

The Changing Face of the Global Development Agenda from the MDGs to the SDGs: Policy Lessons for Nigeria

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Abstract

Over the past decades, Nigeria has experienced marginal success in the area of development, such as the increase in GDP rates, influx in the use of technology, and rebasing of the economy. Coupled with these are the vast natural and human resources positioned in the country. Nevertheless, the country is still confronted with a high poverty rate and degraded infrastructure, which have been the basis for diverse developmental programmes; however these programmes had all flopped over the years. The MDGs thus brought forth a ray of light unto the people. Now, with MDGs gone and SDGs initiated, there is a need to analytically evaluate the successes and failures of the much-touted MDGs. Hence, this study using secondary data made an overview in evaluating the MDGs in Nigeria and targeted futuristically the deliverables in achieving the SDGs. The study contends that there is a need for an effective governance system at the epicenter of developmental programmes regarding policy briefs. Also, there is a need for political will to establish functional institutions and structures to bring about the fulfillment of this programme.

Keywords: Degraded infrastructure, Developmental Programmes, Effective governance system, MDGs, SDGs, Poverty-rate.

ABBREVIATIONS

1. CBN- Central Bank of Nigeria
2. EFA- Education for All
3. FMARD- Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
4. FME- Federal Ministry of Education
5. FMWASD- Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
6. FMWR- Federal Ministry of Water Resources
7. GDP- Gross Domestic Product
8. MDGs- Millennium Development Goals
9. NACA- National Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS
10. NBS- National Bureau of Statistics
11. NDHS- National Demographic and Health Survey
12. NMCP- National Malaria Control Programme
13. NTBLCP- National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme
14. ODA- Official Development Assistance
15. ODI- Overseas Development Institute
16. SDGs- Sustainable Development Goals
17. UN- United Nations
18. UNDP- United Nations Development Programme
19. UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund
20. UPE- Universal Primary Education
21. USAID- United States Agency for International Development
22. VPF- Virtual Property Fund
23. WHO- World Health Organisation
24. OSSAP-MDGS- Office of the Senior Special Adviser to the President, MDGs

Introduction

Development within a state involves a physical reality and a state of mind (Adejumo & Adejumo, 2014:33). However, in ensuring development in a society, the relationship between social, economic and institutional processes must be continually sustained to meet up with impending demands regarding population and the continuous usage of mineral and natural resources.

To this effect, successive Nigerian governments had come up with novelty ideas in initiating sustainable development, such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) in 1970; Green Revolution in 1980 to address poverty; Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) in 1986 to construct good roads, provide rural water supply and rural electrification for rural areas; National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in 1986 to provide financing, training and guidance for unemployed youths; Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) in 2000 to address the problems of rising unemployment in the society, to boost productiveness in the economy, and to

ensure that Nigerians are provided with steady sources of income, quality education, water, adequate, stable and affordable health care, power supply and housing amongst others.

Researchers (Anger, 2010; Oshelowo, 2011; Banwo and Oluranti, 2013; Adejumo and Adejumo, 2014) observed that these developmental programmes had negligible effects in the country and had not facilitated the developmental goals for which they were implemented in Nigeria. For instance, problems such as poverty, unemployment, child mortality, corruption and lopsided income had been on the increase.

A distinct look at the poverty profile showed that Nigeria which was one of the richest countries in the 1970s had retrogressed to become one of the poorest in the world. An apt example is to compare Nigeria with Malaysia, China and Indonesia. It could be recalled that Malaysia got their first palm seedling from Nigeria in the early 1960s when palm produce was already a major export commodity in Nigeria. However, in the 1990s, Malaysia's export of palm oil produce earned it more income than Nigeria earned from oil exports (Dada, 2007:1-13; Eshalomi and Ayodele, 2010:6-8; Okezie and Baharuddin, 2011:369). Likewise, Indonesia and Nigeria which were comparable in almost all spheres such as similar GDP size, agrarian and religious societies, both experienced oil boom in 1973 but took different policy choices. The outcome of these choices has led to 40% increase in total export and Nigeria is still less than 1% which we were in the 1970s (Soludo, 2006). China is not left behind; Utomi (2008:39) elucidated Nigeria's perception of China in the 1970s to be a nonaligned developing country. Nonetheless, Deng Xiaoping's reform policies of the 1970s and 1980s such as the creation of a diversified economy, fiscal decentralization and collectivized agriculture have made China one of the world's largest exporters in the world today.

In all, Nigeria's poverty status kept escalating. Statistics showed that the poverty level increased from 28.1% in 1980 to 46.3% in 1985; declined to 42.7% in 1992 and increased to 65.2 % in 1996 and 69.2% in 1997. In 2004, Nigeria's relative poverty rate stood at 54.4% and increased to 69% in 2010, while the absolute poverty rate was at 54.7% in 2004 and increased to 60.9% in 2010 (Chukwuemeka, 2009:405; NBS, 2010; Igbuzor, 2013).

Given these challenges in promoting sustainable development, Nigeria like other United Nations member countries embraced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs, according to the United Nations, comprised eight different goals to be achieved by 2015. They were: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; achieve universal primary education; promote gender equality and women empowerment; reduce child mortality; improve maternal health; combat HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases; ensure environmental sustainability; and develop a global partnership for development (United Nations Millennium Project, 2006). Nevertheless, these goals could be categorized into four parameters viz a viz Economic, Social, Environmental and Health.

The first and second goals of the MDGs portrayed the economic parameter of the developmental agenda of the United Nations. The first goal with its target would increase poor people's opportunities and give them access to pro-poor policies to lift them out of poverty. In addition, there was a correlation between the second goal and the economic parameters. Even though there had been controversies with the second goal mainly focusing on primary education and not extending its benefits to secondary or tertiary levels, it placed an importance on the foundational level of education giving people an edge over those who were not informed (Fehling, et al, 2013; Igbuzor, 2013:4,17-18; Unterhalter, 2013:5). According to Darrow (2014:71), these goals would enhance the economic growth of the state. Nevertheless, Nigeria had not performed satisfactorily regarding these two goals as seen in the latter part of this discussion.

The fourth, fifth and sixth goals coupled with their targets focused on health parameter with the core aim of improving maternal health, reducing child mortality and combating horrendous diseases. According to Sayem, et al (2011:93), if maternal health is improved, the chances of child mortality significantly declines. Also, many of these infectious disease could be easily prevented by scaling up maternal health and child mortality. In Nigeria, the ratio of these goals is worse and notoriously among the highest in the world; this could hinder development in any society (NDHS, 2014). According to DFFID (2006), women are disempowered and severely constrained by lack of access to healthcare and productive assets increasing their inability to fend off poverty and an unpleasant environment.

The environment also shares a major role in the target and indicators of other MDGs. In recent times, environmental discourse has gained significance in developmental formulation and policies (Adejumo and Adejumo, 2014:36-38). This is well displayed in the seventh and eighth goals which dealt with the environmental parameter of development. The happenstance of rapid urbanization, population influx and problems of climate change has necessitated the call for a clean and sustainable environment. This also serves as a basis of partnership in the world where all nations could relate accessibly. For example, Nigeria's bilateral relationship with other countries and global partnership for development was achieved but environmental sustainability was not (Nigeria MDG Report, 2015). This ascribes a challenge to development because there is a bilateral bond amongst other countries but there is no enabling environment to carry out transactions due to insurgencies in the Niger Delta, Northern region and other parts of the country; unavailability of vital infrastructures; and the absence of women in key positions.

Studies have shown that the situation of women and girls viz a viz their active participation in the society determines the progress of the society and also plays a key role in the reduction of poverty (Okoli, 2009; ODI, 2010; Ajiye, 2014:28). This is indeed the reason why it is amongst the MDGs. However, in this regard, Nigeria has experienced disparity. For example, in the 2011 election, the representation of women in the National Assembly decreased to about 6% which was one of the lowest in Africa (Igbuzor, 2013:15). The 2015 election did not also witness a substantial change in women and girls equality as discussed in the latter part of this study.

In light of the above, coupled with the beginning of another developmental era, pertinent questions such as: How well did the MDGs perform in developing countries? Were the MDGs able to achieve their aims? If it was a struggle to achieve the eight MDGs, how possible will it be to realise the 17 SDGs? have become issues of concern raised by observers.

It is against this backdrop that this paper will review MDGs in Nigeria and steered goals in the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But first, we will examine the concept of development, sustainable development and the MDGs.

Conceptual Framework

Development

The world currently revolves around development, as the need for development is key in lives of individuals and countries. The term 'development' has been given different meanings by different people about their ideological belief and intellectual capacity. It also can be seen from two perspectives; the first focuses on the realization of economic progress and the second places emphasis on individuals as the basis for development (Akume, 2014:443). Therefore, for the purpose of this paper, different definitions of development by scholars will be highlighted and a connection will be drawn from it.

According to Rodney (1976), development is the ability of a state to utilize its natural/mineral resources for the wellbeing of its citizens. From the viewpoint of Fadeyiye (2005), development is a transformation or improvement which brings about changes of a better life for the generality of the people in the society. Such improvement is observable in all human endeavours with reference to their social, political, economic and cultural aspect thereby ushering in progress for the society. To buttress this, Seers (1969) establishes that a question to be asked in gauging a country's developmental status is: What has been happening to poverty, unemployment and inequality? It is no doubt that this question is centred on the betterment of the living condition of people.

It can therefore be deduced from the preceding paragraph that development does not have a finite definition. Rather, it boils down to growth in the economic, political, social and cultural aspects of life, thus effecting a meaningful and distinct transformation in the lives of the citizenry and nation as a whole.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development, like development, also does not have a finite definition, but the key idea simply means development that can be maintained or kept going without being detrimental to the future. According to Complete A-Z Geography Handbook (as cited in Adejumo & Adejumo, 2014:34), sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present, without distressing the future generations to meet their own needs". This is similar to the oft-quoted definition of sustainable development by the Brundtland Commission report, "Our Common Future" (1987), which termed sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their needs". Explicitly, it is a development that is going to trigger an improvement in the quality of human life and a lasting satisfaction to human needs (Allen, 1980).

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The purpose of development in any society is to improve the lives of its people in social, economic, political and cultural aspects. For this reason, the physical necessities and rights of life such as shelter, food, clothing, equality, freedom, employment, participation in governance amongst others must be made accessible. It is on this note that the UN millennium summit which hosted 189 heads of state in 2000 developed the millennium development goals to address some of these challenges like poverty, inequality, amongst others and at the same time promote sustainable development (Chibuzor et al, 2013:527; Igbuzor, 2013:3).

These time-bound goals comprised eight main targets within a timeframe of achieving its result by 2015, using year 1990 as a baseline.

Nonetheless, fast-forwarding to the end of the MDGs agenda, Nigeria had not achieved all the goals. While remarkable progress had made in certain areas, some were met halfway (Nigeria MDGs report, 2015).

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Global View

Since the World War, countries have been characterized with the notion of development and have incorporated various techniques to realize it (Ake, 1996:1; Adjei, 2007:21). Thus, as the world was entering into a new millennium, the United Nations General Assembly embraced the MDGs to overcome some basic human

deprivations (Jahan, 2003:2). According to a MDGs report (2005), if the set targets are met by 2015, 500 million people would have been lifted from poverty, 300 million would no longer suffer hunger; 30 million children would have been saved from child mortality, there would be safe drinking water for 350 million people and basic sanitation for 650 million people allowing them to live a healthier and regal life. The MDGs had thus become a motivation for developed and underdeveloped countries. For a country like Rwanda, its poverty rate stood at 78% in 1994 but was reduced drastically to 44.9% with the help of MDGs induced policies (Sangado et al, 2003). Likewise, countries like Burundi, Togo, Tanzania and Sao Tome have made remarkable changes in the area of education (MDGs 2011 Report); Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Senegal and Sierra Leone have made remarkable changes in gender equality and women empowerment (MDGs 2014 Report).

Nonetheless, the 2015 MDGs Report indicated significant achievements made on most MDGs targets all over the world with developing countries attaining considerable headway, although the progress varied across countries, regions and goals.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The Nigerian Experience in Brief

Nigeria's involvement in the MDGs began in year 2000 with the embracement of the millennium declaration alongside 188 countries during the millennium summit. The MDGs in Nigeria was handled through the office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President (OSSAP) on MDGs.

Nigeria appeared committed on the achievement of the MDGs though it found its rhythm in the implementation of the MDGs when it got a debt relief from a Paris Club in 2005 which enabled it to increase and target pro-poor interventions (Igbuzor, 2013; Nigeria MDGs Report, 2015).

In achieving the goals prior the 2015 deadline, Nigeria disbursed billions of naira into various projects to ignite development in health, education, poverty eradication, agriculture, housing and transport amongst others. According to the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs, the federal government released N320 billion between 2006 and 2008 to gratify MDGs projects across the country (OSSAP-MDGs, 2009; Ahmed & Al Hassan, 2011). Apart from funding by the Nigerian Government, Nigeria got foreign aid channelled towards the realization of the MDGs. For instance, between 2009 and 2010, the bilateral aid spending of the United Kingdom in Nigeria is £114.2 million out of which 44% was allocated to the health sector and 15% for education (DFFID, 2010).

Various reports in assessing the progress of MDGs in Nigeria have been produced. The 2004 report which was Nigeria's first report on the MDGs stated that it is unlikely the country will be able to meet most of the goals by 2015 especially extreme poverty and hunger, reducing child and maternal mortality, based on available information. The 2005 report flickered a ray of hope when it stated that Nigeria had a high possibility of attaining some of the millennium development targets by 2015, such as achieving universal primary education; ensuring environmental stability; and developing global partnership. It went further to assert that Nigeria could achieve other targets such as eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; gender equality and women empowerment; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; reducing child mortality and improving maternal health given the current policies set in place with strong political will coupled with sustained effort (Nigeria MDGs Report, 2004; 2005).

In contrast, the 2008 report which marked a mid-point on the millennium development journey from 2000 to 2015 indicated a slow-paced approach in the achievement of the goals. The report showed that the number of people living in relative poverty was expected to have fallen to 28.78% in 2007 if the MDG target was to be met in 2015 but it had not reach that level yet; infant mortality rose from 81 per 1,000 live births in the year 2000 to 110 per 1,000 live births in 2005/2006 which was far from the global target of 30 per 1,000 live births in 2015. Midway to the realization of the targets, the maternal mortality rate should have been 440 per 100,000 live births, however it was 828 deaths per 100,000 live births in rural areas, and 531 deaths per 100,000 live births in urban areas. The number of people with access to safe drinking water rose from 54% in 2000 to 60% in 2005/2006 while the proportion of the population with access to basic sanitation dropped from 42.9 in 2000 to 38% in 2005/2006 (Nigeria's Midpoint MDGs Assessment, 2008; Lawal et al, 2012:77-78; Igbuzor , 2013:10-12).

Basis For Analysis

Scholars had articulated uncertainty in the achievement of the MDGs target in Nigeria by 2015 due to bad governance, poor coordination of plans/policies, corruption, and misappropriation of funds (Oshelowo, 2011; Lawal et al, 2012; Ajiye, 2014; Imodu, 2014; Omoh, 2014). Undoubtedly, with the end of the 2015 developmental era and the impunity welcome of the SDGs, it is imperative that the achievements and challenges of MDGs should be analysed using 1990 as a baseline. This analysis will help in achieving a laudable developmental era in the country.

State of the MDGs Implementation in Nigeria

In meeting the MDGs deadline for 2015, poverty rate in Nigeria was expected to drop from 42% in 1990 to 22%

in 2015; children dropouts would be completely eliminated; infant mortality rate per 1,000 ought to have decreased from 191 to 63.7; maternal mortality rate per 1,000 should have fallen from 740 to 176 in 2015; improved access to water should have gone up from 54% to 77% and improved access to sanitation increased from 39% to 70% (MDGs Report, 2009). Using this percentage indicators viz a viz the 2015 end report for Nigeria, the gains made in some areas and challenges made in specific areas are analysed as shown below.

Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Poverty is a major challenge in the world. Sachs (2015) affirmed over a billion of the world's population of 7.2 billion lives in poverty. In 2010, an estimated 48.5% of the population of Sub-Saharan Africa remained below the poverty line and more than one-third of the area was malnourished (IFAD, 2010). As Sachs observed, the Sub-Saharan Africa and the South Asian regions are where 76% of the world's extreme poor are found. Consequently, Nigeria, being the most populous country in Sub Saharan Africa, contributes a major quota to the poverty statistic.

The poverty menace increased during the period 1985-2006; the percentage of people living in poverty increased from 28.1% in 1985 to 46.3% in that same year but decreased to 42.7% in 1999 before escalating to 65.6% in 2006 (Bello, 2007:46).

Nigeria, like other countries, in committing herself to the achievements of the MDGs and in achieving the first goal, launched her own version of the MDG poverty reduction programme known as National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS); Vision 20:2020 and other programmes were also targeted at realizing the MDGs. As a result, the poverty prevalence in Nigeria had taken a decline turn from 65.6% in 2010 to 45.5% in 2012/2013; the poverty head count by the World Bank was at 33.1% which indicated that 56 million Nigerians were currently poor as against the 22% target for poverty reduction rate in 2015 (NBS, 2010; Nigerian MDGs Report, 2015).

Nigeria's fight against hunger has been successful and in the year 2012, the country had already met one of the MDG goals, three years prior to the deadline, by reducing hunger in the country by 66% (Nigeria MDG Report, 2015: 31-33). The proportion of underweight children under five years had indicated a decline from 35.7% in 1990 to 24.2% in 2011. An increase occurred in 2013 when it rose up to 28.7% but declined to 25.5% in 2014. Although the figure was still above the 2015 target of 17.85%, this target can be attained in the coming years given government intervention in food production such as boosting farmers' access to extension services and liberalisation of input markets (FMARD Report, 2015).

Achieving Universal Primary Education

Acquiring quality education is very vital to the development of any nation. The Nigerian Government introduced the Universal Primary Education (UPE) and the Education for All Policy (EFA) aimed at eradicating illiteracy, ignorance and poverty. The implementation of these programmes in relation to achieving the second goal of the MDGs focused attention on quality assurance, gender equality and curriculum development, all geared towards improved teaching and learning, teacher development and national development (Ajiye, 2014:28; Nigeria MDGs Report, 2015: 45). In relation to the MDGs report, remarkable achievements had been achieved following the net enrolment rate that stood at 84% in 2004, 87.6% in 2006 and 89.6% in 2007 (UNDP Report, 2007).

However, the performance had fluctuated over the years in response to changing circumstances mainly due to insurgency and insecurity in some northern parts of the country. Between 2011 and 2013, the net enrolment rate decreased from 59% to 54% respectively as against the 100% target for 2015. The primary six completion rate witnessed fluctuations perhaps due to changing policy environments, starting with a good performance of 73% in 1993, peaked to 94%, decreased to 89% in 2006 and then further dropped to 82% and 85.5% in 2013 and 2015 respectively, although states such as Oyo and Ebonyi had attained 100% completion rates.

Furthermore, the literacy rate of 15-24 years (defined as those who can read and write with understanding) was at 64.1% in 2000, increased to 80% in 2008, dropped to 65.6% in 2011, and climbed up to 66.7% as against the 100% target of 2015 (NBS, 2015).

Promotion of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment

One in every household in Sub-Saharan Africa/Nigeria is a woman. The position of women and girls has a key role to play in the development of a region. According to the Gender Equality Index, Nigeria ranks 118 out of 134 countries (UKAid Gender Report, 2012). According to the UKAid report, women make up only 21% of the non-agricultural paid labour force. In politics, women are politically underrepresented. 7 out of 109 senators are women and 25 out of 360 representatives are women. Data also indicate that 44 Nigerian women die each day during the course of childbirth (Ibid).

However, the situation is improving, as there is a gradual increase in the ratio of girls to boys today in primary schools. Statistics indicated an increase from 86% in 1995 to 78% in 2000, up to 87% in 2010 and 94% in 2013, while the ratio of girls to boys in secondary schools witnessed a similar improvement from 95% in 1995 to 86% in 1998, and declined to 85% in 2010, then received a boost to 91% in 2013 (FME, 2015). Women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector increased to 14% in 2012 from 7.7% in 2010. Women involvement in political trend witnessed a turn around and women aspirants for top political positions increased

from 3.2% in 2003 to 7.58% in 2011 (FMWASD, 2014). The 2015 election further revealed the proportion of women in the Senate to be 7.33% while that in the House of Representative was at 5.11%. At the state level, the proportion of seats occupied by women in all 36 states of Nigeria was 2.19% in 1999 but went up to 6.97% in 2011. At the local government level, the proportion of female chairpersons increased from 1.18% in 1999 to 4.6% in 2007 (Nigeria MDGs Report, 2015: 56-59).

In general, there is still a long way to go regarding women empowerment in meeting the MDGs target of 35%.

Reduction of Child Mortality

In developing countries, under-five-year mortality ranges between 25 deaths per 1,000 live births in Turkey and 274 per 1,000 in Niger (WHO Report, 2008). In Nigeria, the under-five mortality rate had improved from 191 deaths per 1,000 live births to 89 deaths per 1,000 live births which is still far from the target of 63.7 deaths per 1,000 live births for 2015 (NBS, 2014).

The trend of infant mortality rates (IMR) was similar to that of the under-five mortality rates. IMR increased from 91 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 100 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2004, and then declined progressively to 58 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014. This is still more than the 30.3 deaths per 1,000 live births target for 2015 (ibid).

Improvement of Maternal Health

Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) is the number of women who die from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management either during pregnancy, child delivery or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy (Nigeria MDG Report, 2015:68).

According to WHO et al (2012), Nigeria had the 10th highest MMR in the world with 630 women dying per 100,000 births. However, there had been remarkable progress on the MMR indicator as a result of the decline to 243 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 2014. Thus, one year before the 2015 deadline, the MMR target had been achieved (NDHS, 2014; Nigeria MDGs Report, 2015:69).

Also, the proportion of births attended to by skilled health personnel increased from a low of 36.30% in 2004 to 53.6% in 2012 and 58.6% in 2014. This had consequently led to a greater number of lives even though the margin is still wide with respect to the 2015 target of 100% (Ibid).

Combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

It is estimated that in the year 2006, 4.3 million people around the globe were infected with HIV/AIDS (USAID, 2006). In Nigeria, HIV prevalence among 15-24 years old has continuously declined. The rampant spread declined from 5.8% in 2011 to 4.1% in 2010. Nevertheless, this was still high compared to the 0.9% target of 2015 (NACA, 2011). The proportion of young people aged 15-24 years using condom during sexual intercourse with non-regular sex partners improved from 43.90% in 2003 to 55.0% in 2012, which was still far off from the 100% target of 2015 (Ibid).

For malaria, the prevalence rate increased from 2,122,663 cases in 1998 to 5,326,573 in 2008 and to 10,143,142 in 2013 as compared to the zero target of 2015 (NMCP, 2013).

Also, from the National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme (NTLCP), 262 per 100,000 people were infected with tuberculosis in 1990. It increased to 343 in 2005, but then decreased to 338 per 100,000 people in 2013 as compared to the 2015 zero target (NTLCP, 2013).

A survey conducted by the NTLCP in 2014 showed 600,000 new cases with 91,354 placed on treatment, indicating that Nigeria is still far off from combating the disease.

Ensuring Environmental Sustainability

The commitment by Nigeria in ensuring environmental sustainability is reflected in its Vision 20:2020. One of the three pillars of the integrated development plan is to ensure sustainability. Yet, some of Nigeria's natural resources are still threatened (Ajiye, 2014:30). For instance, Nigeria has continued to lose forest cover at a startling rate of 3.5% per annum. Approximately 350,000 to 400,000 hectares are lost each year despite its importance to man, resulting in environmental and socio-economic effects such as loss of livelihoods in agriculture, loss of wildlife, soil erosion and increase in desertification at both the global and national level (Nigeria MDGs Report, 2013).

Access to water and safe sanitation has also been a challenge. Nigeria's progress towards this has been erratic. The concurrent effect of acute water shortage is the outbreak of waterborne diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, ring worm and typhoid. In many communities in Nigeria, obscurity in water supply and safe sanitation has increased infant mortality rate (FMWR, 2007). At present, 67% of the population have access to improved water supply which is relatively near the 77% target of 2015 (FMWR, 2014; NBS, 2014). However, citizens play a discernible role by providing their own water through boreholes and wells.

In light of this, a lot still need to be done by the government in improving citizens' access to safe water.

Developing Global Partnership for Development

Official Development Assistance (ODA) in Nigeria has increased over the years with the health sector being the leading recipient. The proportion accrued to the health sector in 2012 and 2013 stood at 66.50% and 96.80%

respectively (Nigeria MDG Report, 2015:97).

According to the CBN, the flow of Official Development Assistance included debt relief. This prompted Nigeria to negotiate and obtain debt relief in 2005 from Paris Club (CBN Report, 2007).

Debt relief had helped Nigeria immensely, most especially in achieving the MDGs. The government had used the debt relief to adopt many initiatives and programmes such as the OPEN- Monitoring and Evaluation (OPEN-M&E) as well as the Midwives Service Scheme. The government had also used debt relief for social safety net policies such as Conditional Cash Transfer, the Vocational Training Scheme and the Small & Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). Other initiatives are the MDGs' Costing and Needs Assessment, Universal Basic Education Counterpart Fund Scheme, the Roll Back Malaria Partnership with the Global Fund in providing insecticide-treated mosquito nets to every Nigerian family (Ajiye, 2014:30).

In supporting global partnership, the area of communication in Nigeria had witnessed great revival. The advent of ICT has made it easier for socio-economic activities to be undertaken at relatively low costs. Accordingly, the number of users increased from 3.53 users per 100 people in 2005 to 42.68 users per 100 in 2014, while tele-density in Nigeria has grown rapidly from 0.73 in 2001 to 99.3 connections per 100 persons in 2014 (NCC, 2014; Nigeria MDGs report, 2015: 100).

Table 1: Summary of the Nigeria's MDGs End Report

Goals	Conclusion
1. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger	Appreciable progress especially in terms of hunger. Goal not met.
2. Achieving Universal Primary Education	Weak progress mainly due to insurgencies. Goal Not met.
3. Promoting Gender Equality and Women empowerment.	Satisfactory progress made in Gender Equality while weak progress was experienced in women empowerment. Goal not met.
4. Reduce child mortality	Appreciable progress particularly in areas of vaccination. Goal not met.
5. Improving maternal health	Maternal mortality met. Other indicators also witnessed significant progress.
6. Combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases	Significant but weak progress. Goal not met.
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability	Strong Progress in the provision of safe drinking water but weak progress in other indicators. Goal not met.
8. Developing Global Partnership for development	Goal Met.

Source: Nigeria MDGs End Report, 2015

Challenges And Lessons Of MDGs Implementation In Nigeria

The Nigeria end report presents a bag of mixed results. While we have seen progress in some selected areas, there have been challenges in others. Evidence reveals that Nigeria has recorded tremendous success with phone subscribers and internet users. In spite of this, the country is still faced with tackling poverty, hunger, women empowerment, reducing maternal death, infant mortality, safe drinking water and sanitation.

These challenges, according to scholars, are as a result of corruption, inadequate database, policy inconsistency, inadequate coordination of programmes and insincerity in governance (Alabi & Ojor, 2011; Cyprian et al, 2013:509; Terungwa & Akwen, 2014:115). For instance, the N430 billion awarded for MDGs-related projects in the last three years went back into the government purse through the counterpart funding by different states (Alabi & Ojor, 2011:18). Across the states, there are also reports of contracts for projects that were not executed. Yet, the contracts were mobilized. In some instances, contracts were awarded for the supply and distribution of drugs when there were no health facilities (Awofadeji, 2009).

This explains why Terungwa & Akwen (ibid) linked good governance to successful developmental programmes. It is anticipated that getting governance right is the main backbone for achieving developmental programmes, considering that menaces such as corruption, deficiency in monitoring, inequality, policy inconsistency amongst others would stop (Oshelowo, 2011:18-19; Ajiye 2014:32). Hence, good governance at all levels from local to global is a pre-condition for sustainable development (Sachs, 2012:2209; Bernstein, 2015).

Transitioning From The MDGs To The SDGs

“2015 is a milestone year. We will complete the MDGs and forge a bold vision for sustainable development including a set of sustainable development goals”- Ban-Ki-Moon (2015).

The year 2015 marked the end of the MDGs tenure. As noted above, many countries especially in Sub-Saharan Africa were not on track in achieving the MDGs. The challenges of women empowerment, poverty and hunger eradication still remained prevalent (MDGs Report, 2015).

In line with improving the lives of the poor, sustaining the positive results obtained from the MDGs programmes and in ensuring global development, the global community adopted a post-2015 development agenda known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are a follow-up of the MDGs. The SDGs comprise 17 goals and 169 targets with the aim to improve livelihoods and protect the planet for future generations (Sachs, 2012; Waziri, 2015). The goals are as follows:

1. End poverty in all ramifications;
2. End hunger, achieve food security and promote sustainable agriculture;
3. Ensure good health and wellbeing;
4. Ensure quality education and life-long opportunities;
5. Achieve gender equality and women empowerment;
6. Ensure clean water and sanitation for all;
7. Provide accessible, affordable, reliable and sustainable energy for all;
8. Promote decent work and economic growth;
9. Promote sustainable industrialization;
10. Reduce inequalities within and among countries;
11. Build inclusive safe and sustainable cities and communities;
12. Promote sustainable consumption and production pattern;
13. Develop urgent action to address climate change;
14. Promote conservative and sustainable use of marine resources, oceans and seas;
15. Protect, restore and promote terrestrial ecosystem and halt biodiversity loss;
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive society, rule of law, effective and accountable society while ensuring sustainable development; and
17. Strengthen means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development.

The SDGs, which are in line with Spangenberg (2005) prerequisite for sustainable development, focus on the four dimensions of the society which are the economic, social, environmental and institutional systems of the society. To Spangenberg, for a community to be sustainable, each of the four systems has to maintain its capability to survive and evolve.

It should be clear that the context for the adoption of MDGs is a different context for the adoption of the SDGs. In 2000, there was relative stability, prosperity and global harmony were on the rise. This situation was good for forging agreement on global targets for development. In 2015 however, the world has encountered more complex problems such as climate change, urbanisation influx, resources explosion, development deficits such as poverty, hunger, inaccessible water and safe sanitation (Igbuzor, 2015). Hence, this revolutionary happenstance was common thinking for the global community to reach a global agreement which involved building a sustainable world where environment, social and economic development are equally valued.

Agenda for Global Action, a United Nations initiative, in August 2015, remarked that the sustainable development goals and targets, when attained, will free the human race from tyranny and want, and will secure our planet for the present and future generations (Waziri, 2015). In corroboration, SDGs reflect a better coverage of the totality of human, social and environmental development which, if pursued with greater commitment, would improve the lives and wellbeing of individuals and the sanity of the environment.

The New Sustainable Development Goals Agenda In Nigeria

In the continuous bid to improve the lives of the poor and ensuring development in the nation, Nigeria joined other member countries in the United Nations to adopt the new development goal agenda in the world, tagged Sustainable Development Goals, on September 25, 2015 at the United Nations General Assembly. The basis of the agenda, just like the MDGs before it, is to end extreme poverty, transform lives, improve the planet and promote socio-economic development (Ihejirika, 2015).

The Sustainable Development Goals agenda include, but are not limited to: ending poverty in all ramifications; ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture; ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all; ensuring quality education and life-long opportunities; and achieving gender equality and women empowerment. These first five goals are much crucial to Nigeria mainly because they are residual goals owing to the MDGs (Ihejirika, *ibid*). Some scholars have also included the six and eighth goals to be of essence (Adegbulu, 2015; Igbuzor, 2015).

In the same vein, poverty is one major challenge that needs to be tackled in Nigeria as it triggers other

developmental problems. According to President Muhammadu Buhari, poverty eradication in Nigeria remains an indispensable condition for sustainable development (Nigeria's MDG Report, 2015). Thus, in its effort to mitigate the effect of poverty in the country, the government intends to introduce what it terms the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT). This is expected to provide one million extremely poor Nigerians with N5,000 monthly stipends. It will also aid the creation of youth empowerment plans, skill acquisition and direct jobs where unemployed graduates will be trained in entrepreneurial skills (PM News, 2016).

The CCT programme, according to Nigeria's MDGs Report, yielded positive outcomes in the reduction of poverty during the millennium development era and is expected to record more success under the expanded SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 11 (Nigeria's MDGs Report, 2015:133).

In like manner, the second goal of the SDGs (achieving food security and promoting sustainable agriculture in ensuring adequate nutrition for all) had also been given maximum consideration. Despite the successful output of reducing hunger via 66% during the millennium development era (Nigeria's MDGs report, 2015), Nigeria had shifted its focus to agriculture owing to the dwindling fall in oil. At a roundtable on Investment and Growth for Africa 2016, MuhammaduBuhari stated that the only way out of the current plunge of oil in the global market is agriculture (Leadership, 2016). Not only will this ensure adequate nutrition, it will also serve as a means of employment for the unemployed, thereby reducing poverty.

Moreover, several of the proposed SDG targets are means to achieving other targets. For instance, juggling agricultural productivity will not be important if it does not involve income, nutrition of the farmers, and health. This way, poverty is reduced and an improved health system is created. Similarly, increasing the re-use of water will give rise to better accessibility of water.

Attainment of the SDGs Targets In Nigeria: Issues for Consideration

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria made a significant advancement during its 15 years' timeline. However, there are clear lessons to be learnt from the MDGs in order to yield fruitful results in the new post-2015 agenda.

1. **Early Commencement:** Unlike the MDGs which did not start until 2005 due to the debt owed by Nigeria and financial constraint, there is a need for the early commencement of SDGs implementation and programmes.
2. **Good Governance:** Scholars (Sachs, 2012; Igbuzor, 2013; Terungwa & Akwen, 2014) have linked sustainable development to good governance. Terungwa & Akwen (ibid) in their study linked the past failures of developmental programmes in Nigeria to governance. It is through good governance that a country can formulate effective and efficient policies that will translate the SDGs from mere targets to reality. Stating the qualities of good governance, Anger (2010) listed the following:
 - Engaging the people in the conduct and management of their affairs;
 - Accountability and transparency in the mobilization and utilization of resources;
 - Responsibility and responsiveness in public service; and
 - Effective and efficient manners in handling public/personal affairs.
3. **Accurate and Reliable Data:** This is a crucial role in planning for development to ensure that no one is left behind. A country without accurate data cannot put in place necessary strategies (Ejumudo, 2013:78). Accurate data are scarce in Nigeria, and this brought about some challenges during the millennium development era. For example, with respect to health, the data generated by the National Bureau Statistics (NBS) sometimes conflicted with those of the National Population Commission (Nigeria's MDGs Report, 2015).
4. **Bottom-Top Approach:** It has been proven that economic growth does not necessarily translate to poverty reduction (Igbuzor, 2013:11). Therefore, it is essential that every individual must be involved in the capacity building and developmental process; all local communities, citizens, private and public sectors, donors and civil society organizations have their parts to play, most notably, the grassroots who are the main recipients of these programmes, bringing to use their services and experience.
5. **Funding:** In line with realizing the set goals and targets for the sustainable development goals, financial resources have to be pumped into the SDGs-related actions. Part of this requires maintaining Nigeria's pledge to the Paris Club by utilizing the estimated US\$8 billion available in the Virtual Poverty Fund [VPF] (Nigeria's MDGs Report, 2015). In the same way, Nigeria's 2016 budget generated room for the SDGs by allocating N5.378 billion for the SDGs programme, N1.109 billion for transition to SDGs and N1.5 billion to monitor and evaluate MDG/SDG goals (Onyekpere, 2016). There is, however, some level of concern over the budget as it is clear that Nigeria is experiencing hard times due to declining oil revenues and obscure economic alternatives. It is definitely assumed that the SDGs might encounter difficulty since the government spent N3 trillion annually during the MDGs era, and so other monetary sources should be explored (Shittu, 2015).

6. Ownership and Universality: As the sustainable development goals and targets are holistic in nature, they do not necessarily translate to a particular nation's context due to differences in capacities, starting point and priorities. Therefore, in ensuring speedy success, the global goals have to be adopted according to targets and goals that reflect each nation's context, taking into account constraints and opportunities. In Nigeria, SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 should be vigorously focused on in the early stages of implementation, largely because they are the outstanding shortfalls from the Millennium Development Goals.
7. Coherence: Knoll (2014) illustrates coherence to be continuity in key policy drivers in achieving better decisions for development outcomes. In Nigeria, initiatives such as Conditional Cash Transfer in education and health; Conditional Grant Scheme in the areas of health, women empowerment, skills acquisition, education, agriculture, water and sanitation; the leverage of funds using the DRG model; Midwives Service Scheme which piloted progress during the MDGs era should be institutionalized.
8. Capacity Building: Demographics have shown that youths constitute the majority of the population in the world today. Therefore, for a nation like Nigeria where most of its youth are unemployed, vital issues such as infrastructural development and job creation need to be addressed.
9. Institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation in line with the SDGs targets and goals should be carried out.

Conclusion

The successful implementation of the MDGs globally has demonstrated that the world can be united on a common cause. This has also served as a drive for the incumbent development agenda known as Sustainable Development Goals with a similar 15-year span.

In Nigeria, MDGs have provided an impetus that development can be achieved following the progress it has made. Reports indicated that Nigeria made significant progress particularly in the areas of hunger reduction, universal primary school enrolment, gender parity in schools, reduction in the spread of HIV/AIDS, eradication of polio, reduction in maternal death, and intensification in technological innovation.

Although the implementation of MDGs yielded mixed results, it created lessons for greater success in the future. Thus, the lessons learnt will serve as a good compass in navigating challenges that might be faced during the course of achieving the new SDGs.

Above all, as Nigeria and other countries kick start the SDGs, the goals reflects a better coverage of the totality of social, economic, environmental and human development which, if pursued with greater commitment, will improve the lives and well-being of the citizenry in a substantial way.

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