

Co-written by Ganniyah Fashina

The strategic importance of the Lagos-Badagry Expressway is difficult to understate as it stretches beyond Lagos and Nigeria, into neighbouring countries. The Expressway which spans approximately 60.2 kilometers not only serves domestic purposes, but effectively connects Nigeria to neighboring West African countries including the Republic of Benin.

The Expressway presents remarkable opportunities for sustained economic exchange between Nigeria and the countries it connects, while strengthening those relationships. It also represents the commitment of Nigeria towards ECOWAS' goals as it forms a part of the organization's network of roads.

Following the rehabilitation works, the condition of the road has significantly improved from what it used to be.

In a 2013 feature, Eko Akete painted a grim picture of the Lagos-Badagry Expressway, describing a major international route that had deteriorated to the point where its condition reflected Nigeria's longstanding maintenance challenges.

The report highlighted the difficulties faced by commuters and transporters, including severe traffic congestion, potholes, craters and ditches, and linked the poor state of the road to accidents and safety concerns.

Despite its state of disrepair, the road remained an important gateway for trade between Nigeria and neighbouring West African countries.

The report also argued that, given the Federal Government's apparent difficulty in maintaining the road, control should be transferred to Lagos State. Thirteen years later, the condition of the road presents a different picture and provides an opportunity to examine how far the corridor has moved from the challenges documented at the time.

The Lagos-Badagry Expressway has undergone significant transformation, with the ongoing rehabilitation introducing expanded lanes, dedicated Bus Rapid Transit infrastructure and reinforced concrete pavement. The improved road infrastructure is a stark contrast to the condition documented in 2013.

These additions are an evident improvement, shifting the cross-border link from its previous state of disrepair as reported in 2013. However, the standard of

development does not appear to extend to some of the communities within its corridors.

The focus on the quality of the highway, although highly welcome should not come at the expense of the infrastructure along the corridor of a major economic route, subjecting the communities within it to substandard living conditions.

There are various communities along Mowe-Ikoga road, which form a part of the Lagos-Badagry Expressway corridor, and regardless of the role these communities play in bridging the travel gap, they are still challenged with bad roads and other infrastructural challenges.

The residents of these communities have made their challenges known to the government, making appeals and even protesting against the lack of infrastructure. The Mowe-Ikoga community is a vivid example of this infrastructural imbalance.

The community, considering that it serves as the link between Lagos and Ogun state, is still in a highly concerning state. Mowe-Ikoga has been described as an embarrassment, and is home to highly unmotorable road, which evidently lacks an infrastructural back up.

The critical state of things has also resulted in difficult living condition for the residents leading to financial strains. In June 2026, residents of the Mowe-Ikoga community organized a peaceful protest expressing their displeasure over the poor state of the road, adding that the neglect of the road has spanned over a decade.

During the protest, a commercial driver called out Hon. Sesi Oluwaseun Whingan, a Member of the House of Representative, stating that residents had expected a permanent solution after his assumption of office. The entire point of representation in office becomes questionable if residents have had to continue to deal with the same challenges for over a decade.

Is the government unaware of the situation? Is it regarded as unimportant? And what role, exactly, is Hon. Sesi Oluwaseun Whingan playing as the elected Member of House of Representatives, Badagry Constituency? What does Senator Oluranti Adebule contribute to the entire issue?

Conclusively, the efforts of the government in transforming the Lagos-Badagry Expressway to fit into modern standards are noteworthy.

Although the rehabilitation is still ongoing, the works already done highlight great commitment to the betterment of the road for both domestic and foreign purposes.

Nevertheless, this should not translate to a disregard for the communities that make up the corridor of the bridge, if anything these communities should benefit highly from being a passageway.

It is also highly concerning that despite the outcry by the residents of these areas, little to no solutions have been provided for their challenges. It contradicts the reality of the situation that despite due representation in the government, these communities still suffer from these infrastructural challenges.