

Need for Inclusion of the Poor in the Design and Implementation of Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria

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Abstract

The paper discussed the hardship being faced by majority of Nigerians as a result of poverty. The paper poignantly observed that there is continued rise in poverty despite some strategies embarked upon by successive administrations to curb the menace. The paper discovered that the poverty intervention programmes were well-conceived but poorly planned and implemented because the poor themselves were excluded in the scheme of things. The paper concluded by recommending the bottom-up system in the planning and implementation of poverty reduction programmes for efficacy, effectiveness and efficiency.

I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty has indeed been acclaimed widely as a major problem bedeviling humanity in sub-sahara Africa including Nigeria. It was because of the continued rise in global poverty that the United Nation declared 1996 as the International Year for the Eradication of poverty with the theme: Eradicating Poverty is an Ethical, Social, Political and Economic Imperative of Human kind" (Okoye, 2002:11).

Okoye (ibid) noted that the declaration of the decade was a follow-up of the world summit on social development held in 1995 at Copenhagen, Denmark where all the countries of the world were committed to poverty eradication as their common goal through decisive National and International Cooperation.

In a similar vein, since the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights in December 10, 1948 in Paris-france, poverty was recognized as a brutal denial of human rights and needs be tackled headlong through designing programmes of actions. At the academic levels in Nigeria, attention has subsequently been focused on the problem of poverty such that research centres like NISER, Ibadan, Centre for Management Studies Lagos, Centre for Development Studies, University of Jos and the like have initiated some empirical studies toward tackling the social menace.

Despite these efforts, poverty in Nigeria has been increasing at an unprecedented rate and has almost become ramified; engulfing a substantial number of people. It seems to have defied any long-lasting solution in spite of the massive financial resources and target programmes initiated and committed to overcome it. Now one is left with no choice but to ask: To what extent are Nigerians poor? Have there been poverty intervention programmes? Have the poor being identified and included in the design and implementation of such poverty alleviation programme? How best can poverty alleviation make significant impact in the lives of the poor?

It is intended in this paper therefore, to identify the reasons from literature for continued existence of poverty in Nigeria and proffer solution to mitigated the menace.

The paper is organized into six parts. Section one is an introduction; section two discusses the concept of poverty section three examines the theoretical framework; section four discusses the spatial dimensions of poverty, section five assesses the performance of poverty alleviation programmes introduced in the country while the last section recommends effective implementation strategies of poverty alleviation in Nigeria.

II. CONCEPT OF POVERTY

Poverty has been given various definitions by various disciplines because of its complex nature. Most people seem to view poverty as a state of insufficient income for securing basic goods and services while others consider poverty as a situation where the rate of consumption of goods and services is higher than the means of livelihood. Poverty extends beyond the realm of economics and touches on such factors as life expectancy, literacy level, health, nutrition, school enrolment rates for children, housing level of social - cultural emancipation and degree of political participation.

Duwong and Modugu (2008:428) cited Alimeka as conceptualizing poverty to involve lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihood, hunger and malnutrition, poor health, limited education and basic service, increased morbidity and mortality from illness and harm as well as inadequate housing, unsafe environment, social discrimination and exclusion.

Similarly World Bank (1998) view poverty as manifesting in hunger, lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to speak properly, not having a job, fear of the future of losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water, powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom.

At the national level, poverty has often been associated with underdevelopment characterized by indicators such as low level of productivity, high rates of population growth and dependency burdens, high and rising levels of unemployment and under-employment, high dependence on agricultural production and primary

product exports, dependence and vulnerability in international relations, high and unacceptable level of illiteracy, high infant mortality, extremely poor medical facilities, very low per capita income, non functional social services and corruption.

In a poverty stricken economy, it is not uncommon to find slumps where urban poor live. Poverty is not purely economic but cultural too. For instance it is very common to find a household whose income is very low and having eight or more children, all living in one room where husband and wife cannot make love in private especially in urban areas where they cannot afford decent accommodation because of lack of money to pay for the rent.

Poverty may be categorized into absolute and relative. It is absolute in the sense that the group of persons concerned are unable to secure the minimum needs for human survival like food, clothing, shelter, health services and basic education hence the lives of the victims become poor, brutish and short. Relative poverty connotes, a rather comparative state of deprivation among individuals, groups or segments of the society. It is the inability of certain sections of the society to meet their secondary need especially transport fare, house rent and school fees of children, variously identified as the lower 30 or 40% of the income distribution, the relatively poor may have barely secured the minimum basic needs but have such limited resources that they lack the means of adequate social participation (Serageldin 1989: 29).

For clarify and pragmatic purpose, poverty has spatial dimensions which connotes extreme condition of social, economic, environmental and economic deprivation in basic necessities of life leading to hunger, starvation, diseases, poor education, lack of sufficient assets, general weakness, vulnerability to problems, powerlessness and short lifespan. Since poverty is a complex social problem, it is only proper to incorporate social, cultural, economic and political dimensions in tackling the menace.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theories to serve as framework for understanding the persistence of poverty in Nigeria and elsewhere have been identified while Abimiku (2009:9) used conservative, liberal reformists, the Marxists and social exclusion theories to explain poverty, Walong (2005:16).

Recognized elite theory of public policy as appropriate to use.

The Conservative Theory

From the individual perspective, the theory posits that the poor is poor because he chooses to be. It argues that an individual is to blame if he does not work hard to produce saleable items for sale or cannot acquire relevant skills to render services to those who have need, hence get entangled in poverty net.

From the cultural perspective on the other hand, the theory sees the poor as inadequate and pathological because cultural attitudes tend to undermine any imposed reforms, innovations and change (RIC) that can improve their standard of living. This theory, according to Abimiku (2009:11) represents the situation of the poor in colonial societies and early stages of capitalism where even if the poor had ample opportunities for improving their welfare, they did not have the initiative and diligence needed to take advantage of. This means that efforts at poverty alleviation should also include the broadened cultural dimensions where opportunities are expanded for expression of the poor in the planning and implementation of programme and projects that would benefits them.

The Liberal Reformists Theory

This theory, according to O'Donnell, Harambos and Heald (cited in Abimiku 2009:11), hinges on the fact that the poor are poor not because of indolence and recalcitrant attitudes to reforms, innovations and changes; rather some forms of constraints such as low incomes, unemployment and illness can make them poor.

The liberal reformists position accounts for the over 19 millions physically challenge persons (Dutch – Welle news 7, Jul 2009) most of who are poor for incapacitation rather than indolent and recalcitrant attitude to development. It is worthy of note that the setting up of National Directorate for employment (NDE) by the federal government can be of immense importance in reducing unemployment among the mentally able-bodied youth(MABY) through skill acquisition to help them fend for themselves and reduce poverty.

The Marxist Capitalist Theory

This theory attributes the cause of poverty to the capitalism. It argues that capitalism, through its exploitative syndrome of making underserved profits can produce and sustain poverty. This has application in Nigerian situation where the bourgeoisie who possess the source productive resources subjugate the masses by selling goods and service at high cost at the expense of the poor, hence pushing them further into poverty net. The result of the exploitative system in Nigeria society manifest deprivations such as prevalent of hunger, diseases death in infrastructural development and amenities and poverty across the country.

It was the realization of this eroded value system and general impoverishment that the federal government set up the anti-corruption crusade like Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) to curb embezzlement among public officers so that the resources made available for execution of projects impact positively on the poor to get over their predicament (Abimiku, 2009:13).

The Social Exclusion Theory

It was at the world summit of the 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark that the social exclusion theory was officially adopted (Abimiku 2009:14) the theory posits that poverty results from people who tend to be kept out from effective participation in societies activities that takes it all explains this position better, as different interest groups are often exerting control over available resources, hence perpetuate power and privileges through social closure, enforcing exclusion of some people from the scheme of things that can help alleviate their hardship. This in essence, means that the poor become poor because they are excluded from the opportunities, power and privileges that may enhance their welfare, hence they remain in perpetual cycle of poverty.

The claim to this theory can be seen in the effort put in place by government at establishing National Economic Empowerment and development Strategy (NEEDS) and encouraging the formation of self-help projects by communities and non-government organizations so that poverty resulting from social exclusion of certain persons within the society can be addressed.

The Elite Theory Of Public Policy

This theory explains that the elites in the society possess the skills, abilities, competence and knowledge such that they determine whatever happens. So the elites choose to allocate scarce productive resources now and in future their own benefit selfishly. They use political power as instruments to make policies that favour them alone and then abandon the masses to slide steeply into poverty net.

IV. SPATIAL DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN NIGERIA

Poverty eradication has been the overriding concern of development perspectives in Nigeria over the years. In spite of being the World's seventh largest producer and sixth largest petroleum exporter, the country with its present estimated population of over 163 million, finds itself sliding continuously into poverty net. The trend of relative poverty incidence has generally shown upward increase; doubling from 27.2% in 1980 to 54.4% in 2004 to 69% in 2010 indicating that about 112,518,507 Nigerians were in poverty (Obadon 214:9). The central Bank of Nigeria reports a substantial rise in 2012 to 72.0% in spite of the economic growth rates averaging over 6%.

According to Mabogunje (2002:128), the 1997 United Nations Development Programme Report found that regional disparities in the country are among the worst in the world, where the Human Development Index, HDI for Edo and Delta States had HDI score of 0.666 and ranked first among the then 19 states of the Federation while Borno state had only 0.156 and ranked last among the states. Such wide regional disparities, according to the UNDP, are a primary source of the country's perennial conflicts, political instability and social unrest (Mabogunje, 2002:129).

Similarly, according to the National Bureau of statistics (Daily Trust February 14, 2012), the percentage of Nigerians living in absolute poverty, that is, those who can afford only the bare essentials of food, shelter and clothing for the nation rose to 60.9% in 2010, compared with 54.7% in 2004, while regional analysis showed that the North-west and North – East recorded the highest poverty rates at 70% and 69% respectively even as the south- West and South- East recorded the least rate at 49.8%.

A state-by-state analysis (ibid) showed that Sokoto had the highest number of poor in the country with 86.4% of its population recorded as not enjoying good living standard compared to Niger State which had the lowest poverty rate of 43.6% by the end of 2010.

Earlier, Sunday Vanguard of January 30, 2000 reported the sorry state of Nigerians: that the percapita was \$250 GDP, life expectancy of about 50 years, with literacy rate of 45% only. And between 1985 – 1986, 34.1% of Nigerians lived below poverty level but jumped to 56% in 1996. The report continued that 26 million Nigerians were core poor in 1996, unlike 13 million in 1985 even as 60% of rural dwellers and 48% of urban dwellers were in poverty.

Available statistics from variety of sources (cited in Goshit 2004:173) indicated also that:

- The higher the size of household, the higher the rate of poverty;
- Poverty incidence is higher in female-headed household than male-headed;
- The higher the educational attainment of household head the lower the incidence poverty is higher among agriculture-related occupations than non-agricultural.
- Despite efforts aimed at reducing poverty in Nigeria, the phenomenon has been described as not only aggravating but continuous and worsening (Abimiku, 2009:16). One is tempted at this juncture to suggest that the economic growth rates of recent years were not truly pro-poor in design and implementation! Nigeria today faces the challenge of meeting the MDG of halving poverty by 2015, giving the fact that progress is sluggish in the spheres of poverty reduction, child mortality, material health and diseases other than HIV/AIDS.

V. POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMME

Poverty crisis in Nigeria is almost reaching devastating proportion. It was as a result of the continued slip into poverty that a number of intervention programmes were conceived and formulated for execution to reverse the

incidence. Beautiful programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution (GR), National Directorate for Employment (NDE) and Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) have been launched to promote self-reliance and buoyant economy to combat poverty in the country. Others with laudable intention like community Bank, People's Bank, Better life for Rural Women, family support programme, family Economic Advancement programme and NAPEP have either been forgotten or left to suffer poverty of neglect. However, a cursory review of these programmes will certainly show lack of commitment to the implementation by successive governments.

1. Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)

This was a World Bank assisted agricultural programme set up in 1975 to ensure increased productivity, incomes, savings, investments, standard of living to reduce poverty among farmers through distribution of agro-chemicals like pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and equipments to farmers at subsidized rate. Although the programme relieved acceptance leading to doubling of maize and rice production, but it became an agent for penetration, expansion and domination of the economy by some monopolistic, capitalist Nigerian bourgeoisie class, through bribes, kick-backs and concentration of land at the expense of the poor who could not afford the cost of the agricultural inputs.

2. Operation feed the Nation (OFN):

This was launched in 1976 to increase food production and combat unemployment through massive distribution of fertilizer, Agro-chemicals, feed- premixes and other farm inputs at subsidized rates (Newsletter, Aug 3, 2009:17). Although the number of farmers increased and temporary employment granted to the mentally able-bodied youths (MABY), the programmed ended in producing what Chinua Achebe described as 'food for thoughts and not food for the stomach' such that the poorest poor who could not afford the cost of the farm inputs remained in poverty net unassisted.

3. River Basin Development Authority (RBDA):

This was established in 1976 with the aim of utilizing the resources of drainage areas to boost irrigation farming, fishing and electric powers to combat poverty manifesting in hunger, starvation and misery. The projects strategies include surface impoundment by dam construction for all season farming and establishing of fisheries departments in tertiary institutions and ministries, with experts to provide technical assistant to small-scale fish farmers. Although recreational sites and employment opportunities have been created as a result, large scale dam construction benefited only the multinational companies engaged in the design, construction and maintenance of the projects.

4. Green Revolution and National Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme

This was launched in 1979 to replace OFN that had been introduced by previous government. It strategized to restrict imports and increase local food production to combat manifestation of poverty such as hunger, starvation, diseases and misery. Abimoye (cited in Newsletter, August 3, 2009:18). Lauded the success of the programme where he said it actually induced marginal growth in agricultural sector. Despite that, food shortage, hunger and starvation continued as loan meant for the programme were cornered by big politician of the second Republic who took loans for their non-existent farms. Hence it can be viewed that the programme was non-poor friendly as rice had to be imported to solve the problem of hunger and starvation.

5. Directorate For Food, Roads And Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)

This was launched as a comprehensive integrated food production and rural development agenda across all the states of the federation with the aim of providing the basic necessities of life like food, shelter and potable water as well as schools, electricity and roads to all the rural areas so that agricultural produce could be transported to urban centres faster to ultimately reduce wastage and cost to help farmers overcome poverty. Although, some rural settlements were reorganized into rural communities of 5000, served with electricity and rural roads constructed, the poverty conditions continued unabated because DFRRI lacked proper coordination which resulted in lack of project harmonization across the country.

6. National Directorate Of Employment (NDE)

This programme was launched in 1986 and charged with designing and implementing schemes to combat poverty through developing of work programme with labour-intensive potentials. The NDE had introduced four programmes of action to the effect as vocational skills development (VSD), Special Public Works (SPW), Small-Scale Enterprises (SSE) and Agricultural Employment Programme (AEP). Despite the success story of the NDE through its Special Public Works Scheme, the directorate could not keep pace with the ever-increasing number of unemployed Nigerian youths, besides the fact that it lack qualified staff and inadequate funds to support even those who have been trained for self-reliance.

7. Better Life Programme (BLP)

This programme was launched in 1987 to improve productivity, incomes, savings, standard of living and reduce poverty among Nigerian women in rural areas through massive distribution of farm inputs, granting of easy credits and establishment of various enlightenment programmes. The BLP succeeded in forming women cooperative societies, totaling 11, 373 in 1993 and 3,613 processing mills and fertilizers were distributed

(Ogwumike 2001:58). However, the programme could not continue because position seeking individuals hijacked it and there was shortage of funds and material as well. Since the poor could not benefit, the programme became a rhetoric than pragmatic in its objectives and had to be replaced with family support programme (which later became family economic Advancement programme).

8. Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP)

It was when family support programme was performing below expectation that it metamorphosed into family Economic Advancement Programme FEAP focused on investment promotion, stimulating economic activities and raising the production and economic power of people to alleviate their poverty condition through the establishment of viable resource-based industry (Nigeriana, May 1998:12).

Although not meant to replace Better Life Programme, the FEAP's overall objective was the promotion of industrial investment in the rural and sub-urban parts of the country by reducing wastage through processing, preservation and recycling, improvement of storage, marketing and packaging system. It preached self-reliance through the utilization of available agricultural and mineral resources. It strategized to establish 10,000 cottage industries, create a million jobs through skills acquisitions, and provide loans directly to cooperative members at interest rate of only 10% at the consent of ward heads, however the family Economic Advancement Programme was shortlived and could not impact significantly on the poor (Nigeriana, May, 1998:10).

9. Urban Mass Transit Programme (UMTP)

This programme was launched in 1988 with the aim of easing the movement of low-income workers and traders in urban areas to engender socio-economic development of all sectors in the country through purchase of buses for state mass transit agencies, labour unions and private sector as well as provision of spare parts and workshop tools and equipment (Goshit 2004: 176). As laudable as the programme was however, buses procured merely served the urban populace that constitute just 30% of the entire population. Besides fuel scarcity, frequent breakdown of vehicles, lack of adequate spareparts and maintenance cost marred its success, hence the conditions of the urban poor still remained the same and even worse.

10. People's Bank of Nigeria (PB)

This was established in 1989 with the aim of providing credit facilities to the less privilege Nigerians in order to increase their productivity, incomes, savings, and investments, reduce poverty and raise their standard of living. The people's bank targeted artisans and technician like truck pushers, shoe-cobbler, vulcanizers and road-side mechanics who could access bank loan without collateral, with a premium interest of just 5% on the loan. However, the programme was marred by corruption and gross mismanagement of funds such that the funds spent on equipment and furniture for the Bank was more than the loan disbursed (Ayodele, 2002:109).

11. Community Bank

This was launched in 1990 and its philosophy was to checkmate the rising incidence of poverty among Nigerians through granting access to loan, irrespective of the size of the amount required to boost productivity, incomes, savings, investments, and standard of living. Ayodele (2002:112).

Scheme succeeded in helping rural dwellers to imbibe the habit of savings loans were made available to the informal sector producers and small-scale industrialists such that the United Nations Industrial Development Organizations and United State-based Organizations, freedom from hunger showed interest and contributed to the effective delivery of credit facilities to the rural poor with a view to eradicating poverty manifesting in hunger, disease and misery. However, highly influential Nigerians collaborated with some Bank Managers hijacked the Community Bank and charged high interest on the loan facilities to deny the poor access to them.

12. National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)

This Community-based programme was launched in 1991 to give support for optimum utilization of the nation's rural and resources for accelerated food production, through consolidation of scattered fragmented holdings to boost productivity, incomes, savings, investments and living standard which would in turn reduce poverty. Its strategies involve land acquisition, land reorganization, land use planning and management, land consolidations, human resource development and utilization, provision of social infrastructure and supervised agricultural credit among others. It actually led to the emergence and development of growth centres in the farm areas as previously isolated farmers from their farm sites were brought nearer to one another to enjoy common facilities.

Although in Plateau State many farmers are still benefiting from the 16,000 hectares of land acquired for redistribution to farmers from the defunct Bokkos farm project where Irish potatoes, maize and beans are grown annually, NALDA is facing a lot of problems like lack of sufficient funds, scarcity of land, predominance of land tenure system, non-cooperation of farmers and the poor attitude of the mentally able-bodied youths (MABY) to the programme.

13. National Housing Programme

National Housing Programme was launched as early as 1970s with a commitment to alleviate the housing problems facing low-income workers in urban of staff dwelling units in government reserved Areas for government employees by income groups which consisted of site clearance, construction of drains and culverts in spacious places close to work place but far away from the urban slumps, ghettos and squalor.

However, in terms of physical manifestation only important cities bear the signs of government efforts in housing in government reserved areas.

14. Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP)

This programme, according to Obadan (cited in CBN 2001) was introduced in 2000. It was designed to be wholistic in orientation with broad features to cover provisions of jobs to the unemployed qualify youths, creation of credit facilities, raising the literacy rate from 51% to 70% by 2003, shooting up health care delivery system from 40% to 70%, raising rural water supply from 30% to 60% and same for rural electrification; embarking on training and settling of at least 60% of tertiary institutions graduate and development of simple processing and small-scale industries. Also included in the policy documents were increasing the emoluments of public sector workers, improving the supervisory capacity within the nation's institutions, rationalization of organization and methods within the system, particularly that of the existing 16 poverty alleviation institutions in Nigeria, encouraging and rewarding deserving Nigerians who excel in industry and enterprises substantial reduction of avenues for easy and illegitimate acquisition of wealth with the aim of checkmating sharp practices and corruption as well as launching of universal Basic Education Programme. However, as wholistics as the programme has been, it did not meet its target in implementation, hence it was overhauled and replaced with National Poverty Eradication programme.

15. National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)

This programme was launched sometime in 2001 to replace PAP. It focuses on strategies for the eradication of absolute poverty in Nigeria by centering mainly on youth empowerment and rural infrastructural development. NAPEP strategized to achieve its targets through relevant well-articulated and focused policy formulation, policy continuity, transparently sustainable practical programmes, full coordination and adequate funding at all levels of the three tiers of governance (Oyenomi 2003:44).

NAPEP provides strategies for the eradication of absolute poverty through streamlining and rationalization of existing poverty alleviation institutions and coordinated implementation of relevant schemes classified into four as follows:

- (a) Youths employment schemes (YES) which focuses on capacity acquisition, mandatory attachment, productivity improvement among others.
- (b) Rural infrastructure development (RIDs) which handles the provision of potable and irrigation water, transportation, rural energy and power supply;
- (c) Social welfare service scheme (SOWESS) which deals with special education, primary health care services, among others, and
- (d) Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS) which focuses on harnessing of agricultural, water, solid mineral and other environmental resources available in the country.

As a commitment on the part of federal government, twelve ministries including Agriculture and Rural Development, Education, Water Resources, Industry, Power and Steel, Labour and Productivity, Women Affairs and Youth Development, Health, works and Housing, Environment, finance and National Planning as well as Agencies like Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB), River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA), Small and Medium Industries Development Agency (SMIDA), National Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) National Primary Health care development agency (NPHDA), Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) and the then National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) were recognized as core poverty alleviation bodies (Torkaa, 2004:69).

Although, NAPEP has done quite well but like the previous programmes, it has wrongly perceived the problem of poverty, hence it has been marred by politicking, unnecessary bureaucracy and massive corruption.

VI. EFFECTIVE POVERTY ALLEVIATION STRATEGIES

It has been noted in the previous section of the paper that poverty alleviation programme of past regimes seem to have had no lasting solution, there is therefore the need for a paradigm shift from the usual approach. Most poverty alleviation programmes of Nigerians government have always failed to achieve their desired goals because of the politics of personal rule and the 'top-down- big – man' from seat of government. The approach is monopolistic, exploitative and distant from the ordinary people such that the policy makers cannot be accountable transparent, responsive and responsible to the poor (Maduagwu, 2000).

Furthermore, the top-down-big-man approach is master-servant relationship in the planning and execution of poverty alleviation programmes where government claims falsely to know and understand what poverty is, who the poor are and what they need in order to get out of poverty trap.

The pluralistic system is all-involving and suitable in the pursuit of freedom of the poor from underserve poverty because the poor usually have quite good perception of their own needs and goals and of what could be required to satisfy and make progress in life.

To this end, participation of the poor can be undertaken and effective right from the identification to the implementation stages. The poor can variously participate in the identification as well as prioritization of options

to alleviate their poor living conditions during surveys, interviews, questionnaires administrations and attending organized workshops, for a, seminars, conferences and meetings convened purposely to improve their welfare. By involving and interacting with the poor themselves, irrespective of sex in the design and implementation of poverty reduction programmes would not only benefit them but would even help to push growth and development to a sustainable level in line with the Nation's Millennium Development goals of democratic government of Nigeria.

Having considered the poor through interacting with them government on its part should:

- ❖ Make policies and strategies that are relevant to the needs of the poor;
- ❖ Articulate short term programme in such away that there is feed-back mechanism to assess performance; and
- ❖ Show commitment by funding poverty alleviation programmes adequately and monitor the implementation closely.

Conclusion

The paper has examined some poverty intervention efforts of successive regimes in Nigeria. It noted that most of the programmes actually held prospects of freeing the poor from poverty net but the poor were often excluded from the planning and implementation. Hence the paper recommended the need to always include the target persons right from planning to execution stage so that poverty was be reduced significantly among Nigerians.

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