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Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria: Issues and Problems

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Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Nigeria: Issues and Problems

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Abstract- Development is a key factor in every given society. Although, the concept of development and its understanding differs from society to society. That is, each society has ways of developing itself passing through the necessary developmental stages. The success of these stages is a function of many key factors such as the environment, interaction with other societies within and outside, leadership and its style, management, culture, individual and collective goal(s) of the people and of the community and the people themselves. The MDGs is meant for Africa as a continent with a bench mark of 2015, what is the situation of realization of these goals in spite of the financial resources committed to this course? What are measures put in place by Nigeria as a country or to what extent have we gone in realizing these MDGs? Hence this article to investigate the issues and problems of MDGs in Nigeria. The secondary method of data collection was thoroughly explored in this article. The article noticed that Nigeria as the GIANT of Africa might not attain the MDGs even if smaller nations (Ghana, Cameroon and Botswana etc) in Africa does.

I. INTRODUCTION

Bringing together, in the eighth Goal, the responsibilities of developing countries with those of developed countries, founded on a global partnership endorsed at the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002, and again at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in August 2002.

a) UNDP Comprehensive Perception of MDGs

According to UNDP, the MDGs are comprised of the following eight goals, targets and indicators:

* Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Target 1 : Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day

1. Proportion of Population Below \$1 (PPP) per Day (World Bank)
2. Poverty Gap Ratio, \$1 per day (World Bank)
3. Share of Poorest Quintile in National Income or Consumption (World Bank).

Target 2 : Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

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4. Prevalence of Underweight Children Under Five Years of Age (UNICEF)
5. Proportion of the Population below Minimum Level of Dietary Energy Consumption (FAO)

* Goal 2 : Achieve Universal Primary Education

Target 3 : Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling

6. Net Enrolment Ratio in Primary Education (UNESCO)
7. Proportion of Pupils Starting Grade 1 who Reach Grade (UNESCO)
8. Literacy Rate of 15-24 year-olds (UNESCO)

* Goal 3 : Empower Women and Promote Equality Between Women and Men

Target 4 : Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015

9. Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Education (UNESCO)
10. Ratio of Literate Women to Men 15-24 years old (UNESCO)
11. Share of Women in Wage Employment in the Non-Agricultural Sector (ILO)
12. Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliaments (IPU)

* Goal 4: Reduce Under-Five Mortality By Twothirds

Target 5 : Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five

13. Under-Five Mortality Rate (UNICEF)
14. Infant Mortality Rate (UNICEF)
15. Proportion of 1 year-old Children Immunised Against Measles (UNICEF).

* Goal 5 : Reduce Maternal Mortality by Threequarters

Target 6 : Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio

16. Maternal Mortality Ratio (WHO)
17. Proportion of Births Attended by Skilled Health Personnel (UNICEF)

*Goal 6 : Reverse The Spread of Diseases, Especially Hiv/Aids And Malaria

Target 7 : Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

18. HIV Prevalence Among 15-24 year-old Pregnant Women (UNAIDS)

19. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate and Population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, UNICEF, UN Population Division, WHO)
20. Ratio of school attendance of orphans to school attendance of non-orphans aged 10-14 years

Target 8 : Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

21. Prevalence and Death Rates Associated with Malaria (WHO):
22. Proportion of Population in Malaria Risk Areas Using Effective Malaria Prevention and Treatment Measures (UNICEF):
23. Prevalence and Death Rates Associated with Tuberculosis (WHO):
24. Proportion of Tuberculosis Cases Detected and Cured Under Directly-Observed Treatment Short Courses (WHO)

**Goal 7 : Ensure Environmental Sustainability*

Target 9 : Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes ; reverse loss of environmental resources.

25. Forested land as percentage of land area (FAO)
26. Ratio of Area Protected to Maintain Biological Diversity to Surface Area (UNEP)
27. Energy supply (apparent consumption; Kg oil equivalent) per \$1,000 (PPP) GDP (World Bank)
28. Carbon Dioxide Emissions (per capita) and Consumption of Ozone-Depleting CFCs (ODP tons):

Target 10 : Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water

29. Proportion of the Population with Sustainable Access to and Improved Water Source (WHO/UNICEF)
30. Proportion of the Population with Access to Improved Sanitation (WHO/UNICEF)

Target 11 : Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020

31. Slum population as percentage of urban population (secure tenure index) (UN-Habitat)

** Goal 8 : Create A Global Partnership For Development, with Targets for Aid, Trade and Debt Relief*

Target 12 : Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, nondiscriminatory

trading and financial system Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction — both nationally and internationally Target 13. Address the special needs of the least developed countries Includes: tariff and quota free access for least developed countries' exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and

cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction.

Target 14 : Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing States.

Target 15 : Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term.

Target 16 : In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.

Target 17 : In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries

Target 18 : In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications

Official development assistance

32. Net ODA as percentage of OECD/DAC donors' gross national product (targets of 0.7% in total and 0.15% for LDCs)
33. Proportion of ODA to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation)
34. Proportion of ODA that is untied
35. Proportion of ODA for environment in small island developing States
36. Proportion of ODA for transport sector in landlocked countries

Market access

37. Proportion of exports (by value and excluding arms) admitted free of duties and quotas
38. Average tariffs and quotas on agricultural products and textiles and clothing
39. Domestic and export agricultural subsidies in OECD countries
40. Proportion of ODA provided to help build tradecapacity

Debt sustainability

41. Proportion of official bilateral HIPC debt cancelled
42. Total Number of Countries that Have Reached their HIPC Decision Points and Number that Have Reached their Completion Points (Cumulative) (HIPC) (World Bank-IMF)
43. Debt Service as a Percentage of Exports of Goods and Services (World Bank)
44. Debt Relief Committed Under HIPC Initiative (HIPC) (World Bank-IMF)
45. Unemployment of 15-24 year-olds, Each Sex and Total (ILO)
46. Proportion of Population with Access to Affordable, Essential Drugs on a Sustainable Basis (WHO)
47. Telephone Lines and Cellular Subscribers per 100 Population (ITU)

48. Personal Computers in Use and Internet Users per 100 Population (ITU).

II. MDGS AND THE NIGERIA CASE HOW-FAR?

GOAL 1; Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger the millennium development goals call for reducing the proportion of people living on less than \$1 to half the 1990 level by 2015 from 27.9 percent of people in low and middle income economies to 14.0 percent. Also to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger from 1990-2015.

Nigeria, the most populous African country has more than 70 percent of its citizens living below poverty line. The Nigerian preliminary report on world bank global consultation with the poor suggests the communities in Nigeria have a rich, complex and comprehensive experience of poverty, defining it using a range of material and non-material indicator. Increasingly, communities perceive poverty as an overwhelming denial of their right to a quality life that is enabling and empowering with characteristics of social exclusion, vulnerability, and insecurity [World Bank, 1999], it is estimated by the united nations that about 20% of African `s populations resides in Nigeria and that over 50% of African investments are in the country [Chinsman, 1998].

In spite of substantial economic progress and social advancement in the past thirty years, then, is still much human suffering and the country continues to face enormous challenges in setting a development agenda that meets the need of its citizenry. About, 10% of Nigeria population lives in absolute poverty [define as earning less than \$1.00 a day] with about 80% of poor residing in rural areas [UNDP, 1996; NPC, 1996]. The federal office of statistics [1999] reported that during a 17 years period [1980-1996], proportion of core poor rose five-fold from 6.2% in 1980 to 29.3% in 1996, with the greatest percentage increase in the period between 1992 and 1996. Levels of urban poverty also worsened sharply from 17.6% in 1980 to 37.80% in 1985 with an all-time high of 58.2% [FOS, 1999].

Considering the aggregate macro-levels, the gross national product [GNP] has declined from \$ 1,000 in 1980 to 260 in 1995 placing Nigeria among the 20 poorest nations in the world [UNDP, 1998]. The physical quality of life index [PQLI] recorded in 1980 was 38% in Nigeria, while Kenya reported an index of 53% and Ghana and Cote D'Ivoire 41% respectively [UNDP, 1996]- the united [HDI] for 1996 placed Nigeria resources. The 1998 figure was more dismal and Nigeria ranked 142 among the 172 countries assessed [Oladipo, 1999].

The Nigeria demographic and health survey [NDHS, 2003], attested to the contribution of poor nutrition and hunger on high toll rates of disability, morbidity and mortality in Nigeria. The body mass index

also confirmed poor health indicator among women in relation to poor food intake.

However, government has reportedly made several attempts at poverty alleviation. Successive regimes in the country had rolled out various programmes aimed at poverty alleviation, but these programmes, despite the laudable objectives of their initiators were moribund by corrupt practice some of the recent programmes include DFRRI, FSN and most recently, poverty Alleviation programme.

III. OVERVIEW OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The MDGs were introduced and agreed on at the united nation millennium summit in September 2000 with nearly 190 countries, including Nigeria as signatories to the agreement. The eight MDGs were:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education;
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

According to DFID [2007] the MDGs were introduced as of a wider attempt to encourage the international community to stop talking about making a difference in developing world and join forces to start doing something about it. Alongside the goals a series of 18 targets were also drawn up to give the international community a number of tangible improvement to aim for within a fixed period of time, and also make it easier for them to progress to date [table 1]. The intention is that almost all of these targets will be achieved by 2015.

IV. THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT IN NIGERIA AND CHALLENGES FOR MDGS

It is essential to gain an understanding of the challenges which need to be addressed to achieve industrial development and attain the MDGs. This is informed by the characteristics of the rural areas and the significance of the rural dwellers in national development.

Table 1 : MDGs, Goals and Targets

Goals	Targets
MDG 1; Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty	Target 1. Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of whose income is less than \$1 a day.
MDG 2; Achieve universal primary	Target 2. Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.
MDG 3; Promote gender equality and empower women	Target 3. Ensure that , by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.
MDG 4; Reduce child mortality	Target 4. Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015
MDG 5; Improve maternal health	Target 5. Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.
MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases	Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio
MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability	Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and began to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
MDC 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development	<p>Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and began to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases</p> <p>Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources.</p> <p>Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.</p> <p>Target 11: Have achieved by 2020 a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers</p> <p>Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, nondiscriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction both nationally and internationally)</p> <p>Target 13: Address the special needs of the Least Developed Countries (includes tariff-and quota-free access for Least Developed Countries? Exports, enhanced program of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries (HPCs) and cancellation of official bilateral debt, and more generous official bilateral debt, and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction).</p> <p>Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and small island developing states (through the Program of Action for the sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and 22nd General Assembly provisions)</p> <p>Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term</p> <p>Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth</p> <p>Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries.</p> <p>Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information communication technologies</p>

V. RELEVANCE OF MDGs TO NIGERIA

Igbuzor (2006) pointed out some important reasons why Nigeria should participate in the MDGs. According to him, MDGs provide additional entry point to engage government on development issues. It also affects all segments of the society and serves as link between government and the grassroots. It provides link between local and international actions towards human centered development. Other reasons advanced include: MDGs draw together in a single agenda issues that require priority to address the development question. Secondly, the MDGs have received tremendous endorsement and backing by world's governments and thirdly, the MDGs have the advantage of being more or less measurable, few in number, concentrated on human development and focused almost on a single date 2015. Another advantage of the MDGs to Nigeria is that it adds urgency and transparency to international development.

VI. NIGERIA'S COMMITMENT TO ACHIEVING MDGs

Explicit resource commitments have been made to achieve the MDGs. According UNDP (2007), in 2003, the Government of Nigeria approved a poverty reduction strategy, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), based partly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To prioritize its spending in line with the Goals, Medium Term sector Strategies (MTSS) were developed to guide the preparation and implementation of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), with 57 percent of total capital spending earmarked for the MDGs related sectors. A prudential committee on the MDGs was set up in 2005, with membership comprising of the Federal and State governments, the Legislature, Civil Society organisations and the Private sector and development partners. The review of NEEDS has to led to the elaboration of a new strategy. NEEDS is more closely aligned to achievement of the MDGs. NEEDS is being aligned with the Seven-Point Agenda that is the focus of the new administration, which is largely in line with the MDGs to form the country's National Development Agenda. This is expected to be the first medium term plan to implement the Vision 2020.

Following the debt relief extended to Nigeria in 2005, a Virtual Poverty Fund was established to ensure that monies released from the debt relief would be channeled towards initiatives to reduce poverty. Since 2006, on an annual basis, about US\$1 billion has been allocated to support progress in health, education, water and sanitation, environment, energy, housing, women's rights, HIV/AIDS, social safety nets (including micro-credit scheme and conditional cash transfer), the conditional grant scheme to state governments and for the provision of rural infrastructure. This fund facilitated

the establishment of monitoring framework for tracking its expenditure and evaluating its impact. Through the involvement of the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), this monitoring framework has been used to track the performance of the activities implemented under the Debt Relief Gains (DRG).

An MDG awareness campaign was carried out in 2005 with participation from a broad spectrum of society including school children, out-of-school youth, and grass-roots women. It also included training for the media to encourage reporting to bring the Goals to public attention and show the connection between the MDGs and the daily life of the people. This campaign increased awareness of the Goals and underlined the survey of MDGs awareness was also undertaken in 2006. At the national level, MDGs needs assessment has been undertaken in eight sectors – agriculture, energy, environment, housing, roads, water, health and education. Efforts to garner support for the states and local governments and being introduced with funding being provided from the national level for “MDGs quick wins” projects. The MDGs report, not less than 14 states have initiated the process of domesticating MDGs reporting. Significant progress has been made in education (MDGs 2 and 3, relating to universal primary education and gender equality). Net enrolment rates show considerable improvement as a result of the government's implementation of the Universal Basic Education Programme (UBEP), a 145, 000 teachers were retrained and 40, 000 new teachers recruited through the Virtual Poverty Fund (Igbuzor, 2006).

On Goals 7 and 8 on environment and global partnership for development respectively, initiatives that merit special mention are the agreement on Zero Tolerance on Gas Flares by 2008 and the cancellation of Nigeria's international debt, freeing up an additional \$1 billion a year for poverty reduction. At the Africa regional launch of fighting climate change: Human solidarity in a divided world, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua appealed for world leaders to address climate change as a matter of urgency to avert a global climate disaster. He explained that developing countries are paying a high toll for the actions of rich nations and called on developed countries to drastically cut emissions, and exceed the report's recommendations. “While the report is advocating a reduction by 30% by 2020 and 80% by 2050 from advanced countries, the 30% must be reached before 2015 if they really want Africa to reach the MDGs.” President Yar'Adua said that Nigeria, as the host of the regional launch, would take a leading role on climate change in Africa and that his government would not tolerate gas flaring in the Delta beyond 2008 (UNDP HDR, 2008).

The President (Yar'Adua) urged that African governments should act now to address the effects of climate change in the region, which include erratic rainfall patterns, floods and prolonged and recurring

droughts creating a cumulative cycle of vulnerability and destitution across generations (UNDP HDR, 2008). The details of the situation in Nigeria were captured in the 2005 MDGs report with regard to each of the goals is shown below:

a) Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger

2015 target: Halve proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day, and those suffering hunger): The current rate of reduction in poverty is too slow to meet the targets set for 2015. If the current rate of poverty reduction is maintained, poverty incidence would reduce to 43% as opposed to 21.2 % by 2015.

b) Achieve Universal basic Education

2015 target: Achieve universal primary completion): The efficiency of primary education has improved over the years, as the primary six completion rate increased steadily from 65% in 1998 to 83% in 2001. It however declined in 2002 only to shoot up to 94 % in 2003. Literacy level in the country has steadily and gradually deteriorated, especially within the 15-24 years group. By 1999, the overall literacy rate had declined to 64.1% from 71.9% in 1991. The trend was in the same direction for male and female members of the 15-24 years age bracket. Among the male, the rate declined from 81.35% in 1991 to 69.8% in 1999. The decline among the female was from 62.49% during the same period.

c) Promote Gender Equality

2005/2015 target: Eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education enrolment by 2005, and achieve equity at all levels by 2015): At the primary school level, enrolment has been consistently higher for boys (56%) than for girls (44%).

d) Reduce Child Mortality

2015 target: Reduce by two thirds the child mortality rates): Infant mortality rate was 91% 1000 live births in 1990 which later decline to 75 in 1999 but became worse in 2003. It rose to 1000 live births in 2003.

e) Improve Maternal Health

2015 target: Reduce by three quarters the proportion of women dying in childbirth): The 1999 multiple indicator cluster survey reported a maternal mortality rate of 704 per 100, 000 live births. The maternal mortality is more than twice as high in the rural areas. The report did not give comparative statistics.

f) Combat AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases

2015 target: Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases): Since the identification of the first HIV/AIDS case in mid 1980s, the HIV prevalence rate has continually been on the increase from 1.8 to 5.8% in the period between 1991 and 2001. In 2003, the rate decreased to 5.0% and in 2005, it decreased to 4.4%.

g) Ensure Environmental Sanitation Sustainability

Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources 2015 target: To reduce by half the proportion of people without access to clean drinking water and basic sanitation. The country is endowed with abundant environmental sustainability. The environmental situation is challenged by myriad of problems, which impact negatively on the utilization of the resources for development and poverty alleviation.

h) Develop a global Partnership for Development

Target: develop further an open, rule – based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction both nationally and internationally).

VII. CHALLENGES FOR NIGERIA MEETING THE GOALS

The question of whether Nigeria can or cannot meet the MDGs is a crucial question that should agitate the minds of politicians, government bureaucrats, civil society activists and development workers. It can be answered either in the negative or the affirmative. The NEEDS document clearly states that “if present trend continues, the country is not likely to meet the Millennium Development Goals.” On the other hand, the 2005 report gives the conditions for meeting the goals: strong political will and sustained efforts. Perhaps, a better way to frame the question is what can Nigeria do to meet the MDGs in 2015?. Nigeria has sufficient resources to meet the MDGs in 2015. But for this to happen, as earlier stated, the country will have to change course in the conceptualization and implementation of policies and programmes to achieve the MDGs (Yusuf, 2006).

Igbuzor (2006), reported that one good initiative in Nigeria designed to meet the MDGs is the oversight of Public Expenditure in Nigeria (OPEN) set up to monitor the Debt Relief Gain (DRGs). Two issues make this initiative unique. The first is the leadership of the process which has been participatory, open, transparent and all inclusive with participation of private sector and civil society. The second and perhaps most important is that systems have been put in place to track resources. This is perhaps the model that should become the norm in every ministry, department and agency at all levels of government. It must however be recognized that development is a complex issue and goes beyond allocation of Debt Relief Gains to some MDGs Ministries.

According to Gwary (2011) identified the following challenges facing Nigeria in achieving the MDGs. They are:

There are available statistics to illustrate the extent of the challenges which need to be surmounted in Nigeria's efforts to attain the MDGs. One of the greatest threats in this regard is the level and extent of poverty which is not prevalent in the rural areas.

Statistics on income and social indicators show poverty in Nigeria to be wide spread and severe and the trend increasing. According to Federal Office of statistics (FOS) and World Bank, the population of the poor in Nigeria which was 36.1 million in 1985 and 34.7 million in 1992, has jumped to 55.8 million in 1997 (Human Development report, 1998). The calculation of the human poverty index for Nigeria shows that it is 41.6, meaning that the people are extremely deprived, with one in every two Nigerians is poor (Human Development report, 1997). In terms of the proportion of the poor in the total population available statistics indicates that in 1960 the poverty level in Nigeria covers about 15% of the population and by 1980 it grew to 28.0%. In 1985 the poverty level was 46.0% which dropped 43.0% by 1992. By 1996, the poverty level in Nigeria was estimated at 66% and about 70% of the population have become poor by 2001 (FOS, 2003; FGN, 2002). According to World Bank Reports, 1999 (In Aliyu, 2001), Nigeria's Human Development Index (HDI) was only 0.416 which placed the country among the 25 poorest countries in the world. Furthermore, life expectancy at birth was 51 years, literacy rate was 44% and 70% of the rural population do not have access to portable water, healthcare facilities and electricity. Infant mortality rate

(per 1000 live births) and under-five mortality rates were 82 and 191, respectively in 1995. Information from the National Bureau of Statistics indicated that the literacy rate ranged between 49.335% for male and 62.25% for female with respect to inability to read and write in English language. The rate for those who cannot read and write in any Nigerian language were 60.17% for male and 49.39% for female. The national net primary school enrolment rate was 81.19% which suggests that 29 out of every 100 primary school children are not in school (Fajonyomi, 2006).

Poverty in Nigeria as been described as poverty amidst plenty (Human Development report, 1998). This is attested by the fact that Nigeria is endowed with both natural and human resources which if wisely managed can no doubt make it possible to attain the MDGs. There are other challenges especially with respect to the other MDGs. With reference to MDG 6, the spread of HIV/AIDS has increased significantly in Nigeria since the first official report of the first case in 1986. Information culled from the National HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health Survey (NARHS, 2005) indicated a progressive increase in the HIV/AIDS prevalence rate from 1.8% in 1991, through 4.5% in 1996 to 5.8% in 2001. However, they appear to be a reversal in trend with the 2003 survey result of 5.0% (FMOH, 2003b) and 4.4% in 2005. About 2.9 million Nigerians are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS in 2005. From the statistics, it is glaring that the AIDS pandemic continues to be a major health and development challenge in Nigeria.



Different Phases and Level of MDG Dilapidated Water Infrastructures/Facilities in Ekiti State





A European Union & UNICEF functioning Water Project with a Community in Osun State



Different Abuses of Treated Mosquito Net: Use as Net for Goal Posts and for Domestic Gardens Respectively in Osun State



A bad and contrary use of ITMN meant to protect the people of Ekiti state against mosquito bite



Functioning and benefiting water projects in Ekiti state different from the MDG water project

Another health of critical significance in meeting the MDG is maternal morbidity and mortality. Though there are variations across states and ecological zones in Nigeria, in general statistics shows that the country has a high level of maternal mortality. Based on available estimates of 800 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, Nigeria records about 37,000 maternal deaths annually, the third highest in the world (WHO, 2004). Poor health seeking behavior, poor availability of obstetrics services and poor quality of services are major factors associated with high maternal morbidity and mortality rates in Nigeria. There are sharp urban-rural differences in access to health services. Women in rural areas generally have relatively poor level of utilization of health services. According to the National Health and Reproductive survey (NHRHS) (2003), the proportion of urban mothers (59%) that were assisted by skilled attendants at delivery was more than twice that of rural women (25%). Urban women are three times as likely to receive post-natal care as rural women (Federal Ministry of Health, 2005). The goal of improving maternal health in the country have also been hampered by lack of friendly policies to encourage access to antenatal services by women as well as other site specific constraints in different parts of the country. A survey in Kano state north eastern Nigeria shows that most deaths of pregnant women were due to hypertension and late referral, and the reasons for this according to Yusuf (2006) are:

1. Lack of competent health personnel;
2. Inadequate health facilities;

3. Poor health seeking behaviors (patients waiting until crisis point);
4. Gender power relations between men and women, especially as regards domestic decision-making;
5. Low educational status of women;
6. Inadequate postnatal Emergency Obstetrics Care services;
7. Muslim women have problems with accessing health services promptly, mainly because they have to seek permission from their spouse and there is disapproval of non-same-sex medical attendants.
8. In general, there are several other challenges facing Nigeria in meeting the MDGs. These include:
9. Decay of infrastructure;
10. The size of the population;
11. Mismanagement of public resources;
12. The capacity of the public service to deliver;
13. Corruption and lack of transparency;
14. The common characteristics of many Nigerian politician to be only interested in what they can gain from the office and an obsession with how to remain in office, rather than thinking of the public benefits;
15. Lack of adequate funding for public education and inequitable allocation of resources between rural and urban areas;
16. Cultural which include religious and social impediments to gender equality;
17. Lack of sufficient care and appropriate laws to protect the environment.

It is very important that the above statistics and discussion shows clearly those mounting challenges which Nigeria needs to overcome in a bid to reach the

MDGs and ensure improve welfare for her people, especially the rural dwellers.

VIII. STRATEGIES REQUIRED FOR DEVELOPMENT

Development requires growth and structural change, some measure of distributive equity, modernization in social and cultural attitudes, a degree of political transformation and stability, an improvement in health and education so that population growth stabilizes, and an increase in urban living and employment. Social transformation will require good change and progress in the following areas:

a) *Transparency and accountability*

Several analyses of the challenges of development in Nigeria have identified lack of transparency and accountability as major a obstacle. Accountants in Nigeria have a great role to play in this regards. They must change the way auditing is done from financial auditing of certifying payments and receipts to systems auditing and examining the whole concept of value for money. Otherwise, accountants and auditors will just be certifying corruption.

b) *Tracking Institutional Constraints*

To deliver services to the people require effective and efficient institutions that follow due process and standards.

c) *Pro-Poor Growth*

It is clear that there has been economic growth in Nigeria in the last few years above 5%. But economic growth alone cannot lead to achievement of the MDGs unless the growth is pro-poor. Structural Change: To achieve the MDGs in Nigeria, there is the economy is not dependent on only one product but diversified economy and expanding the industrial sector.

d) *Distributive Equity*

Deliberate efforts and policies must be put in place to redistribute income. The MDGs will be meeting if the poor and excluded in society are empowered to meet their basic needs.

e) *Social and cultural Re-orientation*

There is the need for social and cultural re-orientation to meet some of the goals. For instance, the goals on women and girls require a new kind of mindset to achieve them.

f) *Political Transformation*

The political system and the way it engenders commitment, participation and patriotism by the people contributes immensely to national cohesion, peace and stability and development.

g) *Human Development*

Development implies the fulfillment of basic human needs including those for education and health.

h) *Urban Development*

The growth of urbanization is definitely increasing and there will probably be more people in urban areas than rural areas by 2015. There must be urban development process that is inclusive and not based on dislocation of slum dwellers without alternatives.

i) *Employment*

Employment is the surest way of achieving the MDGs because individuals will receive income and will contribute of the economy.

j) *Transformation of Power Relations*

Whenever power is concentrated in the hands of a few, they will utilize such powers to accumulate wealth. To achieve the MDGs will require transformation of power relations and challenge of patriarchy.

k) *Partnership with development partners*

It has been documented that in order to make adequate progress towards achieving the MDGs, Nigeria will require additional external financing averaging about US \$6.4 billion annually between 2005 and 2008. Even if the resources in the country are used effectively there will be challenges in meeting the MDGS. Meanwhile, Nigeria is seriously under aided. Nigeria receives only US \$2 per capital in ODA compared to the average for Africa of US of US \$28 per capital. In addition, meeting the MDGs will require partnership between government, the public sector and the private sector. In particular, it will require transformers from the public sector, civil society, media and private sector to build a critical movement of people advocating for and implementing change (Igbuzor, 2006).

IX. THE WAY FORWARD

The reality is that the Millennium Development Goals are not being met. Fortunately, however, the prospects are not completely bleak. Bangladesh and other low income countries can meet these goals, but we require a significant change from business as usual, both in low income countries, as well as in the behavior of rich countries and the international institutions. Only true international partnership will propel the Millennium Development Goals beyond rhetoric and into effect. While this partnership started auspiciously at the beginning of the decade, it has gone off track as the world has grown enmeshed in conflict (Sachs, 2004).

To Gwary (2011) he suggested that the efforts to achieve the MDGs in Nigeria should be coordinated bt all tiers of government in the following areas:

- a. Government in implementing NEEDS, SEEDS and LEEDS: the three (NEEDS, SEEDS and LEEDS) are holistic planning framework geared towards harnessing the potentials of Nigeria's vast human and natural resources to develop the country. To get the benefits envisaged by the plan. This requires

that all hands be on deck, meaning, coordination of efforts of Federal, State and Local governments in genuine partnership with all and sundry. Moreover, realizing this vision for Nigeria relies on ensuring that the set targets and programmes so defined are implemented effectively and that the beneficiaries are involved in monitoring and evaluating the processes.

- b. Promote participation of rural people: Participation of rural people is necessary for sustainable development. It means that the people who are affected by project or programme should be involved in all stage of it, including the planning, implementation and monitoring. This is the only that the essential human element of the project or programme can be incorporated in it. In practice, it entails that all rural development programmes targeted at attaining the MDGs should ensure beneficiaries involvement in its design, implementation, monitoring progress and evaluation.
- c. Promotion of Rural Entrepreneurship: This includes engagement in off-farm and off-season income earning ventures. This is necessary because labor intensive agriculture practiced in the rural areas alone may prove inadequate means of alleviation of rural poverty. Moreover, many rural households derive a significant proportion of their income from non-farm activities and the counter cyclical nature of non-farm employment smoothen the seasonal pattern of earnings. This point should be taken very serious because entrepreneurship is a catalyst to alleviate poverty. Even though NUC have recommended the teaching of entrepreneurship in all existing and functioning tertiary institutions in Nigeria, not all institutions have comply to this order and even those that have complied, most of them are not doing any practical at all. Thus, it is not a complete dose of knowledge.
- d. Adequate funding of rural development: Provision of adequate funding of rural development activities is necessary to address rural poverty and reverse the neglect suffered in the past. With enough funding there will be rural revival in forms of agricultural development, rural employment which raise rural incomes ad also help stem rural urban migration.

X. CONCLUSION

From the above unbiased discourse, it may be very difficult for some countries in developing societies to attain the MDGs because most of them share the same socio-economic and religious template especially for a nations like Nigeria where corruption is the order of every second and it is very unfortunate the virus of corruption has been injected into all the on coming generations. It is also important that the rural areas

become central aspect of planning, restructuring and reformation and rebranding simply because it is evident that the rural areas are very essential in the economic development of any country. For the MDGs not to be a tall dream, the analysis, facts and figures discussed above is dependent is a function of comprehensive development of the rural areas and improvement in the living standard of the rural people. The abandonment of the rural areas is what led to the status we are today in Nigeria as a result of bad leaders that have been ruling the country right from when Nigeria got her *roundtable independent*.

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