

## **Development Plans and Visions as a Strategy for Sustainable Development: The Experience of Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** *The ultimate aim of governments worldwide is to achieve sustainable improvement in the quality of life of its citizenry. Therefore, nation states no matter their size or developmental status strive to achieve some level of consistency in development planning and good governance. However, achieving the goals of governance requires that deliberate plan of action be set out to guide Government throughout the process. This plan will detail the vision, focus and steps to be followed such as the overall vision of the government, what is expected to be achieved at the end of the plan period, the direction of public and private investments, the pace and focus of infrastructural and non-infrastructural development etc. While the plan is purely a guide and amenable to review (or re-direction) as dictated by the operating environment, its absence or inconsistency can however spell doom for the sustainable development of a country. The importance of development planning and vision for sustainable development cannot therefore be over-emphasized. Employing the ex-post facto design, the paper uses existing data from the relevant planning institutions to analyze Nigeria's past development plans from colonial period to vision 20:2020 developed in 2009 to establish whether these have assisted in sustainable development in the country.*

**Keywords:** Development, Development plan, Economic development, Sustainable development, Vision.

### **1. Introduction**

The ultimate aim of governments worldwide is to achieve sustainable improvement in the quality of life of its citizenry. Therefore, nation states no matter their size or developmental status strive to achieve some level of good governance. However, achieving the goals of governance requires that deliberate plan of action be set out to guide Government throughout the process. This plan will detail the vision, focus and steps to be followed such as the overall

vision of the government, what is expected to be achieved at the end of the plan period, the direction of public and private investments, the pace and focus of infrastructural and non-infrastructural development etc. While the plan is purely a guide and amenable to review (or re-direction) as dictated by the operating environment, its absence can however spell doom for the country. Development planning therefore becomes a necessary tool used by many governments and organizations to set their visions, missions, goals, and effective means of realizing development through effective direction and control.

For more than two decade, most African countries have been plunged into an economic crisis which has seriously affected the well-being of large sections of their populations, weakened nation states and increased social and political tensions. The continued suffering emanating from the economic crisis has resulted in 'reactive' policy initiatives aimed at ameliorating the multi-faceted negative impacts of the crisis. As a result, most African countries are presently undergoing managed adjustment processes with profound implications for all sectors of the economy. The crisis has also resulted in far-reaching dependence upon and interference from external forces, notably multilateral and bilateral donors, as these nations attempt to set out their plans for sustainable development.

With particular reference to the Nigeria State, in-spite of her vast and enormous natural and human resources endowment base, given her present development status, she is presently rated along with countries that can be referred to as failed states, that is, countries still at war or just coming out of war. This therefore raises questions as to the efficacy of the various development plans that has pervaded her developmental landscape. Nigeria like most countries of the world has never lacked (economic) development plans/visions. Her development planning experience predates her independence in the 1960. However, in-spite of these various plans – whether short term, medium term or long term (or perspective plan) - her underdevelopment status leaves more questions than answers.

### **Objectives of the paper**

The objective of the study is to examine Nigeria's development plans/visions with a view to ascertaining whether they serve as a strategy for sustainable development of the country. The paper employs the ex-post facto design and relies on data from relevant Planning authorities and other literature in reviewing Nigeria's developmental planning efforts. The practical implication of the paper is to contribute in persuading Government to consider the importance of having a comprehensive national development plan or vision that will ensure sustainable development and which will not be liable to regime changes.

### **Conceptual Analysis**

In order to have a better appreciation of the topic under review, it becomes pertinent for the following key concepts to be clarified: Development and Development planning; Sustainable development; and National Visions.

### **Development**

In its simplest form development means improvement or to become more advanced, more mature, more complete, more organized, more transformed etc. Todaro (1982) sees development as a "multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system". This involves in addition to improvement of income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs and belief. Todaro's definition gives the meaning, which the concept of development assumes whenever it is discussed in relation to countries. Development at this level of conceptualisation is often understood in terms of economic development but, the new focus is now beyond income or innate factors such as GNP or GDP to human focus in terms of quality of life. Ibezim (1999) further explains that, economic development does not only involve physical and financial progress but also improvements in the political and social aspects of society.

Development, both as a theoretical construct and a strategy for practice is largely a product of the last 65 years. Despite the argument of some writers, such as Cowen and Shenton (1996), that its origins lie in the century prior to 1945, the shaping of development theory and practice, and its institutionalization, has been a recent phenomenon (Rist, 1997; McMichael, 1996). Yet, although it emerged from the aftermath of the last great global conflict (Second World War), development has been pursued against the backdrop of a long catalogue of more or less continuous political and social conflicts throughout the world (Overton, 2000). Development was, and is, seen as a national, systemic and planned programme of intervention and improvement. The concept of development cuts across many levels. It refers to macro issues (such as patterns of a nation's growth), as much as it refers to meso problems or micro problems (such as local community development) (Moti, 2010). Development should be understood as a process, not a product (Barbanti, 2004). Societies are always changing. Some improve, while others fail. Development theory therefore aims at explaining both processes.

In all one can conclude that development in a nut shell is Government's ability to improve the welfare of the citizenry by moving them from a state of less desirability to a state of higher desirability through deliberate, conscious and strategically focused designed and implementable programmes, and projects (Ibezim, 1999). Development cannot take place haphazardly. It must be planned.

### **Development Planning**

Marcellus (2009) posits that the conceptualization of development as given by Ibezim (1999) above has some serious implications for a holistic approach to development planning in developing countries. To him, Ibezim's submission promotes the idea and practice of equating development planning with economic planning as the economy is usually regarded as the bedrock for a nation's development. Understood this way, Jhingan (2005: 489) says development planning implies:

“deliberate control and direction of the economy by a central authority for the purpose of achieving definite targets and objectives within a specified period of time”.

But emphasis on purely economic factors in development planning has not been successful in achieving development in the economic sector talk less of the overall national development in developing countries. In such countries, Jhingan (2005) notes that the essence of planning is to increase the rate of economic development by increasing the rate of capital formation through raising the levels of income, saving and investment.

Against the foregoing, one can conclude that, Development planning comprehensively involves predetermining a nation’s visions, missions, policies and programmes in all facets of life such as social, human, political, environmental, technological factors etc. and the means of achieving them. Economic visions and programmes cannot be realized without looking at developmental issues holistically, which entails improvement in all human endeavours. Development planning presupposes a formally predetermined rather than a sporadic action towards achieving specific developmental results. More importantly, it entails direction and control towards achieving plan targets.

## **2. Types and Goals of National Development Plan**

Diejomaoh (2008) gives what can be referred to as a detailed exposé of National Development Plans, types and goals. He posits that National Development Planning in the modern era, dates as far back as 1917, with the establishment of Communism in the Soviet Union, when the Soviet Government introduced centralized planning, in which the state through its various **centralized 5-year plans** determined what was to be produced, by whom and at what prices. There was little or no room for the market and the private sector, and all the means of production were owned by the state. The objective of this kind of planning was to meet the economic and material needs of all members of the

society and to achieve an Egalitarian Society. This type of national development planning was practiced within the context of a strong Soviet governmental structure, which limited individual freedoms and punished ruthlessly those who failed to meet their production quotas.

At the other extreme, was the Capitalist system in the West, where the market system through the operation of privately owned enterprises, determined essentially what goods and services were produced, and prices were determined by the market through the forces of supply and demand. The Government or State operated essentially **annual plans or budgets**, which had to do with what current and capital expenditures the state, had to execute. The general consensus in the West was that the state should undertake expenditures and provide services or goods which the private sector could not produce, or were not best placed to produce. The state largely used the services of the private sector or Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the execution of its services, and concentrated mainly in the administration of justice, the rule of law and the provision of security, police and the armed forces, education and Health Services. The state controlled the operations of the market through fiscal and monetary policies and Regulatory Commissions or Agencies to ensure adequate competition among private enterprises and to avoid the excesses of monopolies, and oligopolistic enterprises.

In-between the extremes of central planning in the Soviet Union and Communist World and the 'free market economies' of the Western World, led by the United States, were the so-called "**Mixed Economies**" in both the developed countries of the West and the developing countries.

In the mixed economies of the developed world, especially in Western Europe, after the Second World War and up to the mid-1980s, the state, especially socialist or social democratic **governments played a major role** in the provision of social services controlled the production of some major industries and the supply of public utilities, including

transport (sea, land, rail and air-transport). The **private sectors modulated by market forces** were responsible for the production and distribution of most of the goods and services. Liberal Democracy and respect for human rights were largely practiced. There were varying degrees of national planning in these states, ranging from **public sector plans, sectoral plans, to national “indicative” plans**, notably in France.

In the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, **national development planning** was the order of the day. Development planning, programmes and project formulation, monitoring and evaluation, was at the foundation of Development Economics and practice up to the mid-1980s. Thereafter, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and most communist countries, with their central planning models and practice and the structural problems which faced most developing countries which were practicing national development planning which to some extent drew inspiration from the central planning models of communist and socialist states, there was a major global re-think of the utility and desirability of past national and national development planning models and practice, which led to the rise of **Thacherite Economics and Reaganomics** – symbolizing free market economics and a dominant role for the private sector and free markets.

Starting from the late 1970s, and mostly in the 1980s, **Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS)** were introduced in most developing countries, which needed financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank to enable them reschedule their foreign debts, reduce external debt repayments and have access to international credit for their international trading operations, upon which their development so critically depended. As a conditionality, countries who introduced World Bank and IMF assisted SAPS often had to adopt draconian economic policies, cutting back on public expenditures and reducing their budget deficits to under 5% of their national incomes (GDP), introducing monetary and fiscal policies to reduce the inflation rate to under 10% and liberalizing prices – letting the market determine prices –

“getting the prices right” and letting the private sector take control of the production processes, and hence privatizing state owned enterprises.

However, the application of the SAP policies resulted in considerable economic hardship and deterioration in many social indicators in developing countries. The hue and cries resulting against the SAPs in the 1980s and early 1990s, led to the **World Summit on Social Development** held in Copenhagen in March 1995, which enthroned Poverty Eradication, Employment creation, Enhanced expenditures on education (basic education for all by year 2015), health and other social indicators, and Gender Equality (Beijing Conference on Women), which set a minimum target of 33% for women participation in all spheres of human endeavour. A global review of progress in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration after 5 years in 2000, led to the birth of the **Millenium Development Goals (MDGs)**, after the Millennium Summit of World Heads of States and Government in New York in September 2000. Another World Summit to review global progress with MDGs was held in September 2005. That particular summit strengthened the MDGs Declaration by specifically emphasizing employment creation and the implementation of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Supported Decent Work Agenda.

In the post 1995 World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen Declaration), the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) led the development agenda on poverty reduction and eradication and human development as a surrogate and summary index for social development. **Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPS)** were introduced as the new conditionality for writing off external debts, through the Highly Poor Indebted Countries (HIPC) Initiative. Further thinking on the development process, led to the conclusion that too much emphasis was being put on poverty reduction and that there was need to place more emphasis on enhancing economic growth, creating wealth, and empowering people to take greater control of their own lives.



### **3. Development Planning Goals: A Global Perspective**

The emerging global consensus on development now consists of planning for the following:

- (i) Accelerated economic growth and 'Wealth Creation' and not just poverty reduction.
- (ii) Macro-economic stability, liberalization of markets and prices, and private sector led growth
- (iii) On the external economic front, reaping the gains from the irreversible process of globalization, which must be made fair for all.
- (iv) Pursuing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.
- (v) Implementing the Decent Work Agenda which emphasizes Workers Rights, decent employment for all, social protection for all, and enhanced social dialogue.
- (vi) The prospects for success in achieving the development goals above depend on the practice of good governance – democracy, respect for human rights; rule of law, transparency and accountability and the fight against corruption in Government, the private sector, and all sectors of human endeavour and society.

### **4. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The basic challenge presented by the concept of sustainable development is in finding ways to define, measure and operationalize it. It involves two seemingly incompatible concepts: Sustainability and Development. Sustainability means maintenance or improvement, without degradation, over a very long term (Munasinghe and Sheaffer, 1995). Development on the other hand entails a constant process of transformation. It is a dynamic concept denoting a state of ceaseless change. Development has three major components namely: life sustenance, self-esteem and freedom. Life sustenance is concerned with the provision of basic needs. No country can be regarded as fully developed if it cannot provide its citizens with such basic needs as

housing, clothing, food and minimal education. Thus, the major concern of development should be to raise people out of primary poverty and to provide basic needs simultaneously.

Self-esteem consists of feelings of self-respect and independence. No country can be regarded as fully developed if it is exploited by others and does not have the power and influence to conduct relations on equal terms. Freedom refers to self-liberation from the three evils of want, ignorance and squalor, so that people are more able to determine their own destiny. No man is free if he cannot choose; if he is imprisoned by living on the margin of subsistence with no education and no skills. Suffice it therefore, to say that, development occurs when there has been an improvement in basic needs, when economic progress has contributed to a greater sense of self-esteem for the country and individuals within it, and when material advancement has expanded the range of choice for individuals.

The fact that many of the ingredients of development are not easily measurable does not detract from its importance. The condition of being developed is as much a state of mind as a physical condition measurable by economic indices. Sustainable development is a notion, a movement and an approach which has developed into a global wave of concern today. It is an idea that was first used in 1980 in the World Conservation Strategy (International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)). This first formulation stressed sustainability in ecological terms, and was far less concerned with economic development. It argued for three priorities to be built-in to development policies: the maintenance of ecological processes; the sustainable use of resources; and the maintenance of genetic diversity (Olewe, 1995). Sustainable development, as used today, is concerned with political mobilization, and the twin issues of environmental protection and economic development. It embodies the notion and ideals of a development process that is equitable and socially responsive, recognizing the

extensive nature of poverty, depreciation and inequality between and within nations, classes, and communities.

It seriously advocates that the world be seen as one ecosystem and that economic development process should include ecological and environmental issues as an essential component (World Bank, 2000). The World Bank (Brutland) Commission on Environment and Development (1991) stressed that sustainable development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs of the future. It is a process in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potentials to meet human needs and aspirations. Cameron (1993) opine that, sustainable development entails the progressive economic and social development of human society through maintaining the security of livelihood for all peoples and by enabling them to meet their present needs, together with a quality of life in accordance with dignity and well-being, without compromising the ability of future generations to do like wise. Without questioning the principle of development as a method for satisfying the needs of current generations, it explicitly recognizes that future generations also have interests and even rights deserving protection in this new model of development (Moti and Vambe, 2008).

## **5. National Visions**

Visioning is a generic term for the process of identifying, developing and documenting vision and values, leading towards strategy and tactics. It is based on a hypothetical future, mainly in medium and long terms, with a great participatory and inspirational potential for radical changes. National visions are defined as policy statements, government programmes, official goals and formal statements for sustainable development. Visions are a very useful element any national planning process- and Agenda 21 strongly recommends that all components of a society define what the people would like to see around them in 5

years or 10 years or 20 years. They include specific, measurable things that everyone can strive for.

National visions are therefore, a commitment to sustainable development and require firm, clearly stated and practical statements. These statements are critical to the unity of effort throughout the nation. Successful planning for sustainable development begins with considering what the end goal should be. Based on the end goal, the key to formulating a workable vision, plan of action is the process of integration and harmonization of the components. Visions cascade from a simple and direct political statement from the Executive level of government (constitution, long term development plan, or executive declaration) to increasingly more specialized planning and implementation statements (developed by sectoral ministries, sub-national, community and industrial levels).

### **Types of Visions**

The literature (Dalal-Clayton, Barry and Bass, 2000), indicates that there are two basic types of visions. These are Top Down and Bottom up Visions. Top down Visions are produced in the form of national plans by planning offices or by various collections of government bodies. These are then implemented as government policy.

According to Wrabley (1992), the strengths and weaknesses of top down visions include the following:

#### Strengths

1. Depending on clarity of the vision, such an initiative can be given the resources and attention it needs to succeed.
2. Awareness can be heightened due to media attention.
3. Local groups can be inspired and develop their own projects.

4. A greater involvement on the part of government in the implementation of the sustainable development can be stimulated.

#### Weaknesses

1. Sometimes a national vision is so strongly worded that it is impossible to achieve.

2. Political visions are not always shared by all, resulting in lack of implementation.

3. Not all interests may be included in top down visions. This means that not everyone will participate and that makes it weak.

4. A top down approach needs a lot of resources to become a reality.

5. High levels of monitoring and enforcement is often called for, requiring large amounts of resources.

6. Environment is not always given priority by a government. As priorities and leadership change, a vision can be affected adversely and become weak.

#### **Bottom up Visions.**

These come from lower level of hierarchy in government, local government communities, and Non-Governmental organizations.

#### Strengths of bottom up visions

1. Local residents take control and responsibility for their actions.

2. Local people represent a reservoir of wealth that can make a vision work while significantly leveraging resources.

3. Bottom up approaches relate to the everyday lives of real people responding to real needs and wants.

4. This can bring a degree of sustainability to a vision or programme.

#### Weaknesses

1. A lack of commitment or understanding from participants will mean that a vision will not succeed.
2. The interest of a local community may not necessarily be in the environment, but immediate cash income.
3. Local projects can dissipate overtime, depending on an initiative's success or a change of the leader.

Whether a top down or bottom up approach is preferred, depends on the country. East Asian countries often opt for top down approach whereas South Asia is more oriented to top bottom approaches.

#### Problems of National Visions

The following problems have been identified:

1. Lack of action. This can be overcome through a combination of factors, including:
  - Awareness building
  - Capacity building programmes.
  - Media campaigns
  - Delivering real results to real people.
2. Lack of integration. Integration can be a more difficult issue, because the need of sustainable development planning and action cuts across a large number of traditional boundaries. There is the need to enhance linkages between and among ministries. Integrating vision into planning calls for:
  - Identifying links between economic development and sustainable development.
  - Understanding the concept of environment as an integral theme of all ministries.
  - Motivation for government to pay attention to the environment, including internal forces as well as external forces such as trade concerns and donor preferences.

3. Discrepancies between overall policy ( eg development strategy at national level) and planning ( eg planning and implementation at local and sectoral levels).
4. Discrepancies between planning and implementation due to constraints such as financial and human resources.
5. Conflict of interest among agents at planning and implementation stages.
6. Lack of effectiveness of visions in terms of enforceable actions.
7. Lack of political commitment for implementation.
8. Donor-dependence syndrome and a dependent and defeatist development mindset.
9. A weak economy and low capacity for economic management.
10. Failure in governance and organization for development.
11. Ineffective implementation syndrome.

#### Lessons learnt about Visions

Many countries have visions for sustainable development. The type of visions, however, differs significantly. They range from the weak to the strong to those in between. Successful visions consistently have a clear direction and benefits that are easy to understand by all. A number of lessons have been learnt about visions.

1. A powerful and dynamic leader makes a difference. Leadership provides the cornerstone for vision, whether top down or bottom up.
2. Visions break down in concrete actions. Visions must break down into well-defined programmes at local and sectoral levels. The key is to define the strategies that are clearly needed to reach the objective.
3. Without sufficient time for planning, implementation will be weakened.
4. Visions need to be prioritized and focused. Sustainable development calls for many needs, but these need to be prioritized in accordance to greatest need and impact.

5. Partnerships between government and non-governmental organizations are growing. Government needs to be flexible while NGOs need to show professionalism and build trust. The key for government is to ensure that the systems are:

- Transparent and
- Promote trust by others.

6. Working with media is important. Working with media is important, if not vital, for promoting sustainable development. Communications strategies are highly recommended for governments to develop.

## **6. Development Planning in Nigeria**

As mentioned earlier, Nigeria has never lacked development plans and her development planning experience predates her independence. This section gives a detailed account of Nigeria's development planning experience. Marcellus (2009) submitted that Nigeria's planning experience can be divided into four broad eras viz: Colonial Era, the Era of Fixed- Term planning (1962-85), the Era of Rolling Plans (1990-1998), and the New Democratic Dispensation (1999 till date). Marcellus further posited that there exists between these periods some years dominated by sporadic governmental actions and ad hoc planning in which the country did not actually produce a plan document that could be categorized into the four periods mentioned. These periods represent times of major socio political upheaval and economic crisis that necessitated transitory and sporadic actions from the incumbent administrations.

### **The Colonial Era**

The history of conscious planning for development in Nigeria can be traced to the colonial days. To be specific, it



has its origin in 1946 when the colonial government introduced what it tagged “Ten Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria”. This was under the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Under this historic Development Plan, a total planned expenditure of an equivalent of N110 million for a period of ten years was earmarked for the period starting from April 1, 1946 to March 31, 1956 (Ogunjimi, 1997). Analyzing the focus of the ten-year Development Plan, Ayo (1988) observes that the plan focused on building a transport and communication system, while little provision was made for industrial development. He notes further that this first development plan was also selective in its focus on agriculture, as attention was concentrated on a limited range of cash crops, which include cocoa, palm products, cotton, groundnut and timber. An important conclusion which one can draw from the analysis given by Ayo is that the Colonial Development Plan for Nigeria was meant to serve the interest of the colonial masters rather than that of the colony.

This foreign-centered development plan, however, did not run its full term because, by 1950, the inappropriateness of charting development over a period as long as ten years in a country experiencing rapid structural changes had become evident. Consequently, a decision was taken to break the plan period into two five-year sub-periods and to formulate a new plan for the sub-period 1950-1956. However, the introduction of a federal system of government affected this revision as each of the regional governments became autonomous and adopted different economic policies. Whatever their weaknesses, this era constitute the beginning of the practice of development planning in Nigeria.

#### The Era of Fixed Medium-Term Plans

Within this period, four plans were launched, namely, First National Development Plan (1962-1968), The Second National Development Plan (1970-1974), the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980) and the Fourth National Development Plan (1981-1985). They were comprehensive because such plans were conceived and formulated within the framework of improved system of national accounts.

Besides, they covered the operations of both the public and private sectors of the economy; and, more importantly, they had their projects related to a number of well-articulated overall economic targets. Each of these development plans had its own focus and well-articulated objectives which had far-reaching effects on the nation's developmental aspirations.

The First National Development Plan was launched in April 1962 and was to cover a period of six years (1962-68). Under this plan, a total investment expenditure of about N2.132 billion was proposed. Out of this, public-sector investment was expected to be about N1.352 billion, while the remaining investment expenditure of N780 million was to be undertaken by the private sector. The full implementation of this development plan was however interrupted by two major political events, namely, the military intervention in 1966 and the 1967-70 civil war. Consequently, the period of the plan was extended to March 31, 1970. These major interruptions notwithstanding, both the Federal Government and regional governments recorded a number of landmark achievements during the development plan period. During the crisis period, the Federal Government alone successfully executed projects like the Oil Refinery in Port Harcourt, the Paper Mill, the Sugar Mill and the Niger Dam (in Jebba and Bacita respectively), the Niger Bridge, and ports' extension, while it also constructed a number of trunk 'A' roads. It is interesting to note that it was also during this period that the first-generation Universities were established in Ibadan and Lagos by the Federal Government, Ahamdu Bello University by the Northern Nigerian Government, University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN) by the Eastern Nigerian Government and the University of Ife (now known as the Obafemi Awolowo University) by the Western Nigerian Government.

The federal and regional governments were able to achieve this much in spite of the crisis because, during the period, the annual capital budgets operated within the development plan framework. They were employed as the main instrument of control and allocation of development resources (Ogunjimi, 1997). This was in itself made possible

by the existence of a development plan which provided guidelines for meaningful and co-coordinated development during the plan period despite two political crises.

General Yakubu Gowon launched the Second National Development Plan in 1970 on behalf of the Federal Government and the government of the then twelve states of the federation. It was launched shortly after the end of the war. Because it was a post-war development plan, its focus was on the reconstruction of a war-battered economy and the promotion of economic and social development in the new Nigeria. What this means, according to Olaniyi (1998), is that the philosophy of the plan was consequently influenced by the exigencies of the war, which include the building of a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; a just egalitarian society; a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens; and a free and democratic society.

Like the First National Development Plan, the Second National Development Plan also recorded a number of major projects, which were successfully executed by both the federal and state governments. Such projects included the successful construction of many federal roads; the successful take-off of the National Youth Service Corps Scheme; the introduction of federal scholarship and loan schemes for Nigerian students, etc.

General Gowon also launched the Third National Development Plan on behalf of all governments in the country. The plan covered a five-year period from April 1975 to March 1980. Ayinla (1998) describes this plan as a watershed in the evolution of economic planning in Nigeria. It was a unique development plan because, apart from its huge initial investment of about N30 billion (which was later revised to N43.3 billion), extensive consultations with the private sector of the economy were made in the course of its preparation.

The cardinal objectives of this plan were also part of its uniqueness. Such objectives included increase in per capital income during the plan period; more even distribution of

income; reduction in the level of unemployment; diversification of the economy; balanced development; and indigenization of economic activities. As laudable as the objectives of this development plan were, the implementation was adversely affected by the change of government in July 1975, barely three months after the plan was launched. In particular, the change of government led to a reappraisal of some of the cardinal objectives as contained in the plan. Here, more emphasis was placed on those projects which were thought to have direct effects on the living standard of the common man. Sectors that were thus given priority included agriculture, water supply, housing and health (Olaniyi, 1998).

The Fourth National Development Plan, (1981-85) was launched by President Shehu Shagari in 1981 on behalf of the Federal Government and the governments of the then nineteen states of the federal. This was the first plan to be formulated by a democratically elected government under a new constitution based on the presidential system of government. As observed by Ogunjimi (1997), the plan was intended to further the process of establishing a solid base for the long-term economic and social development of Nigeria. Unlike the previous development plans, the fourth plan was the first in which the local governments were made to participate at two levels. One, they participated at the level of preparation, and two, they were allowed to have their own separate programmes under the plan. The capital investment target was N82.2 billion shared between the public and private sectors with the former putting in about N70.5 billion, while the latter put in the balance of N11.7 billion.

The Fourth Development Plan was again affected by the change of government in 1983 and by yet another change in 1985. These two changes seriously disrupted the implementation of the programmes of the plan and, consequently, the performance of the economy during the fourth plan period was generally poor. Whatever the case (success or failure), it is interesting to note that between 1945 and 1986; the concept of development planning was a

common planning tool for social, economic and sustainable development in Nigeria.

### **The Rolling Plan Era (1990-1998)**

By 1986, it had become obvious that the National Development Plans had hit the rocks. The huge deficits of the third and fourth plans exacerbated the country's external debts situation, which stood at about \$22 billion. Thus, began the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), which was basically a 'reform therapy' from the World Bank and International Monetary fund (IMF). SAP was only an economic emergency programme expected to last for two years. SAP underscored a shift from project-based to policy-based planning system, and emphasized a private-sector-led economy rather than the prevailing public sector-led philosophy that had inspired previous plans. SAP therefore, presented an opportunity for reevaluating the country's planning system as the fixed medium term planning system seems to have failed.

A three tier planning system was to succeed SAP. The new proposal consisted of:

- i. a 15-20 year Perspective or Long term Plan;
- ii. a three-year Rolling Plan; and
- iii. an Annual Budget that will draw from the Rolling Plan.

The perspective plan was to identify long term policies upon which the rolling plans and the annual budgets will derive their medium and short term programmes respectively. The Babangida administration consequently introduced a perspective known as rolling plan. Based on this, the government decided on a 20-year perspective plan for the period 1989-2008. According to the philosophy of this rolling plan, the first phase of the perspective plan would constitute the Fifth National Development Plan. With this structural change of policy, the five-year planning model was replaced with a three-year rolling plan to be operated along with a 12 to 20 year perspective plan and the normal operational annual budgets. This plan became operational with the 1990 budget and it provided the foundation for the three-year rolling plan (1990 - 92). In order to effectively execute this programme, some fundamental reforms were the merging of budgetary and planning functions with the

sole objective of minimizing conflict between the two (Ogunjimi, 1997; Ayinla, 1998; Ilesanmi, 2000).

In the same way that the tradition of five-year development plan was jettisoned by the Babangida administration, the idea of rolling plan was also shelved in 1996 by General Sani Abacha for Vision 2010, which was launched on September 18, 1996. The programme was to herald socio-economic prosperity for the citizens by systematically improving the quality of life of Nigerians in fourteen years (Ogunjimi, 1997). The work of Vision 2010, a 250-member committee of private-sector representatives, government ministries, academics, journalists, traditional rulers, trade union leaders and foreign businessmen, among others, inaugurated by General Abacha on November 27, 1996, was similarly intended to move the country forward. The committee submitted its final report to General Abacha on September 30, 1997, recommending “large-scale deregulation of the Nigerian economy” among others. In other words, the medium term plans in Nigeria was suspended between 1985 and 1999.

### **The New Democratic Dispensation (1999-2010)**

#### **(a) The Obasanjo Era (1999 – 2007)**

Democratic governance returned to Nigeria in May 1999 with the military handing over to a democratically elected government. The new administration started development planning in 1999 on a clean slate with the initiation of a four-year medium term plan document, the National Economic Direction (1999-2003). The plan had the primary object of pursuing a strong, virile and broad-based economy with adequate capacity to absorb externally generated shocks. While being a new plan document, the objectives and policy direction was not significantly different from that to which the country has followed since the introduction of SAP. According to Donli (2004):

“The new plan was aimed at the development of an economy that is highly competitive, responsive to incentives,

private sector-led, diversified, market-oriented and open, but based on internal momentum for its growth.”

However, with the re-election of the Obasanjo administration in 2003, there was a rethink on the issue of development planning which gave birth to the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) - 2003-2007. This heralded the return to serious medium term planning in Nigeria.

### **Needs- Vision, Objectives and Strategies**

NEEDS is described as Nigeria’s plan for prosperity. It is a four-year medium term plan for the period 2003 to 2007. Though a federal government plan, the States and Local Governments were also expected to have their counterpart plans- the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and the Local Government Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) respectively. It was a comprehensive plan that sought to include not only all levels of government towards moving in the same direction, but also, the organised private sector (OPS), the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the general public in cooperative activity in pursuit of developmental goals. NEEDS as a plan, contained all the envisaged policies and programmes of the federal government for the period 2003-2007 and far beyond and served as the fountain of the much touted Obasanjo’s reforms. NEEDS was not only a macro- economic plan document, but also a comprehensive vision, goals and principles of a new Nigeria that would be made possible through re-enacting core Nigerian values like respect for the elders, honesty and accountability, cooperation, industry, discipline, self-confidence and moral courage. The primary goal of making Nigeria a ‘promised land’ would be realized according to NEEDS through four key strategies of wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and value reorientation. At the twilight of the Obasanjo administration in 2007, printed draft of NEEDS-2 which was expected to cover 2008-2011 was released into circulation.

However, the NEEDS plan had only limited successes vis a vis its stated objectives especially as it related to deregulating the economy, reducing bureaucratic red-tapism in governance, creating of jobs, alleviating of poverty and providing welfare programmes and infrastructure such as water, improved health care, electricity and roads, etc.

### **Yar adua/Jonathan Administration (2007 – 2011)**

With the handover to a new civilian administration of President Musa Yar'Adua's in 2007 – although from the same party with a cardinal campaign slogan of policy continuity - NEEDS 1 and 2 were harmonized to give birth to another plan document christened “The Seven Point Agenda”. This can be referred to as the new Medium Term National Development Plan for 2008-2011. The policy thrusts of the seven point agenda are:

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. With the death of President Musa Yar'Adua in 2010, his Vice Goodluck Jonathan who took over promised to continue with the policies of his predecessor; however all is silent about the Seven Point Agenda.

### **Nigeria Vision 20:2020 (NV 20:2020): Snapshot of Key Issues**

Before his death in 2010, late President Musa Yar'Adua launched Nigeria Vision 2020 in 1999, a throw back to late General Sani Abacha's Vision 2020 in 1996 that never saw the light of the day due to Abacha's sudden death.

NV20:2020 is an articulation of the long-term intent to launch Nigeria onto a path of sustained social and economic progress and accelerate the emergence of a truly prosperous and united Nigeria. Recognising the enormous human and natural endowments of the nation, the blueprint is an expression of Nigeria's intent to improve the living standards of her citizens and place the country among the Top 20(T-20)



economies in the world with a minimum GDP of \$900 billion and a per capita income of no less than \$4000 per annum.

**The Vision Statement is that:**

*“By 2020, Nigeria will have a large, strong, diversified, sustainable and competitive economy that effectively harnesses the talents and energies of its people and responsibly exploits its natural endowments to guarantee a high standard of living and quality of life to its citizens”.*

## **7. The Rationale**

The need for a holistic transformation of the Nigerian state has assumed an urgent and critical dimension in the course of the last two decades. Notable is the increasing relevance of Nigeria as a leading emerging market albeit with under-utilised potential. With the return to democratic rule in 1999, and the gradual re-building of civil institutions and a vibrant market economy, the feasibility of Nigeria assuming a key position as a global economic power and a catalytic hub for development in Africa has become more profound. Using an all-inclusive consultative process involving over 1,000 of the nation’s leading professionals and thinkers, NV20:2020 is an authentic blueprint by the Nigerian people to set for themselves a stretch target to transform the lives of the average Nigerian, and by implication the Nigerian economy.

### **NV20:2020 and National Aspirations**

Nigeria’s targets for 2020 are based on a dynamic comparative analysis of the country’s potential growth rate and economic structure vis-à-vis those of other Top 40 (T-40) economies in the world. This implies that the Nigerian economy must grow at an average of 13.8 per cent during the time horizon, driven by the agricultural and industrial sectors over the medium term while a transition to a service-based economy is envisaged from 2018.

Fundamental to the Vision are two broad objectives – optimizing human and natural resources to achieve rapid

economic growth, and translating that growth into equitable social development for all citizens. These aspirations are defined across four dimensions:

i. Social Dimension: A peaceful, equitable, harmonious and just society where every citizen has a strong sense of national identity and citizens are supported by an educational and healthcare system that caters for all, and sustains a life expectancy of not less than 70 years;

ii. Economic Dimension: A globally competitive economy that is resilient and diversified with a globally competitive manufacturing sector, that is tightly integrated and contributes no less than 25% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP);

iii. Institutional Dimension: A stable and functional democracy where the rights of the citizens to determine their leaders are guaranteed, and adequate infrastructure exists to support a market-friendly and globally competitive business environment; and

iv. Environmental Dimension: A level of environmental consciousness that enables and supports sustainable management of the nation's God-given natural endowments to ensure their preservation for the benefit of present and future generations.

## **8. The Strategic Framework**

This is anchored on three overarching thrusts:

i. Creating a platform for success by urgently and immediately addressing the most debilitating constraints to Nigeria's growth and competitiveness;

ii. Forging ahead with diligence and focus in developing the fabric of the envisioned economy by: Aggressively pursuing a structural transformation from a mono-product economy to a diversified, industrialized economy; Investing to transform the Nigerian people into catalysts for growth and national renewal, and a lasting source of comparative advantage; and Investing to create an environment that

enables the coexistence of growth and development on an enduring and sustainable basis.

iii. Developing and deepening the capability of government to consistently translate national strategic intent into action and results by instituting evidence-based decision making in Nigeria's public policy space,

The three pillars of the Vision represent the building blocks of the future that Nigerians desire. The key strategic objectives of these pillars are outlined here-below:

desire. The key strategic objectives of these pillars are outlined here-below:

<b>Pillar I</b>	<b>Guaranteeing the productivity and wellbeing of the people</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty</i></li> <li>ii. <i>Enhance access to quality and affordable healthcare</i></li> <li>iii. <i>Provide sustainable access to potable water and basic sanitation</i></li> <li>iv. <i>Provide accessible and affordable housing</i></li> <li>v. <i>Build human capacity for sustainable livelihoods and national development</i></li> <li>vi. <i>Promote gender equality and empower women</i></li> <li>vii. <i>Improve access to micro-credit</i></li> <li>viii. <i>Foster a culture of entertainment and recreation for enhanced productivity</i></li> </ul>
<b>Pillar II</b>	<b>Optimizing the key sources of economic growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Stimulate primary production to enhance the competitiveness of Nigeria's real sector</i></li> <li>ii. <i>Significantly increase production of processed and manufactured goods for export</i></li> <li>iii. <i>Stimulate domestic and foreign trade in value-adding goods and services</i></li> <li>iv. <i>Strengthen linkages between key sectors of the economy</i></li> </ul>
<b>Pillar III</b>	<b>Fostering sustainable social and economic development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <i>Develop efficient, accountable, transparent and participatory governance</i></li> <li>ii. <i>Establish a competitive business environment, characterized by sustained macroeconomic stability</i></li> <li>iii. <i>Enhance national security and improve the administration of justice</i></li> <li>iv. <i>Promote unity in diversity, national pride, and the conservation of the nation's cultural heritage</i></li> <li>v. <i>Develop sufficient and efficient infrastructure to support sustained economic growth</i></li> <li>vi. <i>Preserve the environment for sustainable socio-economic development</i></li> <li>vii. <i>Promote the sustainable development of Nigeria's geo-political regions into economic growth poles.</i></li> </ul>

Source: Nigeria Vision 20: 2020 (2009).

## **From Visioning to Action**

### Four Established Imperatives

Recognizing Nigeria's limited success with implementation and execution of previous plans, four imperatives are to underpin Nigeria's efforts at making **NV20:2020** a reality:

- i. ensuring that the **Vision** is clearly linked to existing mechanisms for execution (Medium Term Development Plans (MTDP) and expenditure frameworks, Medium Term Sector Strategies (MTSS) and annual budgets);
- ii. institutionalizing monitoring and evaluation across all levels of government to improve their capability to translate all strategic plans and programs into outcomes and impacts, including those of **NV20:2020**;
- iii. deploying legislative instruments to ensure adherence to the **NV20:2020** plan and institutionalizing specific reforms recommended in the plan; and
- iv. defining a clear strategy for mobilizing the citizenry towards greater demand for performance and accountability using **NV20:2020** as a guiding light.

### **Three-Pronged Lever**

The achievement of the above-indicated four imperatives is predicated on three-pronged lever, necessitating the reform of the central planning authority and the civil service.

The first prong of the lever is to implement **NV 20:2020** through a three-phased medium-term approach: **Phase 1**: 2010-2013; **Phase 2**: 2014 – 2017; and **Phase 3**: 2018 – 2020 respectively. These have detailed specific goals, strategies and performance targets for all sectors of the economy, in line with the overall strategy and principles of **NV20:2020**.

The second prong is to institutionalize a strong integrated monitoring & evaluation (M&E) mechanism across all the Federal, State, and Local Government administrative tiers in Nigeria, whilst the third is to provide adequate legal backing

with sanctions for non-compliance. And the fourth is to sustain the collective goodwill of Nigerians. The current Nigerian Government has not shown a commitment to implementing Nigeria Vision 20:2020.

## **9. Assessment of Economic Performance Under the Various Development Plans**

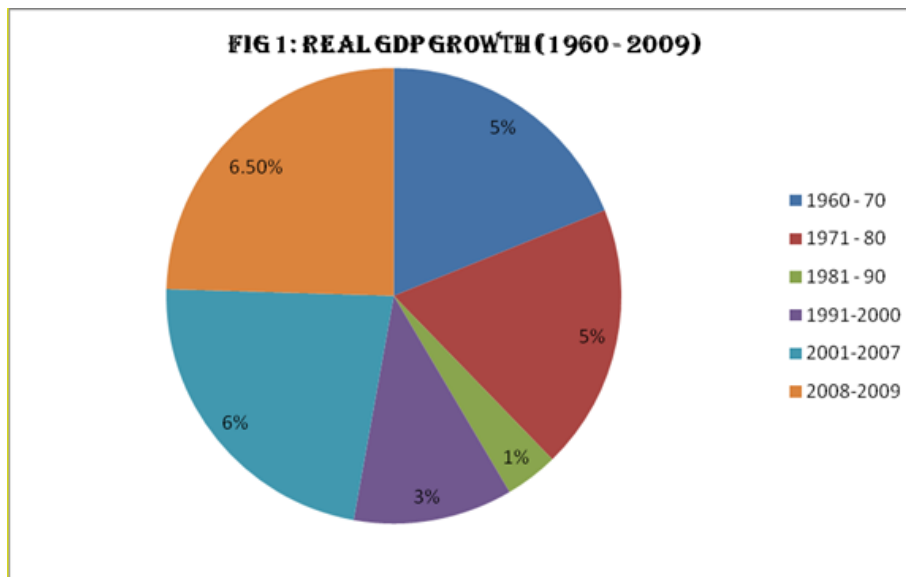
Any attempt at assessing the economic performance will require answers to the following pertinent questions. What has been the story so far of Nigeria's recent experiences with development planning? Has the country been achieving her objectives or, more generally, has the country been moving in the general direction of success? What do the signs show? While these questions may be answered from different perspectives, however, the answers to the above posers are obvious no matter the side of the divide one stands. While one can talk about limited success in some areas, the overall picture shows a dismal performance.

In order to carry out an objective assessment of the nation's economic performance, it is appropriate to review macroeconomics and sectoral outlook as well as the general living standards of the populace.

### **Macro-economic outlook**

Since the mid- 1970's, there has been growing Macro-economic instability. The level of macro-economic instability appeared to have reached a peak in 1990-1994. Macroeconomic instability was caused mainly by the growth of fiscal deficits financed largely by banking systems credit. Between 1986 and 1996, the fiscal deficit/ GDP ratio was in the range of 5.4 - 15.4 per annum. The mode of deficit financing through credit from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has crowded out the private sector and induced high monetary expansion beyond the growth in output. Consequently, the incidence of exchange rate depreciation, high inflation, and balance of payment deficits has persisted. Domestic output, including exports performed relatively well for a period, but could not be sustained in the prevailing un-

conducive environment. With respect to inflation, while economic managers have consistently insisted that inflation in the country is on a single digit, realities indicate a high double digit inflation rate. The National Human Development Report, Nigeria 2008 – 2009 posit that while there has been significant growth in recent years with the per capita income crossing the \$1,000 mark in 2006, there has been no structural transformation Figure 1 below shows the real gross domestic product (GDP) between 1960 – 2009, while table I show a holistic detail of the period 1960 – 2009 using selected indices.



**Source:** National Human Development Report. Nigeria (1960 – 2009).

**Table 1: GDP and Sectoral Growth Rate in Nigeria, 1960 - 2005**

<b>GDP and Sectors</b>	<b>1960 - 1970</b>	<b>1970 - 1980</b>	<b>1980 - 1985</b>	<b>1985 - 1997</b>	<b>1998 - 2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003 (at 1984 prices)</b>	<b>2003 (at 1990 factor cost)</b>	<b>2004 (at 1990 price)</b>	<b>2005 (at 1990 prices)</b>
Real GDP	5.1	7.8	-5.5	2.3	3.3	4.1	3.8	10.2	6.6	6.2
Agriculture	3.2	4.3	-1.0	2.9	4.1	3.8	2.6	6.5	6.5	6.8
Industry	19.4	7.2	-4.2	1.0	0.05	-3.6	n.a	21.3	4.1	1.7
Crude Petroleum	n.a	n.a	0.2	3.6	2.8	5.2	7.0	3.4	3.3	0.5
Manufacturing	15.3	5.6	-3.8	2.3	1.9	4.2	9.0	9.3	9.6	8.8
Services	3.4	6.1	-0.2	5.3	4.0	5.9	n.a	0.4	8.8	7.8

**Note:** Growth rates for 2003 are at 1984 and 1990 constant prices. Those for earlier years are at 1984 prices while those for 2004 and 2005 are at 1990 prices.

**Sources:** (i) Central Bank of Nigeria: Major Economic and Financial Indicators, Annual Reports and Statistical Bulletin (1960-2005).

(ii) Federal Office of Statistics: Annual Abstract of Statistics and Gross Product of Nigeria (1960-2005).

(iii) Obadan (2007)

**Table 2: Performance of the Nigerian Economy under NEEDS**



*Development Plans and Visions as a Strategy for Sustainable Development: The Experience of Nigeria*

\* Table 2: Performance of the Nigerian Economy under NEEDS

	2004		2005		2006	
Selected Indicators	Target	Actual	Target	Actual	Target	Actual
<b>Macroeconomic</b>						
• Growth in GDP (%)	5.0	6.5	6.0	6.2	6.0	n.a
• Gross National savings (%of GDP)	14.1	18.4	17.2	19.4	23.9	"
• Reduction in Poverty Incidence (%)	5.0	n.a	5.0	n.a	5.0	"
• Inflation rate (%)	10.0	10.0	9.5	11.6	9.5	"
• Minimum no of new jobs (million)	1.0	n.a	2.0	n.a	20.0	"
<b>Federal Govt. Finance</b>						
• Overall fiscal balance (% of GDP)	-1.9	-0.5	-3.2	-1.1	-3.2	n.a
• Total Expenditure (% of GDP)	23.5	12.5	23.4	12.5	22.9	"
• Recurrent Expenditure (% Of total budget)	65.0	72.4	60.0	69.2	60.0	"
<b>External Sector</b>						
• Overall BOP (% of GDP)	-10.8	9.6	-9.2	9.3	-4.4	n.a
• Current account balance (% of GDP)	-2.9	17.7	-2.3	22.8	-0.5	"
• External Reserves (\$m)	7,687	16,950	8,687	28,279	9,687	"
• Growth in imports (%)	15.0	-4.4	18.0	13.8	25.0	"
• Growth in exports	10.0	49.1	20.0	36.6	25.0	"
<b>Financial Sector Growth</b>						
• Net domestic credit	24.5	12.0	24.6	-14.5	22.5	n.a
• Net credit to Govt.	29.9	-17.9	29.9	37.0	23.5	"
• Credit to private sector	30.0	26.6	30.0	30.8	30.0	"
• Narrow Money (M1)	10.8	8.6	8.3	15.5	16.7	"
• Broad Money (M2)	15.0	14.0	15.5	16.0	15.5	"
<b>Infrastructure</b>						
• Power generation (mgsat)	4,000	2,763	5,000	2,687	7,000	n.a
• Road (Rehabilitation, maintenance, and new roads-KM)	3,500	n.a	3,500	n.a	4,000	n.a

\* Source: National Planning Commission, Abuja (NEEDS Document); Central Bank of Nigeria Annual Reports 2004 – 2006.

**Poverty:** There has not been much improvement in the living standards of the average Nigerian. For an insignificant proportion of the population, it has been good, but for the majority of the population, living conditions have become

extremely vulnerable. The National Human Development Report, Nigeria 2008 – 2009 alluded to this much when it stated that inequality in Nigeria is among the highest in the world (0.49), with 65% of the assets in the hands of 20% of the population. The Report submitted further that poverty is still widespread, although prevalence has declined but extreme poverty and the number of poor people has risen. Thus it can be said with confidence that the objectives of improved prosperity and equality have not been achieved.

Table 3 below gives an insight into the poverty spread.

**Table 3: The Poverty Level: Estimated total population and population in poverty.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Estimated Total Population (Million)</b>	<b>Population in Poverty (Million)</b>	<b>Poverty Level (Percentage)</b>
1980	65	17.7	28.1
1985	75	34.7	46.3
1992	91.5	39.7	42.7
1996	102.3	67.1	65.7
2000	125	87.5	69.8
2004	138	96.6	70.0
2007	148	80.5	54.4
2009	150	105	70.0

**Source:** (i) 1980 – 2009: Nigeria: Consultative Group (CG) Poverty Reduction Paper Prepare by International Technical Committee on Poverty Reduction for Federal Ministry of Finance, Abuja, Nigeria (May 2000).

**Human Development Ranking:** The totality of Nigeria’s precarious nature is captured by the yearly United Nations Human Development Ranking. For almost three decades, the country has been consistently ranked among countries that can better be categorized or referred to as failed states. Specifically, in the last three decades, Nigeria’s Human Development Index (HDI) – a composite of three elements: the standard of living, longevity and knowledge which are proxied, respectively, by purchasing power based on real GDP per capital, life expectancy and adult literacy rate (and mean years of schooling) has remained below the average of

0.5. Indeed, Nigeria’s index has persistently fared less than the average developing countries. The graphic details are shown Tables 4 and 5 below.

**Table 4: UNDP – HUMAN DEVELOPMENT RANKING OF NIGERIA (1990 – 2009)**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>RANKING</b>	<b>NO. OF COUNTRIES ASSESSED</b>
1990	24	130
1991	129	160
1992	128	160
1993	142	173
1994	139	173
1995	141	174
1996	137	174
1997	141	175
1998	142	174
1999	146	174
2000	151	174
2001	136	162
2002	148	173
2003	152	175
2004	151	177
2005	158	177
2006	159	177
2007 / 2008	158	177
2009	158	182

\*- : 1990 started with low human development countries to the high human development countries. That is, no 1 represent the country with the lowest HDI while 130 represent the country with the highest HDI

**Sources:** Compiled from various UNDP HDI Reports (1990-2008).

Table 5: State HDIs’

☐ State HDIs reflect Country HDI

S/No	States	(HDI) Value	Human Poverty Index
1	Abia	0.516	21.9
2	Adamawa	0.372	42.4
3	Akwa Ibom	0.616	27.1
4	Anambra	0.427	22.8
5	Bauchi	0.291	48.8
6	Bayelsa	0.593	32.5
7	Benue	0.532	36.0
8	Borno	0.345	55.9
9	Cross River	0.539	31.9
10	Delta	0.592	23.6
11	Ebonyi	0.401	34.3
12	Edo	0.465	21.7
13	Ekiti	0.523	22.1
14	Enugu	0.502	28.6
15	Gombe	0.353	45.0
16	Imo	0.510	22.7
17	Jigawa	0.362	48.4
18	Kaduna	0.448	34.3
19	Kano	0.436	43.0
20	Katsina	0.410	49.9
21	Kebbi	0.377	50.2
22	Kogi	0.411	34.4
23	kwara	0.429	33.3
24	Lagos	0.607	14.5
25	Nasarawa	0.488	38.5
26	Niger	0.463	42.8
27	Ogun	0.465	24.5
28	Ondo	0.592	23.9
29	Osun	0.475	22.1
30	Oyo	0.478	21.9
31	Plateau	0.392	36.5
32	Rivers	0.633	22.8
33	Sokoto	0.475	40.5
34	Taraba	0.351	43.4
35	Yobe	0.278	58.0
36	Zamfara	0.434	42.6
37	FCT, Abuja	0.717	21.0

**Source:** National Human Development Report. Nigeria 2008 - 2009

From the analogy above, it is obvious that there is a wide gap between planned objectives/results and actual results achieved. Therefore, one can conclude that Nigeria's performance in the areas of human development and the attainment of the planned development goals has been far from satisfactory. This therefore leads to the question; what are the reasons for the various performance gaps? This is addressed in the next section.

### WHY DO DEVELOPMENT PLANS FAIL IN NIGERIA?

Before dwelling on the reasons for plan/policy failure, it is pertinent to clarify the meaning of policy failure. Broadly, policy failure means chronic failure of socio-economic development policies to:

- (i) Achieve their stated objectives
- (ii) Sustainably attain ultimate goals of an economy, which is to constantly improve the economic welfare of the vast majority of the people.

- (iii) Institute and sustain durable solutions to basic socio-economic problems.

Based on Nigeria's experience in plan/policy management process, policies have failed at virtually every stage viz: Identification and articulation of the problem; Specification of the objectives and targets; Implementation; Monitoring and Evaluation; and Feedback.

The general reasons for policy failures can be listed to include the following:

- (i) **Manpower:** Inadequate qualified staff with requisite knowledge, skills and attitude. During the first and second development plans, there was high dependent on expatriate staff that were not conversant with the plan environment and the least committed to the project. In the recent past, the faulty recruitment/selection process has impaired negatively on plan design, appraisal, implementation and monitoring and evaluation because the system has thrown up officers with limited potentials to add value to the system.
- (ii) **Expansion of Administrative Arms:** There was craze for the creation of administrative arms in the form of States and Local Government, each with their uniqueness, developmental states which poses challenges to plan design and implementation - For example, from the initial 3 regions in 1960, to 12 states in 1967 to 19 States in the 1980's and now 36 States and a total of 774 Local Government Administration - It therefore becomes difficult to have a unified and controllable plan. This is made worse by the dearth of qualified and skilled personnel especially at the State and Local government levels.
- (iii) **Poor plan harmonization:** There were real difficulties in harmonizing plan goals across the different tiers of government. In the early planning days this was due to decentralization and later due to creation of states.

- (iv) **Oil boom:** The discovery of oil led to a shift from agriculture as the backbone of the economy to oil. This changed the perception of public office as 'service center' to 'resource sharing/grabbing centre'. This mentality then became "money was not the problem but, how to spend it". This explains also, the penchant for white elephant projects or cosmopolitan projects that have no direct impact on the lives of the ordinary citizenry.
- (v) **Ambiguous Goals/Objectives:** Development planning goals/objectives more often than not are mere statement of intentions without clear cut/identifiable strategies to achieve them.
- (vi) **Distortion in the structure of capital programme:** All through the various plans, there were discrepancies between planned and actual capital expenditures. For example, in the first development plan, budgeted capital expenditure was N 1, 353.6million while actual expenditure was N 1, 073, ditto for other plans. These gaps have partly been responsible for the high number of abandoned projects littering Nigeria's developmental landscape.
- (vii) **Over dependence on external funding:** There was overdependence on external (private sector and foreign aid) funding for the various plans. For example, in the first development plan, 50% of funding was expected from outside, but only 25% was received. Specifically, during this plan period, the private sector was expected to provide N 780 million out of the total budgeted N 1, 353.6 million. Also, during the 4<sup>th</sup> development plans, the private sector was expected to contribute N 11.7 billion out of the total budget of N 70.5 billion. This scenario was synonymous to all the plans with grave consequences for goal attainment.
- (viii) **Inability to concretize gains:** A major challenge for Nigeria's development plan lie in the transmission mechanism for translating 'improved' macro-economic performance into improved quality of life for the majority of Nigerians. The question

therefore is: why is this difficult if the touted macro-economic improvements are real?

- (ix) **Non- Institutionalising of a virile Monitoring and Evaluation System:** In virtually all the plans, there was no deliberate attempt at institutionalizing a virile monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that the input, process and output are proceeding according to plan. Where there was resemblance of an M & E system, they were not fully complied with.
- (x) **The perfunctory mentality:** This connotes that the Government itself does not understand the purpose of the plans. Because more often than not the plans never seemed to guide governmental action. When a government draws a plan and the actual programmes and policies pursued markedly differ from the plan projections, it shows that either the plan was not realistic or that government was not committed towards the plan. Also, this connote that plans are being done routinely or as a matter of tradition/custom without thorough attention or genuine feelings – “just to fulfill all righteousness” or to be seen to be doing something. For example, the leader and his wife (wives) will more or less impose on the nation their pet projects which are not in the year’s budget. This project will be funded while those in the budget never get funded.
- (xi) **Wrong Focus:** Overtime it has become obvious that the ‘sole’ focus of planners has been to achieving growth. That is planners often focus on growth as an end in itself. In order words, ‘people’ have actually not been the focus of development plans. Plans that focus on growth alone lead to a disconnect between growth, poverty reduction and development.
- (xii) **Lack of Plan continuity:** Of the 50 years of nationhood, 35 years were spent under military regime with its characteristic coups and counter-coups - kitchen coups, palace coups etc – with each coup comes an end to the previous plans and the usual ‘foundation laying’ for another plan. No deliberate attempt was ever made to tap into

successes of previous plans to build on it. Also, in the last ten years of democracy, the rate of policy 'somersault' has been quite alarming in spite of the fact that the three presidents are from the same political party.

- (xiii) **Lack of objective self assessment:** Common sense dictates that sometimes the way forward for a nation or a people to achieve progress in their life is not to go forward but to go backward and re-asses themselves, redefine their visions and goals within the realities and challenges of their time. Till date Nigeria finds it difficult to asses itself, her collective values, dreams and aspiration and accept that something is fundamentally wrong and that doing things the old ways cannot lead to a new answer and by implication the "Promised Land".
- (xiv) **Inadequate consultation:** Plans more often than not are just handed over to the people without prior consultation or any form of input into the plan. The top-down approach to development planning has become the order of the day. And when consultations are made, more often than not they are restricted to their cronies/allies, political associates and business stooges. The leadership see themselves as been able to provide solutions to all socio-economic problems – they play god- and have preference for - 'There Is No Alternative'. (TINA). They therefore see any opposing view no matter how rich and robust as anti-system.
- (xv) **Preference for anything foreign:** This arises from what can be referred to as the 'lazy mentality syndrome' whereby policy prescriptions coming from foreign bodies are always perceived to be better and accepted without testing or sifting. Such policy options are adopted without being adapted to the country's socio-economic environment.

## **10. Conclusion**

For the majority of people living in poverty, struggling to



feed their children, mourning the loss of loved ones to printable diseases and unsure of the future, development planning is meaningless. There is the need for an urgent, all inclusive people-centered development plan that will have concrete, realistic and achievable targets within a medium term strategy framework. It is not enough to build health clinics if there are no roads for mothers to gain access to them. It is not enough to train teachers or provide textbooks, if the children have to struggle with homework at night in the dark. People do not live their lives in the health sectors, or education sectors, or infrastructure sectors, arranged in tidy compartments. People live in families, villages, communities, countries where all the issues of everyday life merge. We need to connect the dots. This will require a national economic leadership that has its overriding goal as the improvement of national welfare and quality of life and will provide shared vision for the complicated national problems. Development plans and National Visions if not consistently implemented cannot lead to sustainable development as exemplified by Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

It is pertinent to state that development planning is not an easy task given its complex and futuristic inclination. However, it is a must do in order to achieve balanced and sustainable development. We, therefore make the following recommendations:

- (a) Future National Development Plans should be more of an 'Indicative medium-term plan and should be private sector driven and where prices are largely determined based on free market principles. However, the need to create a 'buffer zone' for the vulnerable majority becomes pertinent because of the prevalence of poverty.
- (b) Refocus, re-invigorate and re-engineer the privatisation policy to focus on critical infrastructure such as power, transportation and those infrastructure that support the artisans, craft-men and the small scale business in general to enable individuals take control of their lives.
- (c) Set realistic and achievable targets. For example

- aspiring to achieve a GDP growth rate of 13 – 15% is over ambitious given the historical average growth rate of 6% and the existing environment.
- (d) There is need for a fundamental reform in the management and restructuring of the economy in terms of economic and political governance in the public and private sectors, and fundamental shifts in national values, institutional performance and the enthronement of national discipline.
  - (e) Re-invigorate direct effort at diversifying the economic base. Attention should be shifted back to agriculture, tourism, solid minerals, sports, export-oriented manufacturing.
  - (f) Genuine and improved stakeholders' involvement is very critical especially at the lower tiers of government, organised private sector (OPS), Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), organised labour, academia, professional bodies etc in order to ensure a paradigm shift and wider buy-in.
  - (g) Institute a broad-based and functional plan coordinating unit manned by professionals
  - (h) Strengthen the data capacity base through strengthening the human and institutional capacity of statistical services especially at the State and Local Government levels, while instituting a robust monitoring and evaluation system for development plans.

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