

THE STATE AND MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN NIGERIA: COUNTING THE FAILURES

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decade or so, Nigeria's preoccupation with development has had a very marginal success. One of such is the seeming minimal progress recorded in the aspect of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the country. Therefore, this paper examines the level of implementation of the MDGs in the country and problematizes the prospects of the attainment of the goals in the year 2015 as targeted. Methodologically, the qualitative method of data collection and analysis is adopted. Accordingly, the paper argues that the ambitious MDGs' target of reducing poverty by half by the year 2015 is elusive and unrealistic. Comparatively, Nigerians are worse off than they were; environment, education, health and nutrition problems are widespread and infrastructure eroding rapidly. Hence, there is urgent need for practical commitment to the purpose of MDGs through increased state allocations, effective implementation monitoring, improved social welfare and institution of social security for the less privileged.

Keywords: State, Millennium Development Goals, Poverty, Social Welfare, Alienation.

INTRODUCTION

The reality of contemporary world development trend is that some countries are rich while some others are impoverished with precarious development indices. More than 1.2 billion people or about 20 percent of world population thrive on less than \$1 per day. The World Bank (2001) remarks that by 2015, the number of people to be living under \$1 per day in Sub-Saharan Africa will escalate to 753 million while more than 2 billion people will be living far below \$2 per day by 2015. Wealth, therefore, is lopsidedly concentrated in the hands of a very few people. For instance, the three richest people in the world have assets that exceed the combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the forty eight (48) least developed countries (UNDP, 2005). Similarly, the one thousand richest people in the world have personal wealth greater than five hundred million people in the least developed countries (Salil, 2005). In substance therefore, the world has continued to bargain and contend with the murky waters and trappings of capital illogicality. Upon this actuality, thus, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was initiated by highly industrialized nations in the year 2000, to address critical development issues in poor countries. The primary objective of the MDGs is to significantly reduce the incidence of poverty and improve the living conditions of people in developing countries by the year 2015.

Nigeria, however, happens to be chiefly amongst several other countries far behind in the trajectory of development. The country which was once within the centimeter of the world's most fiftieth richest countries in the early 1970s has rapidly retrogressed to become one of the twenty poorest countries at the dawn of the twenty first century. Given the abundant natural resources with which Nigeria is blessed, it defies imagination to think that Nigeria is leading the Group of 77 (G77) poorest countries of the world (Abdelkrim and Awoyemi, 2006). It is equally ironic that Nigeria is the largest exporter of crude oil in Africa, sixth largest in the world and at the same time hosts the third largest number of poor people after China and India. Uneven distribution of material wealth, especially of oil returns, has further impelled a colossal chasm between the rich and the hoi-polloi. As a result, Nigeria falls among the twenty countries in the world with the widest gap between the rich and the poor (Obadan: 2008).

This therefore makes poverty in Nigeria extremely pervasive. Over 70% of Nigerians are classified as poor, while about 35% of them live in absolute poverty. Poverty is unacceptably severe in rural areas where up to 80% of the population live below the poverty line, with social services very limited and few known infrastructures eroding rapidly (World Bank, 2001). Available statistics show that the incidence of poverty in Nigeria, using the rate of US \$1 per day, has rallied between 28.1 percent in 1980; 46.3 percent in 1985; 42.7 percent in 1992; 65.6 percent in 1996; 69.2 percent in 1997, and 54.4 percent in 2004 (National Population Commission, 2004). Nigeria fares very poorly in all development indices. The average annual percentage growth of GDP in Nigeria stood as low as 2.4 in 2000. This is not only very poor but variously belittling when compared to Ghana (4.3) and Egypt (4.6) (Aigbokhan, 2008). The purchasing power of Naira is extremely weak and cannot stand firm or compete confidently against other foreign currencies. In some very bad situations, some people do not have money at all.

These socio-economic realities practically signify or suggest that Nigeria is the most fertile ground in the world to sow the seeds and harvest the fruits of MDGs. Therefore, the MDGs chart a new focus in addressing those inherent imbalances that

have disarrayed and disarticulated the political economy and living conditions of the Nigerian people. Fundamentally, the MDGs' mandate is to awaken and navigate the state to act with a spirited and undiluted commitment, a sense of profound urgency, in achieving specific development benchmarks within the given time-span, 2000-2015.

In this light, therefore, this paper focuses on evaluating the level of implementation of the MDGs in Nigeria. However, specific attempt is made to link between the ineffectiveness of the Nigerian state towards the implementation of MDGs and the plummeting level of living conditions of the people thereafter.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE MDGS PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA

The breakneck receptivity and disposition of successive Nigerian leaders toward development initiatives have never been in doubt. However, the level of commitment at the implementation platform lays bare the fundamental contradictions associated with development pills dished out in the country. Therefore, Nigerian has perennially had a checkered history of policy implementation since its statehood. Several development plans of the military failed; other recent arrangements rolled out since the infusion and experimentation of democratic rule in 1999: NEEDS, Seven point agenda, NAPEP, Vision 20:2020 etc, have not substantially trimmed down the incidence of poverty in the country (Osegbue, 2006). Thus, in its quest for development, Nigeria has merely succeeded in running into policy implementation crisis (Ademolekun, 1983).

In the present, however, one of the pressing development paradigms facing Nigeria is the MDGs. The broad objectives of MDGs include:

- Goal 1: Eradication of Poverty and Hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve Primary Education
- Goal 3: Gender Equality and Empower Women
- Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality
- Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria etc.
- Goal 7: Sustain the Environment
- Goal 8: Develop Global Partners for Development

In a bid to achieve the eight development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration of 2000, the Federal Government of Nigeria set up the MDGs' office in Abuja in the year 2000. The MDGs office was placed under the supervision of the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs, Hajiya Amina Az-Zubair. Systematically therefore, Nigeria commenced the implementation of several relevant policies and programmes to facilitate the attainment of the different targets contained in the MDGs by 2015. In this respect, the various MDGs' projects in the country have continued to munch and chomp large sums of money. The facilitators of MDGs in the country have come to alert, for instance, that MDGs' programmes have gulped about N1.4 trillion between 2006 and 2010 alone (Az-Zubair, in *Leadership*, July 12, 2010).

As a matter of specificity, Mrs. Az-Zubair explained that since 2006, \$1 billion – about N150 billion had been generated from Paris Club debt relief for the MDGs, out of which the Federal Government took \$750 million – about N112.50 billion,

and state governments \$250 million – about N375 billion. According to her, N20 billion was appropriated for her office in 2007, out of which N18.4 billion was allocated to the states under the Conditional Grant Scheme (CGS), and that N300 million was returned to the treasury as unspent fund. Similarly, in 2008, the MDGs’ office got N59.3 billion and released N2.3 billion to various states as CGS, while N15.5 billion was returned unspent. In 2009, the office received a total of N32.6 billion, spent N27.04 billion - given to states under the CGS. In 2010, it was appropriated N35.02 billion, including the CGS disbursements.

Nonetheless, the level of achievement recorded so far in the regime of MDGs in Nigeria compellingly symptomizes that the 2015 target may become irredeemably elusive. The chart in appendix 1 illustrates the level of implementation of MDGs in Nigeria, up to year 2007.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MDGS IN NIGERIA

To begin with, goal one seeks to significantly cut down the incidence of poverty by half by the year 2015. The corresponding targets are as follows:

- Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day.
- Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.
- Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

More so, the first goal parents other sub-goals that address both extreme income poverty and extreme hunger. This goal addresses the needs of the poorest people on earth and attempts to reduce the number of people living in total deprivation. The two indicators chosen to measure hunger are the prevalence of underweight children and the proportion of the population below a minimum level of necessary dietary energy consumption (calories). While the percentage of children underweight is a good indicator of hunger, measuring dietary energy consumption is much more problematic. The United Nations also identified three indicators to measure progress on slashing income poverty: the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day, the depth of poverty, and the share of the poorest quintile of the population in national consumption. The first two indicators complement each other well. While the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day shows the incidence of poverty, the poverty gap captures the depth of poverty. The table below shows percentage of the Nigerian population living on less than one dollar and two dollars per day when compared to other African countries, indicating the pessimistic prospects of Nigeria toward the attainment of the MDGs.

Table 1: Population Living under 1.25 and 2 Dollar (PPP) Per Day for Selected African States

Country	\$1.25<	\$2<
Angola	54.3	70.2
Benin	47.3	75.3
Botswana	31.2	49.4
Burundi	81.3	93.4
Cameroon	32.8	57.7
Central Africa Republic	62.4	81.9
Chad	61.9	83.3
CDR	59.2	79.5
Egypt	<2	18.4
Ethiopia	39	75.5
Gabon	4.8	18.4
Ghana	30	53.6
Guinea	70.1	87.2
Kenya	19.7	39.9
Liberia	83.7	94.8
Malawi	73.9	90.4
Morocco	2.5	14
Mozambique	74.7	90
Niger	65.9	85.6
Nigeria	64.4	83.9

Source: World Bank Development Indices, 2008

Indeed the above table hints that up to 64.4 percent of Nigeria's approximately 150 million population, representing as much as about 96.6 million persons are living under 1.25 dollars per day. This means that, considering the exchange rate of about N150 per dollar, this percentage of people can hardly have one full balanced meal per day. In another measurement, the Human Development Index signals that Nigeria is worse off when compared with her counterparts. The table below presents Nigeria's global ranking for HDI for the year 2007.

Table 2: Distribution of Nigeria's Human Development Index for the year 2007

HDI value	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Adult literacy rate (% ages 15 and above)	Combined gross enrolment ratio (%)	GDP per capita (PPP US\$)
1. Norway (0.971)	1. Japan (82.7)	1. Georgia (100.0)	1. Australia (114.2)	1. Liechtenstein (85,382)
156. Lesotho (0.514)	165. Mali (48.1)	110. Lao People's Democratic Republic (72.7)	148. Bhutan (54.1)	139. Djibouti (2,061)
157. Uganda (0.514)	166. Mozambique (47.8)	111. Tanzania (United Republic of) (72.3)	149. Togo (53.9)	140. Kyrgyzstan (2,006)
158. Nigeria (0.511)	167. Nigeria (47.7)	112. Nigeria (72.0)	150. Nigeria (53.0)	141. Nigeria (1,969)
159. Togo (0.499)	168. Congo (Democratic Republic of the) (47.6)	113. Malawi (71.8)	151. Benin (52.4)	142. Mauritania (1,927)
160. Malawi (0.493)	169. Guinea-Bissau (47.5)	114. Madagascar (70.7)	152. Cameroon (52.3)	143. Cambodia (1,802)
182. Niger (0.340)	176. Afghanistan (43.6)	151. Mali (26.2)	177. Djibouti (25.5)	181. Congo (Democratic Republic of the) (298)

Source: United Nations Human Development Report 2009.

The above data comparably show that the HDI for Nigeria as measured is 0.511, which gives the country a rank of 158th out of 182 countries. On life expectancy at birth, Nigeria ranks 167 with 47.7% while the adult literacy rate of those between 15 years and above is 72.0%, which places Nigeria on the 112th position on the list. On the combined gross enrollment ratio, Nigeria had 53% and ranks 150th behind Togo and Bhutan, while Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in dollars, using the Purchasing Power Parity (PPP), is 1,969, thus, placing Nigeria on the 141st position on the log. Nigeria has a HPI-1 value of 36.2% and ranks 114th among 135 countries for which the index has been calculated. The table below which describes Nigeria's PPP further corroborates the stated facts. Strikingly, the table illustrates that Nigeria's PPP is only a little above that of 4 countries, out of the selected 10 African countries, with South Africa and Mauritius far ahead of Nigeria more than times nine.

Table 3: Selected African Countries GDP Purchasing Power-Parity.

S/n	Country	GDP Purchasing Power-Parity
1.	Angola	\$45
2.	Botswana	\$4,500
3.	Congo DR	\$700
4.	Kenya	\$1,200
5.	Liberia	\$900
6.	Mauritius	\$13,700
7.	Nigeria	\$1,500
8.	Rwanda	\$1,600
9.	Senegal	\$1,800
10.	South Africa	\$13,700

Source: World Bank Development Indices 2008

In the aspect of achievement of primary education, Nigeria has a very bad record. The table below depicts Nigeria global ranking in terms of pupil enrollment in school as against selected countries.

Table 4: Combined Gross Enrollment Ratio and Adult Literacy Rate of the Selected Countries for 2007

Countries	Gross Enrollment/Adult Literacy rate (percentage)		Global Ranking		Position in the Selected Countries	
	Enrollment	Literacy	Enrollment	Literacy	Enrollment	Literacy
Nigeria	53.0	72.0	150	112	10	5
Gabon	80.7	86.2	53	86	4	4
South Africa	76.8	88.0	77	80	5	3
Angola	65.3	67.4	122	117	8	6
Seychelles	82.2	91.8	50	63	3	2
Ghana	56.5	65.9	144	121	9	8
Barbados	92.9	-	19	-	2	-
Egypt	76.4	66.4	79	119	6	7
Malaysia	71.5	91.9	102	62	7	1
South Korea	98.5	-	9	-	1	-

Source: United Nations Development Program, 2009.

The above table indicates that Nigeria is in the 150th position at 53 percent in combined gross enrollment ratio and 122nd position at 72 percent in adult literacy level, out of the 182 countries assessed by the UNDP across the world. Among the 10 developing countries selected for this study, Nigeria is ranked 10 and 5 for enrollment ratio and adult literacy rate, respectively. On enrollment ratio, all the countries selected for the study are doing better than Nigeria. This hallmarks the vitality these nations attach to human capacity building. For instance, South Korea is placed number 9 at 98.5 percent, while Barbados is ranked number 19 at 92.9 percent in the global ranking in combined gross enrollment ratio. It therefore shows that Nigeria has not demonstrated a very serious commitment to the education of its citizenry through enhanced budgetary allocations and painstaking policy implementation strategies.

Of more concern, however, is the fact that MDGs' 5 and 6 which extensively cover health issues have not received even a minimum attention from the state. Child mortality continues to escalate, maternal mortality is on the high side, and cases of HIV/AIDS and Malaria are prevalent and multiplying by day. Tables 6,7 & 8 buttress this assertion.

Table 5: Cases of Malaria in Nigeria

Year	Number of Malaria Cases	Deaths
2003	21, 633	4, 894
2004	127, 225	5,099
2005	220, 870	5, 244
2006	264, 615	5, 206
2007	497, 833	6, 090

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2008:94).

Table 6: Persons Infected with HIV/AIDS in Nigeria, 2003-2007

Year	Percentage Infested
2003	3,392,802
2004	3,295,862
2005	3,191,203
2006	3,138,854
2007	3,083,007

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2008:97).

On the issue of maternal health, Nigeria has a big sorry tale to tell. Of more than half a million women that die in pregnancy and child birth every year in the world, representing per death every minute, Nigeria accounts for 10 percent (Ozumba, 2008). Available statistics indicate that Nigeria has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the developing world. Below is an overview of the reproductive health statistics in Nigeria.

- Presently, Nigeria accounts for 10% of the global estimate of maternal mortality.
- Estimate of maternal mortality deaths are under-reported in Nigeria by as much as 50% because most maternal deaths occur outside facilities and are not counted for many reasons.
- For women who survive the ordeal of pregnancy and labour, a substantial number suffer long-term morbidity including VVF, infertility and chronic pelvic diseases.
- About 40% of pregnant women who lack access to proper healthcare facilities/antenatal care experience serious pregnancy related problems during or after pregnancy and child birth.
- Unsafe abortions contribute to about 50% of the women that die every year in child birth.
- About 52,000 women die every year in child birth in Nigeria.
- About 600,000 induced abortions occur annually of which young people account for 60% in Nigeria.
- Use of antenatal care services is low and that of postnatal care is negligible.
- Majority of those who attend ANC deliver at home with TBA's or faith based facilities.
- Only about 31% of deliveries take place in health facilities.
- Inadequate number of skilled birth attendants' result in TBA's being main care providers especially in rural areas. (Ozumba, 2008:32; *Businessworld*, June 27-July 3, 2011:58).

This horrible health situation is sustained by the inadequacies of the health system in the country. In addition to the issue of poor facility, the level of paucity of manpower in such an important sector as health is quite shocking and dismaying. The state drivers have opprobriously abandoned the health track in the murky and deepening waters of fundamental cataclysm. They now resort to flying themselves, their families, relatives and friends abroad for medical treatment with public funds. Imagine! The table below tells us more.

Table 7: Number of Registered Midwives and Nurses in Nigeria, 2003-2007.

Year	Number of Registered Midwives			Number of Registered Nurses		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2003	-	1,902	1,902	615	2,589	3,430
2004	-	1,754	1,754	632	2,798	3,430
2005	-	2,138	2,138	432	2,852	3,284
2006	6	1,832	1,838	550	3,632	4,182
2007	19	90,470	90,489	6,989	121,929	128,918

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2008:101).

Again, the critical environmental situation in Nigerian convincingly debunks those mathematical formulae, even the almighty algebra, that would want to solve or attempt solving the problematic of MDGs in Nigeria within the cosine or latitude of year

2015. However, the environmental issue in Nigeria can be differently discussed in threefold. First is the dearth of safe drinking water. Second is the fearsome situation in Niger Delta, and third, the “deathtraps” which they call roads in Nigeria. In the first instance, one seriously wonders why there is hardly a sight of drinkable water anywhere in the country. The UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) contends that from 1990 to 2006, the percentage of Nigerians with access to safe drinking water dropped significantly by 3 percent. Access to safe drinking water is thus a mirage as 72 million Nigerians have no access to it. This is not funny at all. Such is an epitome of wide-ranging governmental ineptitude. As simple as that! The implications of these staggering figures are myriad. That is: diarrhoeal, resulting from ingesting of unsafe water and poor sanitary conditions, which is the second highest killer of children in Nigeria, killing on the average 410 children every day and driving the high incidence of child mortality (GCAP, 2009). Moreover, the dangers and risk factor of infections accumulated out of too many unclean household surroundings in Nigeria further raise the vulnerability and survival hopes of women and children, as only 14.6% of those in the urban areas use water closet to dismiss their stools, while as much as 74.8% use indecent methods such as pit, bucket and waterproof styles to shoot off (Iwuoha, 2012).

On the other spectrum, the situation in Niger Delta is remarkable and outstanding. Dominant scholarship: Ibeanu (2002; 2005; 2008), Watts (2007a/b), Ikejiani (2007a), Klare (2006), Friedman (2006) and Anugwom (2004) have all lamented on the character of the state and the neglect of the people of Niger Delta and their environment. This hinges mainly on the rentier character of the Nigerian state – primitive substitution or sacrifice of national principles/core values (including environmental sanctity) over windfalls from oil multinationals. It is quite obvious that the state in Nigeria collects considerable rents from the oil multinational companies operating in Niger Delta. However, the rents come not just as per tax obligations, but more so, for the legitimization and formalization of oil multinationals’ operational rascality. Therefore, wanton oil spillage and sophisticated atmospheric gas flaring have continued to exert untold pressure and injury on the waterways, agricultural landscape and ecosystem of the host communities whose livelihoods depend therefrom. It is often a thing of unlimited sorrow, in fact, to imagine or reconcile the truth that this damnable situation has, all along, been officially supervised by the state in an uncharacteristic and aberrant do-nothingness mannerism for half a century and beyond. Incidentally, most youths in Niger Delta have all joined in inflicting more environmental injuries thereafter through various criminality channels: oil bunkering, pipeline vandalization, blowing of oil facilities such as oil rigs, flow stations, oil vessels and so on (Nwanolue, Osegbue and Iwuoha, 2013). The gross effect and “rewards” of this anomalous development are the dangers of climate change, which have rapidly caught up with Nigeria.

Beyond the Niger Delta issue, the third important spotlight is the deplorable condition of Nigerian roads. These roads, or better put, “death-traps,” have been abandoned and forgotten by the state with utmost sense of panache, temerity and pugnacity. In effect, the recurrent challenges one face on the roads daily: erosion, falling bridges, and road breakages, have become insufferable and unforgivable. The World Bank estimates that 50% of the federal roads have so much deteriorated in the last six years to the extent that it costs more to send goods from Lagos to Maiduguri than to send them to Europe. Due to the poor conditions of the roads, about 33,600 people died in road accidents between 2001 and 2005, while 34,200 people sustained various degrees of injuries during the period. The table below throws more light.

Table 8: Total Number of Road Accidents and Casualties by Category, 2002-2007.

Year	Cases of Road Accidents				No of Casualties		
	Fatal	Serious	Minor	Total	Killed	Injured	Total
2002	7,531	15,942	6,398	29,871	7,407	22,112	29,519
2003	5,401	7,432	4,373	17,206	7,697	16,171	23,868
2004	6,362	8,509	4,740	19,611	8,161	20,925	29,086
2005	6,132	7,849	4,678	18,659	8,980	16,888	25,868
2006	5,806	8,052	4,804	18,662	9,131	19,200	28,331
2007	5,789	7,223	4,785	17,797	9,390	17,413	26,803

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2008:148).

Therefore, the lives of much of the people of Nigeria have been carelessly depleted by perilous roads. This implies that the state is (in)directly responsible for this number of lives lost annually on the highways which it ought to have saved, were the roads in good condition. Ikejiani-Clark further lends her voice, especially in the case of South-East roads, to say that:

...What has the region got to show for this amount? A state of poverty and hopelessness! ...In terms of infrastructure generally, in the South-East, there is evidence of dilapidation. Deadly gullies connecting nerve centers, long stretch of busy roads without asphalt, bridges long overdue for rehabilitation, are seen everywhere. The erosion sites are at Agulu, Nanka, Obosi, Ariara, Akara/Abiriba junction, Uturu, etc. some of these erosion sites have submerged; most roads are in a bad state and health facilities wanting... (Ikejiani-Clark, 2007b:19).

For this, Anya (2008) asserts that there is poor development because Nigeria's political leadership has failed to work for social and economic transformation of the society. It is on this ugly note that Soludo (2003:142) sums up the illusory prospects of MDGs in Nigeria:

Nigeria is set to miss the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Poverty is deep, pervasive and worsening—with great regional, sectoral and gender disparities. Although poverty is widespread, extreme poverty and poverty incidence exceeding 80% are mostly concentrated in the Northern Nigeria. In particular, poverty is becoming *dynastic* in the sense of the children of the poor having narrowing opportunities to escape poverty. For example, because of the increasing deterioration of the public education system, education is fast losing its potency as the social equalization ladder. The elite and middle class send their children to private schools or abroad while the children of the poor are condemned to poor public education and hence become largely unemployable and/or unemployed/underemployed. Other social indicators are also under stress---inequality is one of the worst in the world; unemployment is threatening social cohesion, security and democracy; and the imminent HIV/AIDS pandemic is a potent bomb waiting to explode and with potential dire consequences for productivity in the economy.

From the foregoing, therefore, it is fundamentally obvious that implementation of the MDGs in Nigeria has not plummeted the incidence of poverty in the country. And, neither has it enhanced the provision of social welfare for the citizenry.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This paper examines the effectiveness of the Nigerian state towards the implementation of MDGs in the country. Major findings show that Nigeria has veered far off from the actualization of these goals, especially in comparative sense. Regardless of the little strides recorded at the federal level, appreciation of the requirements for meeting MDGs as well as institutional capacity remains relatively low at lower levels of government. Poor governance and ineffective integration of the MDGs into national and sub-national development strategies have, therefore, become serious challenges. Weak monitoring mechanism for the MDGs and low stakeholder involvement (private sector and Civil Society Organizations) are also important limitations. In content therefore, the implementation of the MDGs in Nigeria has neither improved the living standard of the people nor enhanced the provision of social welfare. The side effects of this development are many and significant. At the physical level, the people suffer abject poverty, misery, destitution and deprivation, which take random toll on them. At the psychological level, this detestable situation culminates to mental obfuscation, frustration and disillusionment. Altogether, the prospects of MDGs in Nigeria is accidentally gloomed and dampened.

However, Nigeria must strive to fight acute poverty by investing tangibly in agriculture in order to stimulate an agro-based economy. Important attention must be paid to human capacity development as a potent tool that would generate a team of self-reliant entrepreneurs who shall in turn build a catholic of small and medium-scale enterprises all over the country. These are relevant keys to massive job creation and self-reliance, which shall go a long way leveling the wide-ranging income disparity in the country.

Again, the government should increase its funding to particular sectors that connect to the objectives of the MDGs such as health, education, works, environment, water resources etc. There should be an effective yardstick for measuring the recorded successes and/or failures of the various sectors that handle projects relating to the MDGs. Monies spent in this respect must be dully accounted for, and the issue returning back monies earmarked for MDGs as a result of partial-implementation of MDGs' budget must be seriously questioned and punished. It is high time non-implementation of budgets (returning back budgeted monies) be taken and penalized as a serious offence in Nigeria.

Finally, the MDGs are the peoples' rights, not mere political privileges and should never be toyed with by the state any longer. We call for a rights-based approach for MDGs attainment. Without people calling for their rights, the indifferent political class which has completely autonomized itself from the society would rather continue in do-nothingness until the regime of MDGs is past, forgotten and eclipsed by usual discovery of other "new goals."

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Appendix 1: Implementation of MDGs in Nigeria, up to year 2007

Status at a Glance					
GOAL	1990	2000	2007	Target 2015	Progress Towards Target
1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger					
Absolute PPI (US\$/day) %				21.4	Slow
Relative (%)	42.7	66	54.4	21.4	Slow
-Population (million)	91.5	91.5	140.0		Slow
-Population under poverty (m)	39.07	39.07	67.11		Slow
Percentage of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption	13	13		5.2	Good
Percentage of underweight under-5 children.	35.7	31	25	18	Slow
2. Achieve Universal Education					
Net enrolment ratio in primary education	68	95	89.6	100	Good
Proportion of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach Grade 5	67	97	74	100	Good
Primary six completion rate	58	76.7	67.5	100	Good
Literacy rate of 15-24 years old	70.7	64.1	81.4	100	Good
3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women					
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education (girls per 100 boys)	76	78	93.6	100	Good
Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education (girls per 100 boys)	75	81	97.6	100	Good
Ratio of girls to boys in tertiary education (girls per 100 boys)	46	66		100	Good
Share of women in wage employment in the non-agriculture sector	66.3	79		100	Lack of data
Seats held by women in national parliament	1.0	3.1	7.7	30	Slow
4. Reduce Child Mortality					
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	91	81.38	110	30.3	Worsening
Under-5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	191	183.75	201	63.7	Worsening
Percentage of one-year-olds fully immunized against measles	46	32.8	60	100	Good
5. Improve Maternal Health					
Maternal mortality ratio		704 ^a	800 ^c	100	Worsening
Births attended to by skilled health personnel	45	42 ^a	36.3 ^c	100	Worsening (data problem)
6. Combat HIV & AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases					
HIV prevalence among pregnant young women aged 15 to 24		5.4 ^a	4.3 ^a		Slow

Status at a Glance					
GOAL	1990	2000	2007	Target 2015	Progress Towards Target
Young people aged 15-24 who both correctly identify ways of preventing the sexual transmission of HIV and who reject major misconceptions about HIV transmission			25.9*	100	Slow
Young people aged 15-24 reporting the use of a condom during sexual intercourse with a non-regular sexual partner				100	Slow (Lack of data)
Children orphaned by HIV & AIDS			1.97*		Lack of data
Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria					Slow (Lack of data)
Prevalence and death rates associated by tuberculosis					Slow (Lack of data)
7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability					
Land area covered by forest		14.6	12.6	20	Worsening
Gas flared	68	53	34	0	Slow
Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per US\$1 GDP (PPP)			1.5		Slow Lack of data
Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita)		4799	2500*		Improving
Total population with access to safe drinking water (%)	54	54	49.1	100	Worsening
Total population with access to basic sanitation (%)	39	42.9	42.9	100	Worsening
People with access to secure tenure (%)		38.4	61.2	100	Improving
Residential housing construction index (ACI) (Proxy)		53	31*		Worsening
8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development					
Per capita official development assistance to Nigeria (in US\$)	3.0	1.47	81.67		Improving
Debt services as a percentage of exports of goods and services		9	1.2		Good
Private Sector Investment (US\$ million)	50	75	8100		Improving
Tele-density (per 1000 people)	0.45	0.73	27.41		Good
Personal computers (per 1000 people)		6.38	6.74		Lack of data
Internet access (%)	0.1	0.1	1.9		Slow

Source: United Nations Mid-Point Assessment of the Millennium Development in Nigeria 2000-7.

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