both previous presidents were “pawns” of the FAANGs. The government is using tactics from 25 years ago to bring in fake news, but this has swollen the ranks of the Takeback party. The destruction of FAANG infrastructure is spreading across the country. The Takebacks are funded through the diaspora. “No to digital colonialism” is the rallying cry.

Nigerians want to support local businesses to compete with the FAANGs and receive government investment. And they want the FAANGs to pay back money – USD300bn per year reflecting the true market value over the last quarter of a century. Encouraged by the Takebacks, other African countries are supporting this stance and there are rumours of regional bloc sanctions on Nigeria unless the FAANGs abide by the new demands.

The FAANGs are threatening to pull out of Nigeria and demanding payback of \$750bn plus interest lest they cut off the digital infrastructure they have invested in over the last 25 years.

Caught at the crossroads of an unknown future, Nigerians need to determine their path. Either the FAANGs will refuse to relinquish control, aided by the President who manages to squash the Takebacks’ uprising. This would lead to enactment of the exclusivity clause further consolidating FAANG power, a model they would then replicate in other countries with exponential gains due to higher “data wells” leading to what some fear could be an “existential threat of digital colonisation.” Or the president will be voted out, leading to the FAANGs being negotiated out of Africa, with Nigeria open-sourcing its data, encouraging a “million flowers to bloom”.

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Imagining Futures: Four Scenarios For Nigeria

Scenario-building processes focus on the long term. Scenarios are a creative way of shining a light on the critical factors that will drive countries in one direction or the other. They don't make predictions, nor even explore which future is most likely. They help decision makers think through how to better manage uncertainty and complexity, the only constants in today's world.

In imagining alternative futures for Nigeria, four (4) scenarios were developed. They include Fire On The Mountain, One Chance, Which Way Nigeria? and African Giant Awake. The scenarios visualise Nigeria over a 25-year period (2025 - 2050) under varying conditions of technology and governance.

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