MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA, 2003-2013

Achanya Julius John
Department of Public Administration and Local Government
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Abstract
The paper set out to assess the extent to which implementation of poverty reduction programmes between 2003 and 2013 have achieved the poverty and hunger reduction targets of MDG-1 in Nigeria. Thus, historical, thematic and content analysis was explored to achieve this objective. Utilizing secondary data, the study revealed a 'gap' between what was planned and what actually occurred as a result of programmes implementation. Some of these challenges include poor coordination, the absence of a comprehensive policy framework, excessive political interference, Ineffective targeting of the poor, leading to leakage of benefits to unintended beneficiaries, the unwieldy scope of programmes, which cause resources to be fluidly spread across to other projects, inconsistency or lack of continuity of programmes implementation to the latter and corruption in governance, among others. As the way out of this structural problem, the paper suggests that if Nigeria is ever going to escape the poverty trap as did many developed nations, it must put in place well designed and well implemented plan of action with a major scale-up of efforts in agricultural productivity, nutrition and market development. This will be in addition to instituting legal safeguards to ensure continuity in programme implementation to the latter as well as addressing the intractable problem of corruption in governance in Nigeria.

Keywords: MDGs, Poverty, Poverty Reduction, Implementation, Programme.

Introduction

At the turn of the 21st century, the world woke up to the startling reality of a world so rich and yet with majority of its people being so poor. According to Ibrahim (2006:9), it was "estimated that over half the world three billion lived on less than two dollars per day and about 800 million go to bed without food in their bellies". By the year 2000, "approximately one billion people entered the 21st century not being able to read or write" (Ibrahim, 2006:9; Oke and Oluwasuji, 2011: 61).

The above horrendous statistics propelled the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in its largest gathering on the 8th of September 2000 in New York. The MDGs was translated into eight goals namely:

- Goal 1: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- Goal 2: achieve universal primary education;
- Goal 3: promote gender equality;
- Goal 4: reduce child mortality;
- Goal 5: improve maternal health;
- Goal 6: combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Goal 7: ensure environmental sustainability and
- Goal 8: develop a global partnership for development (UN, 2001).

Top among the 8 Goals is MDG-1which is the focus of this study with the targets of "extreme poverty and hunger reduction". The Goal was to "halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 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" issued at the 24th special session of the Assembly by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of state and governments (UN 2001; Attaran, 2005; Anikwe 2010; FAO, 2013).

The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) received the mandate of monitoring progress towards the above objectives (FAO, 2013). The Goal was then incorporated into a millennium project with the task of devising a recommended plan of implementation that will allow all developing countries like Nigeria meet its targets by 2015. It was fashioned on the belief that poverty and hunger in these countries can be dramatically reduced only if developing countries put in place well designed and well implemented plan of action with a major scale-up of efforts in agricultural productivity, nutrition and market development (UN, 2001).

As a consequence, the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo during the second term (2003-2007), took both policy and institutional steps to incorporate the Goal. Accordingly, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) was adopted in 2003 with its focus on "a comprehensive socio-economic pact" which aimed at poverty eradication through job creation and growing of indigenous small and medium scale enterprises as the official MDG-1 targeted Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (NPC, 2004; IMF, 2007; Falade, 2008). In the same vein, the governments at the lower levels adopted the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) respectively (NEEDS Document, 2004).

With the leadership of President Musa Yar'Adua Administration in 2007, NEEDS I and II were harmonized and christened "the Seven Point

Agenda", a new Medium Term Development Plan for 2008-2011. The policy thrusts of the seven point agenda were: Critical Infrastructure (power, energy and transport); Land Reform; Human Capital Development (Health and education); Law, Order and Security; Food Security and Agriculture; wealth creation and Niger Delta. In a similar manner, the President Jonathan administration upon the assumption of office in 2011, also harmonized and gave birth to a new medium term development programme christened "Transformation Agenda". The agenda is focused on three key areas which include strong, inclusive and non-inflammatory growth, employment generation and poverty alleviation and value re-orientation of the citizenry (Ome, 2013)

In the same way the FAO received the mandate to monitor MDGs progress at the world level, the federal government also set up and mandated the MDG office in Nigeria to consistently monitor the implementation of programmes since 2003 through the preparation of Annual Monitoring Reports. However, these reports and several other research works show that very little or no appreciable level of progress was made (IMF, 2007; Falade, 2008; Maduabum, 2013). Some of the reasons adduced for the foregoing were linked to socio-economic and political factors.

First, the history of Nigeria's socio-economic recovery and development is characterized by policy inconsistency and lack of continuity of programme implementation to the latter (Ome, 2013; Gambari, 2014). Different administrations in Nigeria have adopted their own poverty alleviation programme, instead of continuing with and improving on the previous ones. The first known poverty reduction programme in Nigeria was the National Accelerated Food Programme and the Nigeria Agricultural and Co-operative Bank set up by the General Yakubu Gowon in 1972. Nothing appreciable was shown for the huge sum sunk into the programme (Ome, 2013). This phenomenon according to several other sources cut across all the regimes and administrations from the 1970s to date.

Second, it has been observed that since the discovery of crude oil in commercial quantity in the 1970's, commitment to food production and the development of agriculture in general, has suffered serious setback. With a population of over 140 million inhabitants, and a growth rate of 3.5 per cent per annum, feeding a total rising population constitute a potential social and political problem (Ajakaiye and Akinbinu, 2000:35). Odama (1989) argued that food production grows at about 2.5 per cent per annum, while food demand grows at a faster rate of 3.5 per cent per annum. He asserts that, there is imminent food crisis in Nigeria. It is an indictment on hunger reduction efforts and the inadequacy of public policy. Invariably, Nigeria, in spite of its great food potential continues to import (Agagu, 2004:14).

Third, Nigeria is dependent on oil as its major foreign exchange earner, which in 2002 constituted about 90% of her foreign exchange earnings, resulting in the weakening of its huge agricultural potentials, as the main stay of her economy. The neglect of the agricultural sector was worsened by persistent environmental predicament as pollution, deforestation, desertification and land degradation. The potentiality of agriculture to galvanize her economy towards growth stems from the fact that agriculture constitutes over 40% of her GDP, employs over 70% of its population and singularly contributes to over 90% of her non-oil export earnings (NEEDS, 20004). However, in terms of Nigeria's economic performance since independence, available statistics demonstrate that it is unimpressive. In this respect, according to the African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (2009:6) observes that:

> The average annual growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 1960 and 2000 was less than 4 percent. Thus, despite the availability and expenditure of colossal amounts of foreign exchange obtained mainly from oil and gas resources, Nigeria's economic growth has remained weak and the incidence of poverty has increased. It is estimated that Nigeria received over US$228 billion from oil export receipts between 1981 and 1999. Yet the number of Nigeria living in abject poverty, that is on less than US$1 a day – more than doubled between 1970 and 2000, and the proportion of the population living in poverty, rose from 36% in 1970 to 70% in 2000. Nigeria's per capita income of US$260 in 2000 is much less than, indeed it is only one-third of its level US$780 in 1980.

The above poor economic scenario of the country's situation has over the years orchestrated geometric poverty malaise climaxing into precarious human conditions. Some social indicators reflecting these excruciating and dehumanizing existences in Nigeria according to Marshi (2009:1) are:

- Life expectancy is mere 54 years
- Infant mortality is 77% per 1000 and maternal mortality is 704 per 100,000 live birth
- Only about 10% of the population had access to essential drugs
- There were fewer than 30 physicians per 100,000 people
- More than 5 million adults were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS with numerous other afflicted by tuberculosis and malaria

- Among children under five, almost 30 percent were underweight
- Only 17 percent of children were fully immunized – down from 30 percent in 1990 and almost 40 percent have never been vaccinated
- Only about have the population have access to safe drinking water (40 percent in rural areas, 80 percent in urban areas)
- Some 29 percent of the total population lived at the risk from annual floods
- More than 90 percent of the rural population depended on forests for livelihood and domestic energy sources
- Rural households spent an average of 1.5 hours a day collecting water and fuel wood, with household members walking an average of one kilometre a day to collect water and fuel wood.

Many analysts including these authors have attributed the above scenario in the country to corrupt bureaucracy, political instability, lack of transparency and accountability in governance and lack of visionary leaders that will take the economy on the part of inclusive growth and development (Asaju and Yarie, 2013; Asaju and Adagba, 2013; Sanusi, 2010).

Fourth, NEEDS for instance is not entirely MDG base, it covered partially 4 out of the 8 MDGs, namely poverty, child mortality, environmental sustainability and education (Falade, 2008). Also, there are no clearly established criteria for measuring hunger reduction progress in Nigeria, rather, progress is measured based on perception and not the quantity/quality of calorie intake/nutritional content or pattern of food consumption as recommended by the World Food Summit (WFS) and the MDGs (NBS, 2014). The absence of indicators makes it hard to track and evaluate policy implementation.

Given this case scenario, implementing poverty reduction programmes in this type of system will be very difficult as opposed to the conventional (orthodoxy) equilibrium system. By the same token it will be very difficult to accept the FAO 2013 report that Nigeria among 38 countries have realized its target of halving the proportion of people who suffer hunger in 2013, well ahead of its international targets for 2015 (FAO, 2013; NAN, 2014). This recognition did not go down well with many Nigerians, a report that hardly reflected the reality on ground. It is against the foregoing background that this study considers it imperative to assess the extent to which implementation of poverty reduction programmes between 2003 and 2013 have achieved the poverty and hunger reduction targets of MDG-1 in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the economic growth model of the neoclassical theory. The model developed by Robert Solow and Trevor Swan in 1956 centered macro economists' attention throughout the 1960s and 1970s on tangible (physical) capital formation as the driver of economic growth (Solow, 1996). Harrod (1939), Domar (1946) and Solow (1996) explained the long-run growth path of advanced capitalist economies in terms of accumulation of capital and technological progress. The sole concern was the growth in income (Amuka, 2014). The model gave insight to what technology can do to explain the difference in the rate of growth between two countries. In the model, a country which is more capital intensive in production process tends to grow faster and have higher standard of living than another country which is less capital intensive (Falade, 2008; Ugwuanyi, 2010).

Implementation of MDG-1 targeted poverty and hunger reduction programmes have their foundation in the economic growth model which states that: long-term poverty and hunger reduction requires sustained economic growth, which in turn depends on technological advancement and capital accumulation (UN 2001; Odusola 2006; Falade, 2008).

Towards achieving economic growth, the MDGs can effectively play two key roles: first as 'ends' and secondly as 'means to the ends' (UN, 2001). For example, the goal of MDG-1 to address the problem of extreme poverty and hunger among developing nations is an 'end' in achieving economic growth, simply because it is a 'societal goal' set to reduce the various forms of poverty including reduced hunger, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people by 2015. However, the MDGs in addition to the aforementioned are set to achieve 'gender equality, good health and sound education, and broader access to safe water and sanitation'. And as such all the MDGs have direct impact on achieving economic growth (Falade, 2008).

Similarly, MDGs are also the 'means to the ends', that is, the MDGs are the 'means' to achieving rapid 'economic growth' and further development. Essentially, MDGs are the various "Capital Inputs" to achieving economic growth. This point can be elaborated with several examples for instance, 'a well fed worker is a healthier worker and a more productive worker, as is a better educated worker. Improved water and sanitation infrastructure raises output per capital accumulation through various channels, such as reduced illness. Many of the MDGs are not only a part of the capital accumulation, but they can also contribute to the accumulation of other forms of capital. Human capital in the form of good health, for instance, also contributes to human capital in the form of education and skills. Water and sanitation infrastructure contributes directly to good health. Natural capital has similar feedback effects. Fish stocks, soil nutrients, and clean air all contribute to good health (UN, 2001; Falade, 2008).

The links between capital accumulation, economic growth and the MDGs can be summarized as follow: that while the goal for hunger and disease are part of the “human capital” grouping, those for water and sanitation and slum dwellers are part of the “infrastructure” grouping. Similarly, while the Goal for technological innovation and diffusion are a part of the “knowledge capital” grouping; that for income poverty is part of the “household income” grouping. While meeting the Goals for hunger, education, gender equality and health is vital for overall economic growth and development, however, it is a mistake to talk simply about the level of economic growth needed to achieve the Goals in a country without also thinking about the kinds of investments that will achieve the goal of extreme poverty and hunger reduction and thus also support overall economic growth (UN, 2001).

Overview of Poverty and Hunger Reduction Programmes in Nigeria

In a bid to address the perennial and intractable problem of poverty and hunger in Nigeria over the years, several socio-economic policies and programmes have been launched by successive governments spanning the 1960’s to date. Beginning from the era of Commodity Board in the 1960s, the country has witnessed a myriad of policies and programmes ostensibly introduced to address perceived problems in the agricultural sector. Such policies and schemes have focused on enhancing agricultural output, improving the expected linkages with the manufacturing sector, increasing earnings and employment opportunities, increasing food security, etc. These efforts ranged from those of the then military governments and civilians, which were adopted by lower levels of governments all with the aim of addressing the excruciating problem of poverty and hunger among the citizenry.

The first known poverty and hunger reduction programme in Nigeria was the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP), an agricultural extension programme initiated in 1972 by the Federal Department of Agriculture during General Yakubu Gowon’s regime. The focus of the programme was to bring about a significant increase in the production of maize, cassava, rice and wheat within a short period of time. The Gowon’s administration also set up the Co-operative Bank in 1973 (Iwuchukwu and Igboke, 2012; Ome, 2013). However, Ome (2013) argued that nothing was shown for the huge sum sunk into the programme; arguing that it only served as a conduit to transfer money to his cronies.

The 1970-1986 periods, which coincided with intense petroleum exploitation, was marked by policies' lack of interest in supporting agriculture. The strong decline in domestic agricultural production reduced the country to growing dependency on imported food stuffs. In the wake of the major crisis in the country in 1976, General Olusegun Obasanjo came up with his "Operation Feed the Nation" (1976-1979). The programme was launched with objectives of increasing food production, attaining self-sufficiency in food supply, encouraging all sections of the Nigerian population to grow food, encouraging balanced nutrition and by extension a healthy nation. The scheme encouraged mass participation. During the same period, the government announced guaranteed minimum prices for agricultural outputs and also reformed the marketing board system to generate adequate returns to farmers thereby ensuring that customers are charged reasonable prices. Various other incentive schemes were offered in the areas of tax relief, subsidy of prices of agricultural inputs, and machinery and equipment. In further recognition of the need to make credit available for the development of agriculture, the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund was also set up under Decree 20 of 1977 with an authorised capital of N100 million (Iwuchukwu and Igboke, 2012; Ome, 2013).

The civilian administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari came up with "Green Revolution" (1979-1983). This programme focused on strengthening agricultural production, providing subsidized inputs, community development, and access to credit. However, it was implemented without a transparent framework to structure action, and the successive governance at the head of the country did not ensure continuity. Hardly had these programmes taken off than they got abandoned or suspended, visibly, failing to make the desired impact on hunger, which would have ultimately impacted positively on the rural majority who are the poor. While the Green Revolution in India caused reduction in hunger, it failed to make the desired impact in Nigeria (Aghion and Armendariz, 2004). These authors attributed much of the success to the culture of consistency in programme implementation and the combination of high rate of investment in crop research, infrastructure, and market development and appropriate policy support.

To buttress Aghion and Armendariz position above, Pingali (2012) posited that a critical area of note was the large public investment in crop genetic improvement built on the scientific advances already made in the developed world for the major staple crops – wheat, rice and maize – and adopted those advances to the conditions of the Green Revolution Programme in India. It was also estimated that a 1% increase in agriculture value added per hectare leads to 0.04% reduction in poverty in the short run and 1.9% in the long run, the latter arising through the indirect effects of lower food prices and higher wages. The fall in staple prices as a result of the Green Revolution also allowed for more rapid diet diversification, even among the poor population, because savings on staple food expenditures improved access to micronutrient dense foods which affected hunger significantly (Aghion and Armendariz, 2004; Pingali, 2012).

The enactment of the Land Use Act in 1978 marked a historic turning point for land use management in Nigeria. The movement was reversed in 1987 with the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) that sought to reduce the national economy's dependency on oil and promote the private sector as the engine driving growth. In 1988, the Nigerian government once again turned its attention to the agricultural sector. It adopted an agricultural policy that had the objective, among others of ensuring food security for the population by developing local production. Some of such policies and programmes that were agriculturally based include: the River Basin Development Authorities (1973), the Agricultural Development Programme (1975), the Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (1986), and the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (1988) as amended (Decree No. 20), most of these and many other agricultural programmes have failed woefully (Okuneye, 2002; Garba, 2006; Omotola, 2008:506; Chukwuemeka, 2009:406).

The above writers attributed these failures to a variety of factors including, but not limited to the following factors: poor road network, lack of appropriate on-farm and off-farm storage facilities, poor rural electrification, inadequate irrigation facilities, high illiteracy among farmers, poor training of extension workers, land tenure system, unavailability and high cost of inputs, high incidence of pests and diseases, erosion, drought, pollution, desert encroachment. Others are corruption in governance, unprotected polices, discrimination against women, increased demand for higher wages, lack of support for policies as well as the failure of the governments in getting the people duly involved in the policy process (Okuneye, 2002; Garba, 2006; Omotola, 2008; Chukwuemeka, 2009).

After the pre-SAP era, there were other poverty and hunger reduction programmes initiated by the national government of Nigeria that were agriculturally based. These includes; the National Agricultural Land Development Authority (1992), the National Fadama Development Project (1992), the Nigerian Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (2000), the National Agricultural Development Fund (2002), the Commodity

Marketing and Development Companies (2003), National Special Programme on Food Security (2002). Others that are not agriculturally based were the National Directorate of Employment (1986), the Better Life Programme (1986), Family Support Programme (1994), the People's Bank of Nigeria (1989), the Family Economic Advancement Programme (1994), National Poverty Eradication Programme (2001) etc. (Garba, 2006; Eze, 2009:447)

In spite of these litanies of programmes, Onah and Ugwu (2010:48) observed that:

> The incidence of poverty in Nigeria is exacerbating instead of pruning down. This persistent burgeoning of poverty enigma in Nigeria even with the various policies to ameliorate the situation made the democratic government of Obasanjo to review the problems associated with the implementations of past poverty reduction measures and subsequently adopted possible panacea for the way forward.

In the review that followed, several problems were fingered as constituting implementation challenges against programme accomplishment in Nigeria's poverty policies in the past. Some of them as stated by NEEDS document (2004:100) are:

- Poor coordination
- The absence of a comprehensive policy framework
- Excessive political interference
- Ineffective targeting of the poor, leading to leakage of benefits to unintended beneficiaries
- The unwieldy scope of programmes, which cause resources to be fluidly spread across to other projects etc

To ameliorate these implementation challenges in poverty and hunger reduction programmes and other development problems in Nigeria, the Obasanjo administration conceptualized the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) in 2003 and its launch in 2004. The policy envisaged "a comprehensive socio-economic reform compact" which aimed at eradicating extreme poverty and hunger through food production, job creation and the growing of local small and medium scale enterprises. NEEDS also aimed at creating a social charter that would usher in sustainable human development for the people. (National Planning Commission, 2004; Oke & Oluwasuji, 2008)

With the leadership of President Yar'Adua Administration in 2007, NEEDS 1 and 11 were harmonized and christened "the Seven Point Agenda" a new Medium Term Development Plan for 2008 to 2011. The policy thrusts of the seven point agenda were: Critical Infrastructure (power, energy and transport); Land Reform; Human Capital Development (Health and education); Law, Order and Security; Food Security and Agriculture; wealth creation and Niger Delta. In the same way the Yar'Adua Administration harmonized and christened the hunger reduction programmes, the President Jonathan administration also harmonized and christened his as "Transformation Agenda" (Achanya, 2015).

The President Jonathan Transformation Agenda was a 5-year development programme, 2011-2015, driven by a world class team of 28 technocrats under the chairmanship of the President himself and the coordination of a renowned Economist in the person of Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. The Transformation Agenda was focused on three key areas which include strong, inclusive and non-inflammatory growth, employment generation and poverty alleviation and value re-orientation of the citizenry (Iwuchukwu and Igboke, 2012)

As lofty as the above efforts and initiatives appeared, they amount to virtually nothing in the face of prevailing realities in the country. It has been argued that despite Nigeria adoption of different hunger reduction strategies such as economic growth strategy, basic needs approach, rural development approach, targeting approach and employment approach, the incidence of poverty and hunger is still high and a challenging problem in Nigeria (Ogwumike, 2005; Aigbokhan, 2008; Onah and Ugwu, 2010; Iwuchukwu and Igboke, 2012; Achanya, 2015).

Examination of Poverty Reduction Programmes Achievement of Poverty and Hunger Reduction Targets of MDG-1 in Nigeria

The above was examined under the following sub-themes:

- NEEDS, 2003-2007
- Seven-Point Agenda (NEEDS 2), 2008-2011
- Transformation Agenda, 2011-2015 with emphasis on 2011-2013

NEEDS, 2003-2007

The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) programme between 2003 and 2007 is Nigeria's MDG-1 targeted poverty and hunger reduction programme. It was adopted 2003 as a response to the numerous challenges facing the nation (NPC, 2004; IMF, 2007). Some of the challenges according to IMF Progress Report (2007:1-2) include the following:

- Near collapse of social and economic infrastructure;
- Per capita GDP remained stagnant prior 1990; Grew at 2.2% 1999 – 2003
- Total GDP 2001 $45 billion;
- Per capital income was $300 a year;
- External and domestic debt – 70% of GDP (difficult to service debt, domestic debt rose by 200% between 1999 and 2002 – about $9.0billion);
- Real sector dominated by primary production sectors: agriculture 41%, crude oil 13%, manufacturing 5 – 7 % of GDP;
- • High macroeconomic volatility (exchange rate, inflation rate, budget deficit, GDP growth rate, GDP per capita - among the worst in the world);
- Finances at all levels of government in poor shape (pension crisis, arrears of salaries, huge debt misallocation and mismanagement);
- Nigerian urbanization rate – 5.3% (one of the fastest in the world);
- High level of poverty (about 70%);
- Dysfunctional education system (low standard, institutions decay, youth militancy etc);
- Unfriendly business environment (public sector dominance, rent seeking, weak institutions, corruption, high cost of doing business);
- High unemployment rate (urban 12.4%, rural 23.2%);
- General insecurity of life and property.

Given the parlous state of the economy, an integrated and coordinated development approach was adopted, with the sub-national governments, developing complimentary medium term plans: (SEEDS). The conceptual issues on NEEDS/SEEDS are based on four goals: Poverty reduction, Wealth creation, Employment generation, Value re-orientation. The framework for actualizing the goals of NEEDS is anchored on three pillars;

- Empowering people and improving social delivery,
- Fostering private sector led growth through creating the appropriate enabling environment, and
- Enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of government, by changing the way government does its work.

NEEDS poverty reduction programme was seen as a means through which the government of Nigeria could alleviate the national poverty syndrome, rebuild the lack of self-esteem of many Nigerians, caused by suffocating poverty and revamp the general battered economy of the country with its concomitant underdevelopment. However, Nigeria's experience with the implementation of NEEDS poverty reduction programme leaves much to be desired. As Onah and Ugwu (2010:58) observe that:

> Even though NEEDS implementation performance may have been remarkable in other areas of its emphasis, that of poverty reduction performance, between 2003 and 2007 in Nigeria, has not attained the requisite pass mark for its goal attainment.

This assertion is strongly corroborated by IMF 2007 Country Report on the effectiveness of Nigeria's NEEDS poverty reduction programmes. On this issue, IMF's (2007:3) report particularly stated that:

> The performance of NEEDS has been remarkable: implementation remain on course… surpassed expectations in many respects (stable macroeconomic environment, civil service reforms, due process, banking consolidation/ emergence of mega banks, privatization and liberalization)… weak in a few areas (Monitoring and Evaluation and Effective Coordination)… Not yet where we want to be (poverty reduction, employment generation, power supply etc).

From the above picture presented by the IMF appraisal of NEEDS, it may not be out of place to assert that Nigerian masses never benefitted significantly from the poverty reduction measure of the programme. This hypothetical statement is better proved in the IMF (2007:7) depicted details shown in table 1 below indicating targeted and actual achievements of NEEDS up to 2006.

Table 1: NEEDS Targets and Level of Achievement 2003-2006

Variable	**2003**		**2004**		**2005**		**2006**	
	Target	**Actual**	**Target**	**Actual**	**Target**	**Actual**	**Target**	**Actual**
Macroeconomic Variable								
Growth in real GDP (%)	10.20	10.20	5.00	6.10	6.0	6.51	6.00	5.67
Growth in oil Sector (%)	23.0	23.9	0.0	3.3	0.0	0.5	0.0	-4.5
Growth in Non-oil sector	3.3	4.5	7.3	7.5	8.5	8.2	8.3	8.9
Reduction in Poverty incidence (%)	5.0	-	5.0	-	-	-	5.0	-
Growth in Real Private Consumption (%)	-	-	4.08	3.08	-	-	-	-
Growth in Real Private Consumption per capita (%)	--	-	2.0	0.69	-	-	-	-
Inflation rate (%)	11.0	14.0	10.0	15.0	9.5	11.6	9.5	8.5
Sectorial Variables								
Growth in Agriculture sector (%)	7.0	6.5	6.0	4.11	6.0	7.0	6.0	7.17
Growth in Manufacturing sector (%)	-	5.7	7.0	6.17	7.0		7.0	9.5
Manufacturing Sector Capacity Utilization	53.0	45.6	>53.0	45.0	-	-	-	-
Fiscal Variables								
Maximum Public Deficit (% of GDP)	-	-2.8	-30.0	-1.7	3.0	>3.0	3.0	>3.0
Total Expenditure (% of GDP)	25.1	17.0	23.5	16.7				
Recurrent Expenditure (% of total budget)	70.0	80.3	65.0	77.2	60.0	-	60.0	-
Capital Expenditure (% of total budget)	30.0	19.7	35.0	22.8	40.0	-	40.0	-

External								
Reserves ($ Millions)	7.18	7.45	7.68	17.26	8.69	28.61	9.68	43.0
Imports Growth (%)	-	3.5	15.0	8.68	18.0	-	25.0	-
Exports Growth (%)	-	55.3	10.0	7.51	20.0	-	25.0	-
Earnings from Non-oil Exports	<5.0	3.2	>5.0	3.6	>5.0	-	>5.0	-

Sources: *Targets from NEEDS and **Actual from CBN Annual Report and Statement of Accounts, 2006 in IMF Progress Report (2007:6).

As indicated in table 1 above, there has been some modest achievement in other sectors of the NEEDS programme except the poverty reduction aspect. For instance, in the 2003-2006 appraisal depicted above, it reveals that the targeted annual 5% reduction in national poverty rating was not achieved. The same poor implementation assessment can also be attributable to
the growth in Nigeria citizen's real private consumption expenditure, which targets 4.83% for only year 2004 leaving other years without any achievement. For the targeted 2% annual achievement in the citizen's growth in real per capita consumption, it is very disappointing to note from the above table, that it was only in 2004 that a meager 0.69% was achieved out of the expected 2% target performance. Besides, the projected annual growth of 2% is far less than 7-10 per cent suggested by the United Nations for developing countries if they are to get out of poverty trap (UN, 2001; Falade, 2008).

Growth in real private consumption expenditure and that of percentage of such consumption per capita reflects the actual incomes that are available to Nigerians for expenditure in their essential needs of life. Since there was no growth here, it all goes to demonstrate that these citizens are still so poor financially and otherwise to afford payments for education, health, housing, investment, food security, transportation etc. Another implication of the above is that the Nigerian government at all levels have not provided enough resources or empowered its citizens enough to have access to basic requirements of existence.

SEVEN-POINT AGENDA (NEEDS 2), 2008-2011

The Seven Point Agenda also referred to as NEEDS 2 (2008 – 2011) is another Nigeria's MDG-1 targeted poverty and hunger reduction programme under President Musa Yar'Adua's Administration (Oluleye and Obi, 2010:22; Maduabum, 2013:101). The focus of the agenda was power and energy, food security and agriculture, wealth creation and empowerment, mass transportation, land reform, security and qualitative and functional education. The agenda include two special interest issues – Niger Delta and disadvantaged groups (Oluleye and Obi, 2010:22). Although there is no comprehensive and concise document on the 7-point agenda (unlike NEEDS) President Yar'Adua stated the following as the strategies for achieving the objectives of food security and agriculture, and wealth creation and empowerment:

On Food Security and Agriculture

- Committing heavy investment, into the agricultural sector to boost and improve technology in modern farming;
- Investing heavily in agriculture to increase productivity and to revolutionize the agriculture through more funds;
- Injecting of funds into research, production and development of agric inputs to achieve 5-10 fold increase in yield and production.

On Wealth Creation and Employment

- Diversification of the country's source of wealth creation to avoid continuous dependence on the petroleum sector;
- Development and exploitation of the agricultural sector
- Development and exploitation of the solid mineral sub-sector.

According to IMF (2007:20), the overall goal of NEEDS 2 was to take care of the gaps in NEEDS 1 (2003-2007). While acknowledging that significant progress have been made in the context of the NEEDS 1 policy thrust and targets in other areas, there remains several challenges and outstanding issues to be addressed in NEEDS 2 (7-Point Agenda) in order to facilitate the reduction in poverty levels in accordance with the MDGs by 2015. The major challenge would be the sustenance of prudent fiscal and monetary policies under NEEDS-2 to ensure macroeconomic stability. Other challenges include employment generation; bridging the existing infrastructure deficiency; reduction in high incidence of poverty, raising the education status, improving business environment and competitiveness; raising the level of aggregate demand; improving human development indicator and resolving the Niger Delta region crisis.

However, an avalanche of scholars including Abang (2009), Dike (2010), Adeolu (2012) Oke, et al (2011) have opined that the aforementioned were a major national concern during the period under study, a problem they attributed to excessive corruption in governance by officials having responsibility for programme implementation. By implication, the administration was a far cry from anything but poverty and hunger reduction targets. In spite this observation; the administration was credited for resolving the Niger-Delta crisis.

However the foregoing, there was a general lack of data on NEEDS 2 or 7-point agenda for the period 2008-2011 to corroborate the above observation. This is unlike NEEDS 1 (2003-2007) with targets and achievements published by reliable organizations and institutions like the CBN and the IMF.

TRANSFORMATION AGENDA, 2011-2015 WITH EMPHASIS ON 2011-2013

The implementation of Nigeria's poverty reduction programmes between 2003 and 2013 no doubt recorded some measure of achievements as seen from the preceding analysis. However, what is in doubt is the claimed realization of MDG-1 set target for reducing by half the proportion of people who suffer hunger in Nigeria in 2013 ahead of the 2015 international deadline. It has been argued that programmes implementation performance may have been remarkable in other areas of its emphasis, that of poverty and hunger reduction performance have not attained the requisite pass mark for its goal attainment. The award and recognition of Nigeria by FAO as noted earlier hardly reflected the reality on ground. More so that the claimed recognition is a negation of rated reports. For instance, the 2012 Global Hunger Index (GHI) which assesses all available data on hunger, undernourishment and the pattern of food consumption within countries scored Nigeria at 15.7 whereas nations like Iran, Libya and Jordan which are substantially desert nations scored less than 5 on the GHI, indicating the near absence of hunger and malnutrition. According to the ranking, the score of 15.7 for Nigeria therefore indicates a 'serious' hunger problem in the country (El-Rufai, 2013).

The above scenario is in addition to several other incidences that cut across economic woes, food insecurity, insurgency (Boko-Haram) and governance crisis during the period under study. For instance, the 2013 FAO estimation measured MDG-1 progress between 2010 and 2012. Incidentally, the highest incidence of climatic catastrophe like flooding, migration of farmers from the North to the South due to insurgency and the highest prices of staple foods (like beans) was recorded between 2010 and 2012 amongst others. As a consequence, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) warned of possible famine. NEMA estimated that, between 2010 and

2012, 17,000 farmers in the area had migrated to Southern Nigeria, fearing loss of life, property, farmland and livestock (Abdul'Aziz, 2014).

The President Jonathan Transformation Agenda like the Yar'Adua's Seven Point Agenda also suffered from lack of data and targets for measuring or bench marking performance indicators and a far cry from the achievement of MDG-1 in Nigeria. This could be summed up against the backdrop of the fact that the Nigeria economy under his administration was characterized by structural bottlenecks and rigidities, underdeveloped money and capital markets, oligopolistic market structure, economic dualism and underdevelopment of the rural areas, inadequate tax system, high level of corruption, external dependence, primitive accumulative instinct, and a large informal sector amongst others (Achanya, 2015).

The Major Challenges that impeded the Implementation of Poverty Reduction Programmes in Nigeria, 2003-2013

There are underlying factors that put the successful implementation of MDG-1 targeted poverty and hunger reduction programmes in Nigeria in doubt. However, the major challenges that impeded the performance of the programmes as observed from the study's section on "Overview of Poverty Reduction Programmes in Nigeria" from the 1960s to date is 'policy inconsistency and lack of continuity' in programmes implementation to the latter. Corroborating this study hypothetical assertion, Onah and Ugwu (2010:45) observes that:

> The enunciation of various poverty reduction programmes by the federal government of Nigeria dates back to the first national development plan of 1962 to 1967. Since then a litany of sectoral and multi-sectoral policies and programmes targeted at reducing the burgeoning poverty malaise in the country have not abated.

Ome (2013, 29) attributed this intractable situation to the fact that *"the problem with Nigeria is lack of consistency and non-implementation of government policies to the latter".* In the same vein, Oke et al (2011:64) also asserted that the major challenge with the implementation of MDGs and poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria lies with the *"non-continuity of government programmes by successive governments which is grossly responsible for so many programmes and policy summersault in the country"*. The foregoing is strongly corroborated by Professor Gambari's position in (Maduabum, 2013) that:

> *Nigeria's development efforts have over the years been characterized by lack of continuity, consistency and commitment (3Cs) to agreed policies, programmes and projects as well as an absence of a long-term perspective. The culminating effect has been growth and development of the Nigerian Economy without a concomitant improvement in the overall welfare of Nigerian citizens.*

To buttress Gambari's contention above, the study observed that whereas India is still implementing the 'Green Revolution' of the 1960s (Pingali, 2012), the Nigerian government has experimented with no less a litany of programmes to date.

Other challenges that bedeviled the implementation of programmes have been muted by an avalanche of scholars. Some of these include Falade (2008), Abang (2009), Ogbonna (2009), Momo (2009), Onah and Ugwu (2010), Dike (2010), Granval and Doullet (2011), Adeolu (2012), Maduabum (2013) among others. The challenges muted cut across the absence of a comprehensive policy frame work, poor coordination, lack of or inability to use data, inadequate safety nets, programmes not fully participatory, insufficient time for implementation, corruption, lack of continuity and coherence in programme implementation, lack of legal safeguard to ensure continuity, adoption of non-time bound indicators, economic meltdown, infrastructure decay and technological deficit, insecurity, etc. For instance, Falade (2008) observes that NEEDS' preparation, implementation and monitoring were seriously constrained by these factors. He stated that:

> The programme faced an initial problem of serving two purposes – first as a National development plan (rolling plan of a kind) and secondly as an interim poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) for IMF/World Bank financial assistant and ran into some technical formulation constraints of neither here nor there. Also, NEEDS is not entirely MDGs-based, covering partially 4 out of the 8 MDGs(namely; poverty, health, education and natural environment) and completely ignoring nearly all the 18 monitoring indicators. NEEDS' preparation was not fully participatory and suffered from the syndrome of 'planning without data', showing serious deficiencies in the rigour and comprehensiveness required in data analysis and projections and the formulation of smart strategies.

In the light of the above, there is a general disconnect in articulating appropriate strategies, projections, and targets to effectively link them with attaining the MDGs. Generally, NEEDS has been couched in woolly statements that can be credited with PRSP, however, many studies have exposed the deficiencies in terms of not providing the required safety nets, not fully participatory, non-gender sensitive, adoption of non-time-bound targets and incomprehensive use of indicators (Falade (2008); Onah and Ugwu, 2010; Maduabum, 2013). Also, implicit among the various challenges that inhibited the performance of NEEDS is the factor of timing of the whole reform process and the absence of legal safeguards to ensure continuity after the administration that instituted the programme had gone (Ogbonna, 2009; Momo, 2009).

Another challenge that bedeviled the implementation of programmes is the issue of corruption. To illustrate, former Nigeria's President Obasanjo's government had a windfall of budget surplus of $13 billion between 2003 and 2007. Oil income more than doubled in 2006, meaning that economic pressures were off. However, in the same year, Nigeria had the largest numbers of absolute poor people in the world after China and India, indicating 70 per cent or 84 million people (Dowden, 2008). This outcome can clarify the extent of funds mismanagement in Nigeria.

The foregoing observations also cut across the 7-point agenda of the Yar'Adua's administration and that of Jonathan's Transformation Agenda. However, other critical challenges identified with both programmes are corruption in governance; the constraints of massive infrastructural decay; technological deficit; the prevalent of insecurity in the Niger-Delta between 2007 and 2011 and Boko-Haram insurgency between 2011 and 2013 and beyond; the challenge of budget implementation failure; the then wave of global economic recession coupled with insincerity of the government to pursue the actualization of the programmes to the latter (Abang, 2009; Dike, 2010; Adeolu, 2012; Oke, et al, 2011;Maduabum, 2013; Achanya, 2015).

Implicit in all the programmes is the general lack of coherence, issues in relation to other sectoral policies and implementation issues at various institutional levels. Nigeria's poverty and hunger reduction programmes were for a long time opportunistic and not coordinated among each other. In terms of cross-sector policy, Granval and Doullet (2011) argued that little has been done to link agricultural policy with rural development policy, support for small and medium sized enterprises, and management of water and natural resources.

Conclusion

The study set out with the broad objective of assessing the implementation of MDG-1 targeted poverty and hunger reduction programmes in Nigeria between 2003 and 2013. The aim of the assessment was to ascertain the impact of the programmes on hunger in Nigeria. This was against the backdrop of FAO 2013 Hunger Report which claimed that Nigeria has already realized the target of MDG-1 in 2013 ahead of 2015 deadline in spite increasing hunger statistics and the prevailing hunger condition in the country. However, the findings in the study revealed that Nigeria's experience with programmes implementation so far leaves much to be desired. The performance of poverty and hunger reduction programmes between 2003 and 2013 in Nigeria have not attained the requisite pass mark for its goal attainment as awarded by FAO in 2013.

Recommendations

Deriving from the study findings and discussion, we proffer the following recommendations as the way forward:

To address the problem of policy inconsistency and lack of continuity of programme implementation to the later, Government must institute legal safeguards to ensure consistency and continuity in programme implementation to the latter. This will be in addition to addressing the problem of corruption in governance. Also, the technocrats and sectoral experts in ministries, departments and agencies of government handling poverty and hunger reduction programmes need to be properly trained in the design, implementation and monitoring of programmes.

Toward achieving poverty and hunger reduction, the millennium village approach has been advocated. The model was developed by the United Nations Millennium Project in 2005 with Sub-Saharan African countries as their primary focus. The approach was developed from the premise that 75% of the poor and hungry in countries of Africa like Nigeria live in rural areas and depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their livelihoods. The model believes that MDG-1 can be achieved in rural Africa through advanced design and implementation of community-led, practical investments in food production, health, education, energy, infrastructure development, information technology and community participation over a time frame (Ajayi, 2008).

It is a twin-track approach to hunger and poverty reduction that combines measures to promote rural development through growth in agriculture and rural off-farm activities with measures to provide direct and immediate access to food for the most needy. It must be stressed that the two tracks are interdependent and that the key to swift hunger and poverty reduction lies in making use of this interdependence by taking simultaneous actions in both fronts. For example, direct action to improve nutrition can stimulate personal productivity by increasing physical work capacity. However, if action is not taken simultaneously to promote rural development and labour demand, this additional productivity may not have much impact on income because little additional work is available. Conversely, the provision of better seeds through agricultural research may not have much impact on farmer's incomes if the farmers to whom they are supplied cannot work well on their farms because they are undernourished or ill (Millennium Village Project, 2007)

The model further identified four major measures to increase the income of the poor. These are:

- Increasing the demand and therefore, the price for those factors of production that the poor own (e.g their labour);
- Transferring physical assets such as land to the poor;
- Providing social services such as education to the poor; and
- Transferring current income to the poor through cash and food subsidies.

Although evidence shows that economic growth is a powerful means of reducing poverty and hunger, not all patterns of growth have the same impact. For example, production incentives that encourage growth in rural areas will directly benefit farmers but also indirectly benefit the landless through an increased demand for labour and those involved in agricultural marketing. Labour intensive agricultural growth is particularly important for poverty reduction because agriculture in Nigeria provides employment for up to 70% of the labour force in the rural areas. To achieve this, group or cooperative farms need to be developed and funded at strategic villages depending on the comparative advantages of the selected communities.

Increasing the access of the poor to land and other assets will alleviate the poverty of the masses, as they will be able to cultivate the land and rear animals. Enhancing the access of small-scale farmers and traders (particularly women) to credit, will lift up their productive capacities, as they will be able to invest more on agriculture and increase food supply.

Development of infrastructural facilities in the rural areas is sine qua non to developing agriculture. Even though this is a medium term approach, it can be tested using a number of local government areas in each state as pilot programmes. Such facilities like good feeder roads will enhance the evacuation of output and transportation of inputs to the rural areas. In particular, on-farm storage facilities appropriate for specific agricultural enterprises should be designed and commercialized for use in villages/rural areas.

Inputs such as improved seeds, seedlings, cuttings and suckers need to be commercialized through incentives to the private sector. Other inputs that need to be commercialized are fertilisers, herbicides and insecticides. Undoubtedly, the price response of farmers to this inputs, is very low. However though, a strong advisory service, the adoption of these technologies will enhance a profitable and environment friendly manner.

A major step to take is to increase the irrigated areas for food production. In the first place, yield is higher during the dry season as photosynthesis occurs more than during the wet season. Furthermore, processing and marketing of food items offer a veritable avenue for job creation. Small-scale processing facilities for cassava, yam, rice, millet, sorghum have been identified as having high labour absorptive capacities. Apart from the employment potentials, processing offers a value added to agricultural output thereby increasing farmer's income.

Other areas include providing market information to farmers' association, informal education programmes to small-scale farmers and directly assisting the enterprising but poor Nigerians with funds to engage in farming and trading through subsidies and other forms of incentives. Therefore, eradication of hunger can be achieved through growth in agriculture and rural off farm activities (Millennium Village Project, 2007, Ajayi, 2008).

However the foregoing, the researcher believes that if the intractable problem of policy inconsistency and corruption in governance is not adequately addressed, the recommendations as put forward here will only remain a far cry from reality.

References

Abang, P. (2009). Revising Nigeria's agriculture policy in favour of livestock farming: to Reduce rural poverty. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, 2(1), 48-63.

Abdul' Aziz, I. (2014). Nigeria: Hunger looms in Northern Nigeria as farmers face Boko-Haram. *African Farm News in Review:* http//weekly.farmradio.org/2014/01.

Achanya, J. J. (2015). Implementation of hunger reduction programmes and the control of poverty increase in Nigeria. *Review of Public Administration and Public Affairs in Africa (RPAPAA),* 1(2) 27-38.

Adeolu, D. (2012). Analysis of the cost of governance and options for its reduction in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, 49(1), 10-28.

African Forum and Network on Debt and National Development (AFRODAD), (2005) The politics of the MDGs and Nigeria iii" Harare, Zimbabwe. Retrieved from*www.afrodad.org May 11/5/2009, afrodad@afrodad.co.zw*

Agagu, A. A. (2004). Development agenda of the Nigerian state. Ibadan: Flag (Nig.) Publishers.

Ajakaiye, O. &Akinbinu, B. (2000). Strategic issues in Nigerian development in a globalising and liberalising World. Ibadan: NISER.

Ajayi, O. C. (2008). Eradication of poverty and hunger in Africa. In E. O.Akinnowo, et al (Eds.), *Socio-economic policies and millennium development goals (MDGs) in Africa* (50-60). Faculty of Social and Management Sciences, Adekunle Ajasin University. Akure: Logos-Universal Publishers.

Aghion, P. & Armendariz, B. (2004).A new growth approach to poverty alleviation. In Bannerjee, A. and Benabou, R. and Mookerjee, D., (Eds.), *Understanding poverty* (71-84). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Aigbokhan, E. B. (2008). Growth, inequality and poverty in Nigeria. *Paper Prepared for United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.*

Amuka, J. I. (2014). Economic theory and global economic challenge: Shall we wake the dead economist? An anthropology of theories for social research. Enugu: University of Nigeria Press Ltd.

Anikwe, S. O. (2010). The role of human resources planning and development in the achievement of the millennium development goals in Nigeria.*Nigerian Journal of Public Administration and Local Government*, 15(2), 110-133.

Asaju, K., Adagba, S.O., &Yarie, E. (2013). Global financial crisis and economic development in Nigeria: The challenges of vision 20:2020. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development, 4*(4), 65-74.

Attaran, A. (2005). An immeasurable crisis?A criticism of the MDGs and why they cannot be measured.*PLOS Medicine, 210, 955-962.* Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1371 /journal.pmed.0020318

Chukwuemeka, E. E. O. (2009). Poverty and the millennium development goals. *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance in Nigeria: The Nexus. Educational Research and Review,* 4 (9), 405-410.

Domar, E. (1946). Capital expansion, rate of growth and employment. *Econometricians, 14, 137-147.*

Dowden, R. (2008). Africa: Altered states ordinary miracles.London: Portobello books.

El-Rufai, N. R. (2013). *Hunger in the midst of plenty.Nigeria Intel. Retrieved from www.nigeriaintel.com/2013/04/12/hunger-in-the-midst-of-plenty*

Eze, C.M. (2009). The privatized state and mass poverty in Nigeria: The factor of economic development programme since 1980s. *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations,* 3(10), 443-450.

Falade, J. B. (2008). A Study of theory and practice. In Akinnowo, E. O. et al (Eds.),*Socio-economic policies and millennium development goals (MDGs) in Africa (*4-32*),* Faculty of Social and Management Sciences, Adekunle Ajasin University. Akure: Logos-Universal Publishers.

Food and Agricultural Organisation. (2010). The state of food insecurity in the world 2010. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1683e/i1683e.pdf

Food and Agricultural Organisation. (2012). The state of food insecurity in the world 2012. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/ i3027e00.htm

Food and Agricultural Organisation (2013). 2013 hunger report. Retrieved from http://www.fao.org/hunger/en/

Garba, A. (2006). Alleviating poverty in Northern Nigeria.*A Paper Presented at the Annual Convention of Zumunta Association, USA Minneapolis, MN. July 28-29.*

Granval, F. & Doullet, M. (2011). Nigeria's agricultural policy: Seeking coherence within strategic frameworks. Retrieved from *http://www.interreseaux.org /ressourcesthematiques/ressources-parpays/articl/politiques-agricoles*

Harrod, R. F. (1939). An essay in dynamic theory. *Economic Journal, 49 (139), 14-33.*

Ibrahim, A. J. (2006).Find the money: A guide to monitoring allocations to the millennium development goals through debt relief gains. "Foreward" Ogbonna, H. (Ed), Abuja: Action Aid International Nigeria.

IMF, (2007). Progress report on the national economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS), NEEDS benchmarking exercise 2003-2007 7MDGs, Washington DC. Retrieved from http://www.imf.org.

Iwuchukwu, J. C. &Igboke, E. M. (2012).Lessons from agricultural policies and programmes in Nigeria. Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization, 5,(11-22). www.iiste.org/journal/index.php/JLPG/artile/viewFile/2334/2335

Maduabum, C. P. (2013) The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Framework and the Nigerian Developmental Agenda: How Congruent? In International Journal of Emerging Knowledge, 1(6): 96-108.

Marshi, Mohammed (2009, December 24). National economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS), Sunday Triumph Newspaper. Retrieved from http://www.triumphnewspapers.com/archive/ST17112006/nati22122006.htm 5/2/2009.

Momo, T. (2009, July 13). Nigeria: NEEDS is assassinated. Vanguard Newspaper.Retrieved from http://allafrica.com/stories/200807140681.html.

Millennium Village Project Annual Report (2007). Retrieved fromwww.unmillenniumproject .org/mv/mv_cluster.htm

National Planning Commission (2003).National economic empowerment and development strategy, Vol. 1 Report. Abuja.

National Planning Commission (2004). National economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS), Abuja.

News Agency of Nigeria (2013). Nigeria makes MDGs one list, reduces hunger by half-FAO. Retrieved from: Theeagleonline.com.ng/Nigeria-makes-mdg-one-list-reduces-hunger-by-half-fao/

Nigeria Meets MDGs Hunger Target Ahead of 2015 (2013). Retrieved from http./theguardianmobile.com/readnewsitem.php?... 17/06/2013

Oduma, J. S. (1989). Food as a Fundamental Human Rights and the Nigerian Constitution.*Annuals of the Social Science Council of Nigeria*, NO 2, January – December.

Ogbonna, H. (2009) NEEDS; building on four pillars in contextualizing NEEDS economic/ political reform in Nigeria. Report of civil society policy dialogue on NEEDS. In Amadi, S. and Frances, O. (Eds).*A publication of Human Rights Law services (Centre for Public policy and Research)http://209.85.173.132/search9=cachioBRFDUIGNdbEj: www.boellnigeria.org/documents... 5/2/2009*

Ogwumike, F. O. (2005). NEEDS and challenges to poverty reduction in Nigeria. *CBN Economic & Financial Review*, 39(4) 45-72.

Oke, L. & Oluwasuji, C. O. (2008), Poverty alleviation and human development in Nigeria: the imperative of good governance. In Akinnowo, E. O. et al (Eds.), *Socio-economic policies and millennium development goals (MDGs) in Africa*, Faculty of Social and Management Science, Adekunle Ajasin University. Akure: Logos-Universal Publishers.

Oke, L.; Oluwasuji, C. O. & Simon-Oke, O. O. (2011). Millennium development goals (MDGs) and the Yar'Adua'a seven point agenda in Nigeria: Prospect and challenges. *African Research Review Journal,* 5(1), 57-72.

Okuneye, A. (2002). Agriculture, communication, and socio-economic development. In Management association and information Resources (Ed.), *Regional development: Concepts, methodologies, tools, and applications*. https://books.google.com.ng/books?id=paOeBDAAQBAS&pg=PA399&dq

Oluleye, F.A. & Obi, K. (2010). National economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS) and the seven point agenda: Untarred roads to Nigeria's economic development. In T. Wuam and T. N. Sunday (eds), Governance and economic development in the fourth republic (15-33). Makurdi: Aboki Publishers.

Ome, E. M. (2013). Imperatives of poverty reduction and sustainable human development. *Journal of Nigerian Intellectual Property and Humanities*, 2(4) 23-35

Omotola, J .S. (2008).Combating poverty for sustainable human development in Nigeria: The continuing struggle. *Journal of Poverty,* 12(4), 496-517.

Onah, F. O. & Ugwu, C. E. (2010). National economic empowerment and development strategy (NEEDS) and Implementation of poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria, 2003-2007. *Nigerian Journal of Public Administration and Local Government*, 15(2), 45-73

Pingali, P, L. (2012). Green revolution: Impacts, limits, and the path ahead. *(online).* Retrieved from www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov... 07/31/2012

Sanusi, L.S. (2010). Growth prospects for the Nigerian economy. *A Paper delivered in a public lecture at the Igbinedion University Eighth Convocation Ceremony, Okada, Edo State. Nigeria. Research Department, Central Bank of Nigeria.*

Solow, R. (1996). A contribution to the theory of economic growth. *Quarterly Journal of Economics, 70 (1): 65-94.*

Ugwuanyi, R. O. (2010). Development and utilization of human resources of rural communities for economic growth.*Journal of Sustainable Human Development Review,* 2(1), 65-75.

United Nations (2001). Report of the UN Secretary-General: Investing in development. A practical plan to achieve the millennium development goals, London: Earth Scan.

United Nations.(2010). Millennium development goals. United Nations Summit 20-22 September 2010, New York high level plenary meeting of the general assembly. Retrieved October 8, 2012, from Available at http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/MDG_FS_2_EN.pdf

United Nations (2012). Millennium development goals (MDGs) report. New York: United Nations. http://www.undp.org/content/dam/ undp/ library/MDG /english /The_MDG_Report_2012.pdf