

## EVALUATING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL TWO (ZERO HUNGER) IN NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND LESSONS FROM THE MDGS

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### ABSTRACT

In spite of the progress recorded under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the enthusiasm towards the on-going Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Nigeria, stakeholders in Nigeria have expressed concerns on the adequacy of the existing evaluation system to communicate accurate results, facilitate learning, effectively measure performance and feedback stakeholders premised on evidence. This paper therefore reviewed and identified evaluation related challenges under the MDGs and proposed innovative approaches for evaluating the SDG 2. The article covered the Nigerian nation and in-depth review and content analysis of relevant secondary data, available locally and from development sources. The study identified numerous factors which limited MDGs' evaluation to include late take-off of implementation, restricted focus on performance measurement and individual projects, limited deployment of innovations, negative competition, duplication and limited coordination by donors, uncertainty of funding, weak capacity and focus. Given the peculiar and inter-linked nature of SDG 2, the article recommended for the deployment of adaptive innovative practices to measure this Goal, premised on systems, principled and multi-stakeholder analyses, juxtaposed within the framework of a holistic results-based M&E approach. The Nigerian Association of Evaluation, Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on SDGs, Development Partners and National Planning Commission should step-up arrangement for the development of a national evaluation policy and effectively synergize to stimulate the introduction and adaptation of best practices in support of SDG 2 evaluation in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Millennium Development Goals; Sustainable Development Goal 2; Evaluation; Innovative practices; systems analysis; Principled analysis; Multi-stakeholder analysis; Adaptive approach; Results-based M&E system.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

Nigeria was among the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly that adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September, 2015, following the expiration of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), an embodiment of eight development goals, which span 2000-2015. Though, rhythm for the MDGs commenced in 2005 in Nigeria (Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Millennium Development Goals (OSSAP-MDG) 2015), numerous achievements were recorded relative to the targets sets across the country. Like numerous development reports which have reported varied achievements under the Goals, the End-point report on the MDGs in Nigeria, reported that key achievements were recorded in some thematic areas, including maternal and child health, creation of awareness and reduction of poverty diseases, such as HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and reduction of hunger. However, arising from the unequal achievements within and across countries, stakeholders have underscored the need to reflect and learn from the experiences of the MDGs in order to effectively key into and avoid missing out from crucial implementation steps under the SDGs. However, concerns raised on the MDGs were largely borne out of the inability of governments to effectively capture and showcase the desired results and demonstrate accountability to the stakeholders through evidence. EVALSDGs (2016) for instance, affirmed that even though, the MDGs focused on global efforts and spurred progress towards the achievements of human development goals around the globe, its major limitation was the inadequate attention paid to generating evidence on achievements and learning from challenges. In a related development, MDGs' related indicators have also been criticized for their being inadequate to track the progress of the goals, given the focus on national averages for masking local disparities in accomplishments. While the issue of credible disaggregated data on which a holistic evaluation covering marginalised population was problematic, the question of attribution has also been an issue, given the nature of the research on the internal policy processes of each signatory country (Sarwar, 2015). The International Institute for Environmental Development (IIED) (2016) further argued that the common framework for evaluation approach adopted under MDGs, which has little regional flexibility, limited the evaluability of the Goals. EvalSDGs (2015) suggested that when contemplating the role of evaluation in the achievements of the SDGs, it is imperative to consider the implementation experience of the preceding MDGs. The MDGs were generally noted to be narrow in participation, with limited perspective, leading to lack of strategy and cohesion on how to move forward. It was also noted that the goals did not lay out strategy for effective monitoring, evaluation and impact measurement (White, 2015). Towards this end, this paper ask pertinent research questions, such as (i) what are the lessons which can be learned from the evaluation of the MDGs ? and (ii) what are the innovative approaches available for evaluating the SDGs ?. It is thus against this backdrop that this paper attempted to take lessons from the implementation of the MDGs and identify innovative approaches for evaluating the SDG 2 within the Nigerian context. The specific objectives of the paper therefore, were to review and draw lessons from the evaluation of the MDGs; identify innovative approaches for evaluating SDG 2 and make policy recommendations for a practical, sustainable and innovative evaluation of the SDG 2. The justification for this article stems from the need to provide a learning platform for development experts and policy makers to learn from the mistakes and implementation experiences of the MDGs on one hand, while identifying innovative evaluation approaches that will spur effective evaluation of the SDGs for stakeholder accountability through evidence, as the world marches towards 2030.

## CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL INSIGHTS

### Sustainable Development Goals

According to the International Institute for Environmental Development (IIED), (2016), the Sustainable Development Goals are an international agreement for transforming the globe into a more prosperous and sustainable world. It noted that the SDGs' charter calls for the global village to collaborate to achieve ambitious development targets, while giving a key role to reviewing and following up processes at the country, regional and international levels. Shittu (2016) further affirmed that the SDGs are universal sets of goals, targets and indicators expected to be deployed by member states in framing up their agendas and policies over the next fifteen years.

The SDGs were a follow-up on the MDGs, which came to a close following the adoption of the SDGs in September 2015 by the United Nations Summit (IIED, 2016; Shittu, 2015). The SDGs became operational in January 2016, with 17 Goals (figure 1) and 169 targets, spanning a range of development issues, ranging from zero poverty and hunger, improving health and education, making cities more sustainable, combating climate change, protecting the environment, among others. The focus of Goal 2 (Zero hunger), which is the emphasis under this article is to ensure access by all people, in particular, the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round and to achieve by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, while addressing the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons; double agricultural productivity and incomes of smallholders, particularly, the vulnerable through access to asset; ensure sustainable food production practices and implement resilient agricultural practices; maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species; correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect and adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves. Evaluation concerns on this goal has become imperative given the need to learn from the immediate past MDGs, determine the issue of equity in food security, learn from the implementation experiences of the immediate past MDGs and pursue sustainable food security practices in Nigeria, driven by innovation and evidenced by accurate statistics.



Fig

**Figure 1: The Global Sustainable Development Goals**

**Source:** Shittu, J. (2015). *Prioritizing Targets for Implementation: Which Way Forward for Nigeria* ?  
Centre for Policy Alternatives, Lagos Island, Lagos State Nigeria.

### Concept of Evaluation

In the extensive and innovative book on ten steps to a results-based monitoring and evaluation System, Kusek and Rist (2004), like other M&E development authors and practitioners referred to evaluation as the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, including its design, implementation, and results, which aims to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. The authors noted that evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision making process of stakeholders. However, this view of evaluation continues to witness changes due to the dynamic global terrain. IIED (2016) for instance, noted that evaluation combines evidence with sound thinking about value-based criteria, or sometimes principles. It affirmed that it entails critical thinking which aims for reasoned judgements of the merit, worth or significance of policies, programmes, strategies and systems. It affirmed that good evaluation informs policy making, facilitates adaptive management, enhances government and organizational learning, while demonstrating accountability and empowering the stakeholders. The Institute affirms that evaluation is a changing and continuous process that continues to evolve and support improving activities, even when the context changes. The source noted further that evaluation supports learning, transparency, accountability and improvement and that it is the evaluation evidence that informs, orients and strengthens efforts and interventions under the SDGs and that a dynamic evaluation premised on what works, the targeted group and the conditions of implementation will accelerate progress towards global want. On the other hand, D'Errico (2016) established that numerous misconceptions exist about evaluation and that evaluation is about establishing value, worth and merit, using critical thinking, asking questions, analysing arguments and assessing claims and helping to make difficult decision in complex situations. This practitioner posited that evaluation will play a vital role in the implementation of the on-going SDGs. The EVALSDGs (2016) affirmed that the SDGs' agenda provides a vision for evaluation and focuses on strengthening the enabling environment for evaluation; strengthening institutional capacities of voluntary organizations

for professional evaluation (VOPEs) and civil society; strengthening individual capacity for evaluation; Inter-linkages between enabling environment, institutional and individual capacities.

### **Evaluation and Sustainable Development Goals**

Generally, the SDGs have been tagged aspirational (IIED, 2016), accompanied by arrays of targets and a body of performance indicators. IIED (2016) posited that in determining whether targets are being met, focus should be directed at six key aspects of evaluation, which included; going beyond measurement; addressing the complexity of the SDGs and their achievements; focusing on valuation thinking for informed choices; recognising the place of national policy evaluation; building solid evidence for claim and building capacity for evaluation. IIED (2016) suggested that the complex interconnections of sustainable development must be noted in any meaningful approach to evaluation. It argued that the inter-connected nature of sustainable development can be usefully viewed through a complex systems' lens and thus, suggested five lessons and priority areas to guide national policy makers and planners implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, drawing from the experience of the MDGs. These included (i) thinking beyond individual policies, programmes and projects, thus, implying that more than one specific policy intervention and tracking outcomes across interconnected sectors be evaluated; (ii) examining macro forces influencing success and failure, such as political, economic, ideological, environmental, socio-cultural and technology changes; (iii) focusing on multiple definitions and measures of success, as simple targets and goals may not reflect the full impact or outcome and sustainability, which by its nature requires long term perspective; (iv) recognising the importance of culture-cultural beliefs, values and behaviours and how society views and approaches change; (v) shifting towards evaluative thinking and adaptive management, which requires a flexible approach, allowing for continuous cycles of experimentation and evidenced-informed learning. The body argued that considering these five points will strengthen national approaches to evaluation, but that the final point is the most powerful. On its part, the EvalSDGs (2016) noted that focus of the evaluation community has been on developing evaluation approaches that are equity and gender-focused and argued that with the SDGs calling for "leaving no one behind", the agenda presents new opportunity (and challenges) to further strengthen national evaluation capacities to evaluate localized SDGs and national development policies and strategies with an equity-focused and gender responsive lens. IIED (2016) further posited that, with the focus of the SDGs on numerous shared issues such as food security and clean water, the SDG charter calls for collaboration amongst countries and a long term view, with the focus of identifying achievements, gaps, challenges and factors critical to improvement. According to the source, this calls for a credible and elaborate evaluation framework. It further noted that the review process of the SDGs must be informed by rigorous, evidence-based, country-level evaluation, in addition to supportive evaluation policies, strategy coherence, resource flow and effectiveness of regional and global systems. Taking cognizance of the aforementioned issues and challenges, it is evident that much still needed to be done in Nigeria to effectively evaluate the on-going SDGs. The fact that the country lacks a holistic or sectoral evaluation policy, almost a year into the SDGs' implementation, speaks volume for the intended outcomes if urgent steps are not taken.

## METHODOLOGY

### Study Area

The study covers Nigeria; which is the most populous country in Africa, situated on the Gulf of Guinea in West Africa. Nigeria has a land area of about 91 million hectares accommodated within a total area of 356,667 sq m (923,768 sq km). Its neighbours are Benin, Niger, Cameroon, and Chad. The lower course of the Niger River flows south through the western part of the country into the Gulf of Guinea. Swamps and mangrove forests border the southern coast; inland are hardwood forests. The population based on the 2014 estimate is put at 177,155,754 (growth rate: 2.47%), with a life expectancy of about 53 years. The country is made up of 36 states and a Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (Figure 2). The economy is predominantly agrarian, with over 70% of the population engaged in farming and related rural enterprises, which their income and well-being depend upon (FMARD, 2015). The current contribution of the agriculture sector to the country's GDP is put at 23%, attributable to the dwindling fortune of agriculture and the simultaneous rise of the other thematic sectors of the economy. Shittu (2015) noted that of an estimated 71 million hectares of cultivable land, only half is currently used for farming; similar potential for an expansion of irrigation exist, but only covers 7 percent of irrigable land. Most of the rural farms are subsistence scale, cultivating small plots and depending on seasonal rainfall. Shittu (2015) further noted that a lack of basic infrastructure continued to exacerbate poverty in the rural areas. Shittu (2015) stated that Nigeria ranks 91 out of 109 on food security indexes. The source noted that Nigerians suffering from extreme hunger reduced from 19.31 million in 2010 to 13.38 million in 2013, though the achievement is still far below the MDG target of 9.7 percent set for 2015.



Figure 2: Map of Nigeria (<http://www.infoplease.com/atlas/country/nigeria.html>)

## **Data Collection and Analysis**

The data and information for this paper were based on secondary sources from the National Planning Commission, National Bureau of Statistics, National Programme for Food Security and other on-going donor supported food security based projects and programmes and internet platforms of the International Institute of Environmental Development, and the Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, amongst others. Data collected covers statistics and literature on MDGs, SDGs, monitoring and evaluation. Data analysis entails detailed review and content analysis based on available data and information.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Review and Lessons from Evaluation of the MDGs**

According to the SSA-MDG *et al.* (2015), implementation of the MDGs in Nigeria found its rhythm in 2005, which was the year it negotiated a debt relief from the Paris Club, which enabled it to increase and target public investments in pro-poor interventions aimed at achieving the MDGs. This was also the year the Presidential Committee on the Assessment and Monitoring of the MDGs and the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs were established to guide the use of the Debt Relief Gains (DRGs) in the execution of pro-poor programmes and projects (OSSAP-MDG), 2015). While noting that full-fledged activities under the MDGs commenced five years behind the actual commencement date, the OSSAP-MDG Office affirmed that the Nigerian experience was a bag of mixed results. It noted that while progress was recorded in some areas, critical challenges remained in others. As regards the positive side, it established that progress was recorded in areas of health, gender parity, as well as halving the people living in absolute hunger, among other indicators, even though critical challenges still remained. On the negative side however, the report noted that the country is still faced with the critical challenges of tackling poverty; hunger and malnutrition, which are key focus of SDG 2, achieving gender parity in education, wage employment and political leadership; reducing maternal deaths and improving access to sanitation and ensuring environmental sustainability. The late start up in Nigeria, has implications for cross country comparability of results and more so, given the fact that no dedicated and credible baseline data may have been undertaken, without prejudice to the periodic well-being and poverty studies undertaken by the National Bureau of Statistics in Nigeria, which could have provided start-up data..

Furthermore, IIED (2016) in its governance, policy and planning brief for instance, noted that country evaluation under the MDGs mainly focused on performance measurement and were generally complex. The scenario in Nigeria was not an exception, as most MDG-based performance reports were largely achievement target focused (output-target dynamics), with little emphasis on the relationship between ensuring output and national well-being outcomes, equity in terms of who gets what and sustainability of these MDGs' interventions. To this, and towards ensuring effective evaluation of the SDGs, IIED (2016) suggested that a follow up and review process must be undertaken, which must incorporate rigorous and country led evaluation that examines policy, programme implementation and effectiveness, while ramping up reasons, with supported cases of progress. The brief further noted that evaluation must go beyond measurement (hall

mark of the MDGs) to consider equity, relevance and sustainability of interventions. This approach, according to the source will help public accountability to stakeholders, learning and the use of innovation in the evaluation process.

Another key issue identified to have limited the usefulness of evaluation under the SDGs was the restricted nature of evaluation, which concentrated largely on individual projects. Though, donor collaborations and interactions exists in Nigeria, through the existing Donor Coordination Meetings and via complementary support for projects and programmes, as was the case with the World Bank (WB) and African Development Bank Support (AfDB) support for Fadama-II; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), AfDB, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and Arab Bank for Economic Development (BADEA) support for the National Programme for Food Security in Nigeria and lately, the multiple donor support for the on-going Agricultural Transformation Agenda Support Programmes, involving the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), AfDB, World Bank, among others. The issue is that, there is hardly a platform for collaborative or joint evaluation of intervention; as each donor does its own thing using its own approach and methodology, though, without prejudice to the fact that joint collaboration exist during reviews, through review workshops to discuss outcomes of evaluation studies. The International Fund for Agricultural Development in Nigeria has made a landmark achievement in this direction. Jagha (2016) also affirmed noted that evaluation is conducted mainly to assess impact of individual projects. The argument on board is that a single project cannot cause the achievement of a goal and that collaborative evaluation is imperative, premised on the contributions of similar projects, which is likely to support the attainment of the desired SDGs' targets. However, the view by numerous experts is that expanding the scope of evaluation to cover numerous projects will prompt more generic outcome of evaluation results, especially, as it relates to the various thematic sectors and inter-linkages between sectors of the economy. Heider (2015) harped on the need to make evaluation more effective by avoiding duplication and ensuring effective coordination, while raising the bar for evaluation to focus more on several projects in its evaluation. Jagha (2016) reiterated the critical issue of coordination, while noting that several development projects are being implemented simultaneously by various donors, each working towards affecting the same SDG (formerly MDGs). The author noted that these projects are most times, implemented independent of the others, with each entity attempting to claim attribution of results at population level. IIED (2016) argued that If the MDGs were too complex, the SDGs have been simplified to some level and that the same individual project approach to evaluation will hamper the way results to the SDGs are identified and reported.

In terms of resources, though, donors operating in the country have continued to jointly increase support towards project funding, as was the case with the Agricultural Transformation Agenda Intervention, however, they still needed to do more in terms of greater harmonization of resources, especially with regards to supporting interventions noting their own areas of comparative advantage. However, the on-going recession may limit the flow of budgetary resources to SDGs' implementation in the country. The new SSA on SDGs, Orelope Adefulire affirmed that the key challenge to project implementation under the SDGs was inadequate resource flow occasioned by the global economic downturn. She however revealed that effort is already being made to review globally acclaimed best practices, such as Conditional Grant Scheme. Details of estimated funding gap under MDGs is presented in Table 1.



Table 1.0: Estimated annual public sector funding gap for meeting the MDGs' Targets (2010-2015) in key sectors (₦ million)

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Cumulative estimated total cost (2010-2015)</b>	<b>Annual Average Cost</b>	<b>2009 Total budget for meeting MDGs target at the three levels of government</b>	<b>Public sector funding gap (2009 budget)</b>
Education	1,692,000	282,000	199,787	82,213
Health	4,458,000	743,000	218,866	524,134
Agriculture	6,684,000	1,114,000	306,541	807,459
Energy	4,863,000	810,500	159,909	650,591
Water	2,511,000	418,500	147,504	270,996
Housing	760,000	126,667	74,004	52,663
Roads	4,401,000	733,500	400,992	332,508
Environment	187,000	31,167	92,739	-61,572
Total all sector	25,556,000	4,259,333	1,600,342	2,658,991
US\$ equivalent (billion)	170.37	28.40	10.67	17.73

Source: OSSAP-MDGs Costing Team, June 2010

While evaluation capacity is not anything new, experts have observed that the issue of evaluation capacity has not been given its right place, given that it was not seen to be of paramount importance in the achievement of SDGs. Heilder (2015) however suggested that evaluation capacity should be a SDG by itself, with resources devoted to it and some level of independence granted it so that comprehensive projects can be implemented towards improving evaluation capacity in Nigeria and Africa (Heilder, 2015). Though, several evaluation-based trainings have been conducted on the evaluation of food security interventions for local resource persons in Nigeria, while opportunities continued to be provided in terms of job and consultancy opportunities to further build capacities. However, huge gap still exist within the country setting,

given the dynamic evaluation world, especially with regards to changing and conflicting donor procedures. This development also greatly limited the success of MDGs' evaluation in the country.

Negative competition amongst donors and development partners have also been a key issue which has impacted on the evaluation of the MDGs. Jagha (2016) noted that competition among partners and projects is one reason that evaluation has not made the in-depth impact that it should have in Nigeria. With respect to the case of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) in Northern Nigeria, Jagha (2016) noted that while project implementers meet with government and know what others are doing on the ground, there is not much leveraging. He hinted that USAID and DFID clearly encouraged collaboration to achieve higher results, but this does not happen fully and projects remain stand-alone. It was thus noted that in all, evaluation was reduced to data collection for individual projects, and results regarding the projects outputs instead of a collaborative means of evaluating the overall impact of individual but similar projects on the population. In spite of the enhanced operation of the National Bureau of Statistics and the support of development partners, the issue of credible data for evaluation still poses a challenge. The linkage between research/university based data and the NBS is also not in existence.

Though, a global problem, effective evaluation of the MDGs were constrained by the limited perspective on set goals, set by the originators, which led to lack of strategy and cohesion, premised on the killer assumption that people and institutions would come together organically to move towards the SDGs ( White, 2015).

### **Considerations and Innovative Approaches for Evaluating SDG 2**

The International Council for Science (ICSU) (2016) asserted that the best interdisciplinary research should underpin the development of goals, targets and indicators at global, regional and national levels and that the SDGs must be based on science. On the other hand, IIED (2015) reiterated that the MDGs highlighted the benefits of adopting a complex systems perspective, which meant understanding that goals and solutions are diverse, holistic, transnational and which can unfold in non-linear ways. Towards this end, the brief suggested for effective evaluation, which revolves round the fact that measurement is not enough; focus of evaluation should be on the complexities of SDGs and their achievements; evaluative thinking is indispensable for informed choices; national policy on evaluation is essential; evaluation should build strong evidence for claims and that building capacity for evaluation is critical.

On the issue of innovative approaches towards evaluating SDG 2, this brief recognised the existence of numerous approaches, given the changing global scenario, ever dynamic nature of development interventions and the complex inter-linkages of this Goal with the other inter-related Goals. Some of the feasible approaches included the systems approach, principle-based approach, multiple-point of view and the adaptive approach. The systems approach entails taking cognizance of the interconnected nature of the SDGs, understanding that SDG 2 and associated reliefs are multi-faceted, holistic and cross cutting across the 36 states of federation and FCT. Recognising the non-linear nature of SDG 2, solutions have also become imperative. Recognising the complex nature of the SDGs in general, the IIED (2016) sets out five considerations that could assist resourced constrained countries like Nigeria to set national agenda to include thinking beyond single policies, programmes and projects, examining macro forces influencing success or failure, having a nuanced understanding of success; recognising the importance of culture and adopting evaluative thinking and adaptive

management. Vella (2016) posited that to achieve the SDGs, the linear economic models must be replaced with a circular economy which is tangible set of solutions to reaching the sustainable patterns of production and consumption.

On the other hand, the principle-based approach involves analysing different perspectives of SDG 2, which may involve looking at sustainable food production, equity in the distribution of food, right to food, food security issues, resilient agriculture, diversity in production, trade restriction, functioning market system and other commitments arising from global food security fora including issues related to principles and approaches and ethical evaluation designs. Another approach is premised on having multiple point of view in evaluation analysis, which entails taking cognizance of existing knowledge and multiple point of view on the nature, context and solutions to social and environmental problems (IIED, 2016). The adaptive approach entails using an adaptive management approach which entails exploring emerging and alternative ways to meeting SDG objectives and targets and leveraging on knowledge from monitoring and evaluation to developing new approaches. Above all, it has become imperative to rethink the functionality of the results-based system within the closed MDGs and fully adopt the results-based performance management approach in its entire ramification for effective monitoring and evaluation of the on-going SDGs. Paying close attention to the various components of the RBME, comprising the hardware, software components and the peripherals.

## **CONCLUSION**

Arising from the aforementioned review and analyses, it is obvious that numerous challenges hindered the effective evaluation of the MDGs, which may as well limit evaluation under SDG 2, if prompt precaution is not taken and innovative solutions applied. These challenges included late start-up activities, leading to goal implementation, limited funding, which may be exacerbated by the on-going recession, restricted focus of evaluation to performance measurement, linear approach and single project, lack of evaluation, weak coordinator and duplication and negative competition among donors.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Arising from the outcome of this review, this paper recommended as follows:

1. There is need for the Office of the SSAP-MDG (SDG) to take a cue from the late implementation of the MDGs and promptly put in place all requisite structures and arrangements to facilitate effective evaluation of the on-going SDGs. This should entail earmarking of baseline data, review and alignment of targets and KPIs, development of monitoring and evaluation plan and putting in place a dedicated fund or identification of a clear budget source for M&E activities;
2. It has become imperative for the National Planning Commission in conjunction with the OSSAP-SDG to undertake a sectoral or institutional capacity gap assessment, with the view to ascertaining the gaps and capacity augmentation needed for effective evaluation of the SDGs;
3. The National Association of Evaluation in Nigeria should in conjunction with the Development Partners put in place requisite advocacy and participatorily support the preparation of a national evaluation policy in Nigeria, taken cognizance of sectoral peculiarities and existing donor specific evaluation policies.
4. There is the need for the OSSAP-SDG in conjunction with NPC and the development partners to create awareness and build local capacities on the current evaluation procedures supportive of the SDGs;

5. The development partners on ground need to enhance synergy with regards to combined or sectoral evaluation, avoid negative competition, duplication and increase support to the SDGs M&E component;
6. The NPC, in conjunction with the OSSAP-SDG and the Federal and States MDAs should put in place a workable and an enduring monitoring system and data collection hub to support acquisition of data for periodic SDGs' assessments;
7. The OSSAP-SDG needed to adopt current innovative approaches for effective evaluation of the on-going SDGs, particularly the food security interventions. This will entail a comprehensive capacity building plan and visits to developing or developed nations, known to have performed creditable well with regards to MDG evaluation;
8. Enhancing and sustaining results-based M&E systems at the country and donor levels will be key to effective evaluation of the SDGs;
9. There is the need for a broad-based stakeholder engagement to support qualitative and quantitative data as evidence for accountability and learning. In this, the private sector should be supported toward sectoral data collection and management;
10. The need for technological advances in generating credible data to show evidence is a mandate which the NPC and OSSAP-SDP should strive to achieve.
11. The Nigeria Association of Evaluation should be more pro-active and provide frequent fora for discussion of new evaluation practices.
12. SDGs' implementing staff at sector and lower levels should be encouraged to link up with resourceful, innovative and established e- evaluation networks, with the view to sharing experiences and taking up new practices.

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