

Corruption in Construction in Ethiopia: the Hidden Manipulation of Surveying Data

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SUMMARY

In Ethiopia's rapidly expanding construction sector, one of the least discussed yet most damaging forms of corruption is the manipulation of surveying data. Surveying provides the foundation for every infrastructure project—governing design, budgeting, alignment, and land compensation. When such data are falsified, entire projects become distorted—technically, financially, and ethically. Drawing on professional experience, this paper examines how surveying data are manipulated within Ethiopian construction, the systemic causes behind these practices, and their implications for infrastructure integrity. It highlights field-based insights, identifies institutional and educational weaknesses that enable corruption, and proposes actionable measures such as independent verification, digital transparency, professional accountability, and improved education in Geomatics Engineering. Protecting the integrity of surveying data is not merely a technical issue; it is an ethical and developmental imperative essential for ensuring that Ethiopia's infrastructure serves its citizens with honesty, safety, and sustainability.