

Changing the Self-Help Story of Galagandi



VOICES

The bell had barely rung when the students of Galagandi Primary School raced into their newly constructed classrooms, resuming classes after a 45-minute break. Just a few months before, the same bell marked the end of the school day. With temperatures that can go as high as 37 Degrees Celsius, learning was unbearable in the outdoor spaces where children were assembled for learning. Galagandi, a small rural community situated in Sumaila Local Government, approximately 77 kilometres from Kano metropolis, grapples with several developmental challenges, simply because they are too far to reach. Amongst its most pressing issues is the absence of a school to meet the educational needs of its growing population. The nearest primary school in Magami, though just about 4.5 kilometres away, seemed much further, as it is reachable only through an impassable road. These conditions discouraged regular school attendance, so years ago, the community took matters into their own hands, establishing a makeshift school under the shelter of a baobab tree. Mallam Murtala Umar, a community leader, recalls, *"We never had any public infrastructure, and our children were compelled to receive lessons under the shade of trees."*

Among other public amenities, the leaders of Galagandi wanted a school for their children, like in neighbouring communities.

But, Galagandi had long since benefitted from government intervention. According to Mallam Mukhtar Ado Yakasai, the former Director of Planning in the Ministry of Planning and Budget, achieving the objectives of the government amidst scarce financial resources is challenging, especially considering the enormity of competing priorities. Utilising medium-term planning tools provided by PERL, the state government successfully prioritised impact-focused interventions across all sectors to be included in its annual budgets. The tools enabled the state to break down strategic objectives into achievable medium-term actions that could be funded through the annual budget.



Community members outside the newly built classrooms



Children of Galagandi village in the classroom

PERL supported the state government to deploy planning tools for enhancing the prioritisation and funding of critical projects.

Without these tools and the adoption of a participatory budgeting approach, consideration of small communities like Galagandi would not have materialised. In 2019, the construction of a block of two classrooms was completed to pioneer the community's first primary school and pupils in Galagandi are now in a more conducive learning environment.

"Today, our children have proper classrooms and furniture, courtesy of this project".

With excitement, Mallam Murtala Umar reflected on the struggles of the past and the prospect of a brighter future for Galagandi Village.

As the policy space in Kano State evolves, the livelihoods of people in Galagandi and thousands of other communities are being positively impacted and full of prospects on the horizon. With more communities to reach, sustaining the use of the planning tools deployed through the intervention of partners like PERL, will ensure that the state government has sight of and remains responsive to its development commitments, so that no one is left behind.

Contact Address:

- 📍 10 Bobo Street
Maitama, Abuja, Nigeria
- ✉ info@perlnigeria.net
- 🌐 www.perlnigeria.net
- 📺 Find us on Facebook
- 📘 www.facebook.com/perlnigeria



The Partnership to Engage, Reform and Learn (PERL) is a five-year public sector accountability and governance programme, funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office. The programme provides support to governments in the core areas of policy development and implementation towards delivering public goods and services; supports citizens to engage with these processes and facilitates evidence-based learning and advocacy.

The opinions expressed in this leaflet are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.