

Vision 20:2020 and the Political Jiggery-Pockery in the Governance of Nigeria; Wherein Lies the Transformation Agenda?

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Abstract

This paper highlights some crucial issues in the effective actualization of vision20; 2020 goal in Nigeria. The areas among others evaluated include the power sector, Health care facilities and Human empowerment capacity building gaps. The paper concludes by making some possible suggestions on how to tackle these issues and problems both in the far and near future.

Keywords: Vision 20:2020, governance, transformation agenda, Nigeria economic fortune

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria boast high reserves of human and natural resources and unlike many sub-Saharan African nations, it has the potential to build a prosperous economy, reduce poverty significantly and provide the infrastructural services its population needs. However, with these abundant resources, the giant of Africa is indeed proving the point that possessing mere potentials seem to be inadequate for transformation to greatness. Decades of unfocused and self driven egocentric leadership which is critical in exploiting all the potentials for the good of citizenry has plunged the nation into a dungeon of darkness (Obi, 2009). This is because the function of leadership is to make accessible to citizens the basic needs of life.

In view of the need to radically reinforce a plan that will go beyond mere economic prescriptions to address social, human and political goals that will make accessible to every Nigeria citizen the basic needs of life irrespective of location, social stratification or religion, the Nigerian government keyed into the vision2020 goal. The vision was launched in 2009 as an economic plan aimed at positioning Nigeria to become one of the top 20 economies in the World by the year 2020, because no nation can truly develop without a national vision. In fact, Vision is to a nation what the eye is to the human body, take vision a way and that nation will forever grope in the dark. The vision 2020 planned to combine the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (NEEDS) of the Olusegun Administration and the seven point Agenda of the Umaru Yar'dua administration to among others stimulate Nigeria's economic growth and launch the country unto the path of sustained and rapid socio-economic development (Osisioma, 2012).

Apparently, in a time that Nigeria is in a hurry to overtake countries such as Italy, Indonesia and possibly South Korea in 2020, the question that lingers in the minds of Nigeria citizens however remains; where lies our faith? In view of the fact that the nation has more than enough to guarantee a living wage; there is oil production of 2.53 million barrels per day compared to 2.48 million barrels per day in 2012, the gross federally collectible revenue in 2013 is projected at N11.34 trillion of which the total revenue available for the federal government budget forecast at N4.1trillion representing an increase of 15% over the estimate of 2012 present momentary dwindling in oil price notwithstanding (Iwualla, 2014). With these mouth watering revenue accruing to the Nation, the expectations of the citizenry is a development blueprint that will transform the economy, reinvent the politics of our nation, secure the polity, care for the underprivileged and provide responsible, responsive and transformative leadership

Truly disturbed by the fact that after more than fifty years of policy reforms, the economic situations of Nigeria citizens has not improved, on assumption of office in May 2010, the president made a solemn promise that his priority would be to radically, structurally and fundamentally re-appraise basic assumptions that underlie our reforms and development efforts (Asobia, 2012). The promise was anchored on the transformation agenda, though the promise generally appear hopeful, fruitful, economically and socially progressive and geared towards moving the nation in the right industrial direction but when one begins to analyze the allocations to specific ministries and priority department, one is quickly demoralized.

Six years down the line to reach year 2020, institutional capacity, accountability and transparency have continued to be a daunting issue and one begins to wonder if there exist a genuine commitment to truly moving the country forward or was it just as Shakespeare will say; a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

The purpose of this write up therefore, is based on the perceptive that if a father insists on his right to beat his child, his child also has the right at least to cry, if he cannot fight back. It presents a humble attempt to highlight some contemporary issues and problems pertaining the realities on ground with regards to the goal of vision 20; 2020, efforts made by the transformation programme while taking analysis of some key economic indicators gaps that would enable Nigeria citizens appreciate the efforts or otherwise of her leaders in this direction and possible make recommendations to our policy makers.

Current Nigeria Economic Fortune

In spite of the turbulent global economic environment and changing global oil map over the last decades, the Nigeria economy has been resilient, experiencing a robust growth in 2012 of 6.5% compared with global growth of 3.2 %. Inflation is now to single-digit at 9% in January 2013 compared with 12.6% in January 2012 and exchange rate has remained stable (Iwualla, 2014). Between 1999 till date, over 13.3 trillion naira has been appropriated by the national Assembly (Onah, 2010). The country earned more revenue from oil sell in 2013 and 2014 than budgeted, actual oil prices received in year 2013 was \$95 and \$110 per barrel in 2014. The exchange rate used for receipt from sale of crude oil, gas e.t.c was N95 to \$1; this is below the bench mark oil price of N160 to \$1. The bench mark oil price of \$79 per barrel was used in preparing 2013 budget from \$72 per barrel in 2012. Oil production increased from 2.53 million barrels per day in 2013 to 2.53 million barrels per day in 2014 (Iwualla, 2014)

Table 1: Revenue generated in 2011, 2012 & 2013 in Nbn

	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Year												
2011	732	767	877	782	749	848	1,049	1,110	1,149	1,143	950	903
2012	968	743	838	796	698	675	837	896	643	669	717	656
2013	781	853	805	807	826	785	1,080	791	905	740	744	

Source: Tell magazine, march 2014

Nigeria received more in remittances than any other sub-Saharan African country in terms of foreign aid, with US\$9.221million being received in 2007. Average remittance per person were US\$62 compared with the average of US\$26 for sub-Saharan Africa, ODA represent about 1.2 percent of GDP which translates into about US\$14 per person (World Bank, 2010). Donor agencies like World Bank group and United Kingdom department for international development (DFID) have also stepped up financial and technical assistance in order to remove obstacles to growth and development in the period under review. In 2006 ODA to Nigeria reached US\$280 million and down from US\$573 million in 2004 and equivalent to only US\$2 per capita compared with average for Africa of US\$28 per capita. World Bank report indicates that total donor supports in terms of overall current allocation to Agriculture, food security, land tenure and water was US\$1.69 billion, comprising US\$645million by European Union (EU), US\$585 million by the World Bank. US\$175million by United Nation Development Programme (UNDP), US\$165million by DFID, US\$56.5 million by USAID and about US\$13.5 million by the Canadian international Development Agency (World Bank Report, 2009). In March 26, 2013, World Bank approved US\$150million for two projects in Nigeria to boost employment opportunities for young people in 20 states and to improve education quality for millions of school children in Nigeria state education program investment project (SEPIP) (World Bank group, 2014). In 2013, Nigerian government planned to argument its domestic resources with a proposed US\$1billion Euro bond (Iwualla, 2014). More so, in 2013, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow into Africa rose by 4% to 57billion with inflow into Nigeria standing at \$5.6billion (Manuaka, 2014). Total amount of tax collected by Federal Inland Revenue service (FIRS) from all sources was N2.8trillion (Nations, Feb. 1, 2011pp42).

The foregoing present's a bird eye view of the palatable revenue that has accrued to the country for couples of years now but with attendant decline in the standard of living of average Nigeria citizens.

Contemporary Issues in Nigeria vision 20; 2020 agenda; locating the transformation agenda

No doubt, there are numerous areas to measure the attainment of vision 2020 goal which the transformational agenda has set out sincerely to give its best shots. However, this paper would simply highlight some of the crucial ones. Some of such issues include:

- a. The power sector
- b. Health care facilities
- c. Human empowerment

It was Akpan Ekpo; a professor of Economics and Director of West African institute for financial and Economic Management that declared on (Tell, March 2014pp45) that “ any nation that does not think of the welfare of its people is doomed to crumble like a park of Domino” . Further to this, a management expert Peter Drucker once said that ... there has to be something to point to and say, we have not worked in vain. Apparently convinced of the need to set a road map for actualizing the vision 2020 goal, President Goodluck Jonathan in a speech he delivered to Nigeria Community in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in (Nations, Feb1, 2011pp2) said

Without security, there is no government, so it is not debatable. It is something we have to address and we are working towards that with vigor. But if I am voted into power, within the next four years, the issue of power will become a thing of the past. Four years are enough for anyone in power to make significant improvement and if I can't improve on power within this period, it therefore means that I cant do anything

even if I am there for the next four years, ... the law does not allow voting outside Nigeria but I will work towards it by 2015, even though I will not be running for election.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that Steady power supply was identified as part of the way to position Nigerian economy to guarantee meaningful industrial development and aid Nigeria to her dream of becoming one of the top 20 industrialized nations of the world by the year 2020. Conscious of this fact, the 2013 budget allocation to the power sector for the connection of generated powers to the national grid was N74.26Billion (Enakoko, 2014). Government also spent about US\$3.8billion on the rehabilitation of some power plant while US\$175million was expended on gas infrastructure upgrade (Amanze and Alike, 2014). More so, the National Executive council approved the disbursement of a sum of US\$1.6billion for the enhancement of the transmission network (Ugbomeh, 2014). Accordingly, the sum of US\$500million and US\$150million is being expected from World Bank and African Development Bank (AFDB) in 2014 (Nebo quoted in Amanze and Alike, 2014).

Upon this heartwarming and cheering news of huge government investment in the power sector, it has remained quite sordid that rather than finding lasting solution to the long running problem bedeviling the Nigerian electricity sector, those charged with the responsibility of supervising the sector has chosen to be setting unrealistic targets. For instance, the minister of power, Prof. Chinedu Nebo announced that by end of 2013, the country power generation would rise to between 7000 and 10,000 mega watts. The worst culprit is the minister of state of power, Hajia Zainab; she projected that power generation would increase to 6000 megawatts in July 2013 and rise further to 10,000 by December 2013 and with this increase in power generation, Nigerians would experience 17 to 18hours of daily power supply in the country (Amanze and Alike, 2014). Since November, 2013 when the defunct power holding company of Nigeria (PHCN) was ceded to 18 successor firms, electricity generation in the country has revolved around 3,000megawatts. Power generation dropped from 4,105mega watts in April to 3,674 mega watts as at 24th May, 2014. As of 15th June 2014, peak generation was 3,714.70megawatts while peak demand forecast is 12800.42mwh where energy sent out was 3,277.72 (...). This power supply is grossly inadequate to the country's power needs which experts put at about 30,000 megawatts (Ugbomeh, 2014). Consequently, the people are left at the mercy of exploitative generator distributors across the country for power supply.

With this sympathetic scenario, Nigerians have expressed widespread skepticism over the exact intention of government for unbundling power holding company of Nigeria in November 2013 as National Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC). Even with constant epileptic power supply in the first half of 2014, the federal government secretly increased tariff in 2013, less than one year after the June 1, 2012 hike in tariff. The government had also in 2011 increased electricity tariff silently from N4.20k to N7.00 even with no corresponding improvement in power generation and distribution (Ugbomeh, 2014). Under the latest increase, electricity consumers especially those using pre-paid meters were subjected to 50% increase in fixed charges/maintenance charges with effect from March 2013. The residential customers that were paying N500 maintenance were asked to be paying N750 under the new tariff. By encouraging the private sectors to increase tariff for electricity that is not being supplied, the government is lending credence to the belief in some quarters that these so called private companies were floated by the political elite who are championing the transformation agenda to further impoverish the Nigerian people. The promise of 18hours light usage per ay only exist in Aso Rock and the government houses across the states of the nation and possibly at the domain of those of our federal ministers and other special aids of the government in power (Ofuonyebi, 2014)

The rate of tariff plan has also been quite worrisome and there is no proportionate increase in electricity supply. Recently the National Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) announced its intention to increase electricity tariff by N1 per kilowatt for customers in R2 category from June 2014, and that the electricity fixed charge (fc) which is to rise to N1500 from June1, 2014 in the multi-year tariff order (MYTO) for 2014 will remain at N750 for some customers (Ugbomeh, 2014). With this desire there is demise of many industries while multitude of companies have either gone under or fled the country because of high cost of generating power for their plants living citizens to question the efficacy of the transformation agenda. This development is synonymous with the fuel subsidy withdrawal which according to El rufai quoted in Emeh et al (2012) by withdrawing subsidy; the Jonathan Administration is taxing every Nigerian- Man, Woman and Child N8000 while N1.4trillion has gone into some people's pocket. This disturbing situation leaves everyone in a dilemma situation considering the fact that the target year of 2020 is around the corner and the promise of transformation is still promising unrealistic projections. It is the stability of electricity that makes economy boom. Honestly, if we have regular power supply it will promote rapid development in Nigeria.

The fact that Nigeria has existed for 54years does not call for celebration. It has been 54years of gradual, accelerated Impoverishment of the people and polarization of the polity. Celebration of independence in a country where over 200 of her girls are in the den of heartless terrorist for over 5months is a mockery of freedom and liberty (Manuaka, 2014). Indeed, the state of health in Nigeria has remained deplorable and pathetic, the volume of money budgeted for the provision of health care facilities does not in any way justify the present

situation in Nigeria. For instance, DFID reports revealed that Nigeria’s health indicators are among the worst in the world (Onuoha et al, 2010), nearly 15% of Nigeria children do not survive to their fifth birthday. Two leading causes of child mortality are malaria (30%) and Diarrhea (20%). Malnutrition contributes 52% of deaths of children under five (.....). According to the information from the federal ministry of health published in the social statistics department of the national bureau of statistics, malaria claimed the highest number of lives in the country during the period between 2001 and 2004. A report of UNICEF cited in Ikejiani Clark (2009; 3) noted that

One Nigerian woman dies every ten minutes due to complications of pregnancy and child birth....., Nigeria ranked 70 out of 71 less developed countries as the worst place for a mother to live.

Nigeria ranked second to India as a country with the highest number of children who are not getting adequate basic health care (16million). Nigeria has a second highest maternal death rate in the World, it ranked 4th out of 22 countries with a high burden of tuberculosis (Onah, 2012). Nigeria health system for example was ranked 187 out of 191 countries by World Health Organization (WHO) in 2000. The infant mortality rate, under-five mortality rate and the maternal mortality ratio are some of the indicators that are often used to compare health status of populations. Nigeria’s figures on each of the three indices are some of the worst in the world, even by the standard of developing countries. Currently, a tenth of children born in Nigeria die under the age of one year (infant mortality rate of 100per 1000 live births) and a fifth die before their fifth birth day (under five mortality rate of 201 per 1000 live births). According to the most recent estimates from the United Nations agencies, over 50,000 mothers die from childbirth related events- the second highest annual national maternal death figure in the world. Nigeria’s maternal mortality ratio is estimated to be between 800 and 1,000 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (Fatusi, 2014). The leading causes of deaths among mothers and children in Nigeria are largely preventable diseases (polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, measles, malaria and diarrhea). At federal teaching hospital (1 &11) Abakaliki, in Ebonyi State, there is no functional X-ray machine, leaving patients that require urgent medical attention at the mercy of private hospital vendors who charge a very high rate at delayed process. A trip to the accident and emergency session of the hospital will suffice.

In view of the foregoing, the situation clearly suggest that the Nigerian health system needs more than cosmetic change, what it requires is a radical reform to improve its performance, in the word of Adetokumbo an eminent public health physician quoted in (Fatusi, 2014), the Nigerian health system is sick , very sick and in need of intensive care. As a federal ministry of health document puts it, the Nigeria health system is so complex and has grown out of so many obtuse needs that the best approach to reform is to start afresh and plan the system de novo. Most workers don’t have the health insurance policy to help them manage work hazards; for instance, 68% of total health expenditure in the country is done out of pocket payment by National Health insurance Scheme (NHIS) at the beginning of its programme in 2005. In 2012 it only managed to capture three (3%) more of the population, but the reality of these figures is far worse (Tell, May5 2014, pp21). The three percent merely represent 5million of government workers and their dependents. Currently, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) estimates that there are over 40million people in Nigeria who are not employed, these ones cannot be covered by any health insurance scheme because of lack of shelter or even clothing. This simply means that their take home does not cover their basic needs like food, shelter or even clothing; therefore, health for this category of people is luxury.

With these trends one wonders if the transformation arrangement is very slow or it is financially or politically incapacitated.

Aside from medical care, another measurement of standard of living is the provision o decent jobs. In our country today, jobs have become a scarce commodity. Unemployment has been identified as the mother of all development crises in contemporary Nigeria and indeed Africa. According to The International Labour Organization, unemployed workers are those who are currently not working but are willing and able to work for pay, currently available to work, and have actively searched for work. In our country today, jobs have become a scarce commodity, the rising profile of unemployment and poverty in Nigeria is assuming a worrisome dimension as empirical studies have shown. Nigeria, a sub-Saharan African country, has at least more than half of its population living in abject poverty. The trend of Unemployment rate as Percent of total labor force in Nigeria according to National Statistical Office Latest actual data has been on the increase ranging from 13.1% - 21.1% in 2000 and 2010 respectively.

Table2: Unemployment rate in the country

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Unemployment rate	13.1	13.6	12.6	14.8	13.4	11.9	12.3	12.7	14.9	19.7	21.1

Source: NBS report, 2011.

The rate of unemployment among Nigerians worsened after President Goodluck Jonathan assumed office (premium times, October 10, 2013). The report indicated that the unemployment rate in Nigeria in 2010 was 21.1%, a figure that increased to 23.9% in 2011. The National planning commission report confirms the fears by Nigerians that unemployment has been on the rise in the country with unofficial estimate putting it at above 30%. It is also one of many other reports by national, regional and global bodies indicating that the efforts being put in place by the Jonathan administration may not be yielding the required results. In June 2013, the World Bank released a report, Nigeria Economic Report, stating that unemployment rate worsened from 12% of the working population in 2006 to 24% in 2011. The population commission report also stated that 51.18 million Nigerians were employed in the economy in 2011. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) estimates that Nigeria population grew by 3.2% in 2011 from 159.3 million people in 2010 to 164.4 million in 2011 reflecting rapid population growth. Unemployment is higher in the rural areas at about 25.6% than in urban areas where it was 17% on the average (NBS report, 2013); in December 2013, the National Bureau of Statistics observed that 54% of Nigeria youths were unemployed, expanding on the issue the minister of finance noted with fury that no fewer than 5.3 million youths were jobless in the country while 1.8 million graduates enter the labour market every year (Uche-Okobi, 2014). With these ugly trends the number of jobs created in 2011 was reported as 209,239 by the ministry of labor and productivity. This development is quite worrisome as it is coming up at a time when there are more need for more personnel to tackle some developmental and insecurity challenge facing the nation. For example, Paradang the controller general of Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS) quoted in (Tell magazine, March 2014 pp35) observed that

There are over 1,400 legal border routes through which Nigeria can be assessed from the neighboring countries .., that is not the only headache that NIS is battling with...another factor is inadequate manpower to man even the legal borders. ...NIS will have to open 30 control posts to cover different borders to man the post. To be able to do that, NIS will have to recruit 5000 personnel annually for five years.

The above sympathetic scenario justifies the fact that the manner employment exercise is handled in our country coupled with the terrible treatment of the job seekers shows that our norms and values for human dignity are for the dogs. For the few privileged ones working, the working condition and welfare package of employees in public co-operation has declined. In most ministries where there are opportunities for employment, the leaders seem to be truly detached from the plight of its youths.

The reality on ground in the provision of public goods informs us that we are still far from that country of our dream, little wonder the unemployment situation has created an army of youths that is ready to do anything to survive. It was not surprising that a stampede at the Abuja and Lagos stadiums led to the death of some 20 applicants besides the many of them that sustained injuries during the last recruitment exercise by Nigeria Immigration Service. There was national outcry, but the minister responsible is still in office. Our leaders seemed not concerned about the welfare of the masses but how to enrich themselves. It is therefore pertinent to mention the fact that since 2011, the budget of the National Assembly has remained a constant N150 billion. Of this figure the legislators argue that it is only three percent of the total budget, yet they have refused to disclose how this N150 billion is spent (Tell, Oct. 2014). To further explain what goes on at the floor of the national Assembly, Sola Adeyeye; a former legislator quoted in Akinkuotu (2014, pp42) observed that;

If Nigerians know how much we in the National Assembly were making, they would come and stone all of us. Much of the money politicians take home does not come in form of salaries' it comes in form of bare-faced looting called allowance.

The foregoing explained why in 2013, reports by Transparency International (TI) a German based graft watch dog ranked Nigeria as the 33rd most corrupt country in the World. In the groups corruption perception index 2013, Nigeria ranked 144th out of 177 nations surveyed across the globe, thereby scoring 25 point out of a possible 100 (Uche-okobi, 2014). With such level of corruption analysts say many Nigerians are denied what rightly belongs to them. During the meeting of International Monetary Fund and World Bank in April 2014, Nigeria was ranked as one of the top five countries that have the largest number of poor people. Jim Yong Kim, World Bank president observed that Nigeria ranked third in the World with 7% population of the World's poor while India and China ranked first and second with 33% and 13% world poor (Uche-okobi, 2014).

Consequently, the question that lingers in the minds of Nigeria citizens however remains; where lies our faith? When the nation has more than enough to guarantee a living wage

Conclusion

An evaluation of the Vision 20:2020 and the political jiggery-pockery in the governance of Nigeria has revealed the extent to which it has achieved its objectives so far. However, it is not yet 'UHURU' as the task of transforming the Nigerian nation from a socio-political and economic perspective requires more than the hard

factors of growth and development. It is quite clear from the foregoing that for Vision 20:2020 in Nigeria to achieve its stated objectives, these crucial issues of epileptic power supply, poor health facilities and capacity buildings gaps must be squarely addressed by Transformation managers in Nigeria.

It is recommended that to attain the goal of Nigeria being among the first 20 countries in terms of industrialization, democracy and human resource in the year 2020, the Nigeria unemployed who are the worst hit in terms of economic hardship should be encouraged to form a union or an association. This umbrella union would be the umpire responsible to shout foul whenever recruitment exercise in the MDA's is been hijacked by the politicians.

Evidences have shown that the economy had grown from bad to worst with the entrance of some politicians who have continuously glued themselves to power, rotating portfolio from one ministry to another with attendant indices of constant decline in the welfare of the citizens whom they hold power in trust. Indeed, it is easier to deal with cabals than punishing all Nigerians for corruption of a privilege few. As a matter of fact, any politician in this country who is above 50years of age should not be allowed to hold any political position, they should be given the responsibility of performing the role of custodian of the norms and value of good governance.

Because government is a continuum, Politicians who participated in the administration of one regime should be made to give room for others to acquire leadership experience. An elder's council forum that would serve as advisory body to incoming government should be formed at federal, state and local government level. The council should be made up of politicians that have served for one term of administration while severance allowance should be made available to take care of their remuneration needs.

To avoid making our country a global laughing stock by announcing unrealizable projections, political Nominees during screening exercise at the legislative floor, should be made to explain in specific terms, timelines for accessing their performances. With this timelines, government could give them all the required political and financial enablement and where they fail to meet-up the projections, they should be sent to exile or ostracized.

Office of the senate president, speaker house of Representative, ruling party chairman e.t.c should not be influence by geographical spread but based on precedence. Group/s involved in sycophancy, political thuggery or pasting of posters or sponsoring campaign to distract any serving president before INEC announced date of campaign should be arrested and jailed for they are the distracters of government.

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