

MDGs AND POVERTY IN YOBE STATE

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Abstract: The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) constitute a benchmark for minimum standards of health, education and livelihoods, and demand that signatory countries ensure that the lives of their people are in accord with these minimum standards. The primary objective of this study is to provide insights into the role and impact of MDGs poverty eradication in Yobe State. The study contends that poverty at the individual, household and community levels distorts and diminishes the capacity and capability to attain and live a life of well-being in Yobe State. The methodology adopted was questionnaire administration, interviews as well as published reports review, involving analysis of policy papers and related publications exploring a number of issues identified as critical to the attainment of the MDGs. The study found that lack of access to basic necessities of life has constrained the efforts of the poor towards achieving meaningful results in the drive to improve their well-being. And that the MDGs has little impact on the communities in the state. The study among other things recommended the need for eliminating the discrimination against rural and agricultural development, and continuous flow of resources need to be provided to agriculture in the form of elements such as rural infrastructure, inputs, research and credit combined with appropriate institutions to increase the sector's productivity and potential capacity for contributing, thereby making a larger reverse flow to the rest of the economy.

Keywords: Poverty, MDGs, Development, Yobe state.

INTRODUCTION

Africa is a continent in despair. Despite its enormous natural and human resource endowments, the continent has been trailing in all socio-economic indices of development when compare with other Third World regions. Despite considerable progress

made by some countries in Asia and Latin America between 1990 and 2002, Africa as a whole suffered immensely, recorded the slowest progress overall and in some vital areas, it suffered reverses. Africa is synonymous with poverty, ignorance, and diseases, a state that impoverish its people. In sub Saharan Africa , the number of people living in absolute poverty, i.e. US \$1 or less per day, soared from 217 million in 1990 to 290 million in 2000 (Economic Commission for Africa, 2005). It is disheartening that women form the bulk of this number. Also, adult life expectancy declined from 50 years to 46 years during this period. It is on this basis that the Addis Ababa-based Economic Commission for Africa (2005: 1) argues that, "based on the trends of the past 15 years, Sub Saharan Africa will not achieve the MDGs on time."

The situation in Nigeria is not encouraging as the continent's most populous country has been confronting with development challenges and crisis of governance especially considering the fact that Nigeria was among the world's 50 richest countries in the early 1970s but slumped to find itself among the 25 poorest countries in the world at the dawn of the 21st century, (Soludo, 2006).

Following the return of democratic rule in 1999, the Nigerian government has shown remarkable commitment to the attainment of the MDGs through various reform programmes/initiatives. Of utmost significance is the formulation of a home – grown National Economic Empowerment and Development strategy (NEEDS) which has been described as Nigeria's version of the MDGs. NEEDs has been replicated into the state Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) at the state and local government levels respectively.

National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies seeks to achieve poverty alleviation and economic revivalism by stimulating the well

acknowledged creative energies of the vast majority of the population.

There are four clear goals of NEEDS. They are: (i) The creation of wealth (ii) Generation of employment (iii) Reduction of poverty (iv) Re – orientation of values

The objectives have informed the policy thrusts of the government and are part of a grand reform agenda which is encapsulated in its far reaching economic programme. NEEDS sets clear but ambitious macro – economic targets for Nigeria. Real Gross Domestic Product grew 8.6% in 2003; it is expected to grow five percent in 2004, six percent in 2005 and 2006 and seven percent in 2007. A steady five percent annual reduction in the incidence of poverty is projected over the five year period 2003 – 2007.

In the generation of employment, NEEDS commits all stakeholders, particularly the Federal government, to creating a minimum of one million new jobs from 2003 to 2004 and two million yearly from 2005 to 2007.

In the re – orientation of values, Nigeria expects tourist visitors every year in number by 10 percent year on year up to 2007.

However, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy is relatively well positioned in terms of framework and the definition of the Nigerian essence as basis for plan articulation and implementation. But the programme as many others before it bubble like foam and disappear as quickly as it rose without making any discernible impact on the Nigerian socio – economic and political terrain.

Recently eight millennium development goals emerged from the UN declaration, firmly committing governments to an ambitious set of goals and targets by a deadline of 2015 (socialist international, 2005) cited in Chukwuemeka 2009.

However, a recent report that the sum of ₦430 billion has been expended by the Federal Government of Nigeria in the last three years on the implementation of the millennium development goals projects is a disturbing one, especially when we reflect on the target, that is the rural dwellers that are the true victims of extreme poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Most of these people are not even aware of the MDG's and neither its operational condition or impacts.

According to the senior Special Assistant to the president on MDG'S, Hajiya Amina Az-Zubair at a briefing on the progress of MDG'S in Abuja, "to achieve the MDG'S by 2015 would require a whopping \$170.3 billion which is equivalent to ₦25.557 trillion within a period of six years starting by 2010." She added that, on annual basis the

projected cost of achieving the MDG'S will increase from \$19.3 billion in 2010 to \$38 billion in 2015 while averaging \$284 billion annually, (Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, 2010).

While these reform programmes and policies can impact positively on the nation's economy, at least, at the macroeconomic level, lack of political will on the part of our leaders coupled with the expensive nature of the project, makes it difficult if not impossible to see light at the end of the tunnel. For instance, Aliyu Ndume a member of the National Assembly in an interview with the VOA attested that the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of PDP has never implemented up to 50 % of its budget from 1999 to date. And the budget implementation is one of the crucial factors in achieving MDG'S.

Addressing MDG'S in Nigeria requires understanding and analyzing the root causes of failed development. According to human development report 2003 during the 1990s, debates about development focused on three sets of issues. The first was the need for economic reforms to establish macroeconomic stability. The second was the need for strong institutions and governance to enforce the rule of law and control corruption. The third was the need for societal justice and involving people in decisions that affect them and their communities. These issues are all crucial for sustainable human development and they continue to deserve priority attention in policy making.

With reference to Yobe State, the inauguration of the MDGs more or less represents an exit strategy from poverty trap. The global partnership for development which constitutes the substance of goal 8 reflects the commitment of the industrialized North to the fight against poverty in the developing world through official development assistance. In view of the practical impact of the MDGs on the different dimensions of poverty in Yobe State, the MDGs have been fully domesticated through the creation of MDGs office. Despite the implementation of the MDGs in the state and the activities of other poverty alleviation agencies, the scourge still remains widespread. Therefore, given this background analysis, the work critically and clinically X-ray the problems and prospects of achieving a remarkable reduction in the state poverty profile within the framework of the MDGs by the target year of 2015.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to provide insights into the role and impact of MDG impact in poverty eradication in Yobe State. The specific objectives include: (1) To assess the philosophy and

goals of the MDGs and its implementation in Yobe State. (2) To assess the impact of MDG'S on poverty alleviation in Yobe State. (3) To study the extent at which the MDG'S have been achieved. (4) To assess the challenges and prospect of the MDGs as a tool of poverty alleviation in Yobe State. (5) To provide insights into the impact of MDG project on the lives of the communities in Yobe State. (6) To provide appropriate recommendations on how to achieve the MDG goals in Yobe State

LITERATURE REVIEW

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MDG'S

The UNDP in its Human Development Report of 2003 titled Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to end Human Poverty pointed out that to achieve the MDGs requires policy responses to structural constraints on several fronts along with stepped up external support (HDR, 2003). The report recommended six policy clusters to help countries break out of their poverty traps:

- (1) Invest early and ambitiously in basic education and health while fostering gender equity. These are preconditions to sustained economic growth. Growth in turn can generate employment and raise incomes-feeding back into further gains in education and health gains.
- (2) Increase the productivity of small farmers in unfavorable environments- that is, the majority of the world's hungry people. A reliable estimate is that 70 percent of the world's poorest people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture (HDR, 2003).
- (3) Improve basic infrastructure- such as ports, roads, power and communications- to reduce the costs of doing business and overcome geographic barriers.
- (4) Develop an industrial development policy that nurtures entrepreneurial activity and helps diversify the economy away from dependence on primary commodity exports- with an active role for small scale and medium size enterprises.
- (5) Promote democratic governance and human rights to remove discrimination, secure social justice and promote well being of all people.
- (6) Ensure environmental sustainability and sound urban management so that development improvements are long term.

Poverty includes the absence of employment opportunities and difficulty in accessing credit and finance, the vulnerability to risk in poor people's personal and work life has attracted great attention (Morduch, 1998; Rutherford, 1999; Lund and Srinivas, 2000- Cited in Odigie 2007). The United Nations Development Programme raised similar concerns, which in its report (UNDP, 2004) on the progress of the MDGs announced that poverty rather

than coming to an end is fledging. It reported that in Sub Saharan Africa, the tale is of woes as countries have witnessed setbacks. The setbacks can be felt with respect to food security and the issue of hunger. For instance, the Federal Government of Nigeria reported that it imported food stuff worth 3.4 Trillion in the last three years i.e. 2008 – 2010. (B B C). Ironically, large proportions of the poor live in the rural areas and urban slums, and are engaged in subsistence farming. Farming is increasingly becoming difficult given the fact that most farmers have no access to fertilizer and other related implements.

Therefore, to address these issues, the root causes of poverty have to be addressed squarely rather than concentrating on dead flogging issues and politicizing strategies.

Moru (2004) questions that how can poverty be eradicated? What are the strategies to be employed? Is the government on track? Nigerians are challenged in the area of poverty eradication and hunger. IMF perpetuates hunger, World Bank statistics shows disparity of wealth as 70% of the populace lives below poverty line. The challenge is turning the statistics around and restores the dignity of the poor, impoverished and vulnerable masses (Moru 2004).

Ban ki-moon (2007) remarks that we have just passed the midpoint in the race to reach the MDGs by the target date of 2015 and the global score card is mixed. He claims that some regions, particularly the sub-Saharan Africa, are not on track. AFRODAD (2005) reports that despite rapid advances by some countries that show that the MDGs are achievable, most countries in sub-Saharan Africa including the populous nation of Nigeria are yet to mobilize resources, political and financial supports to meet specific global challenges, especially the fight against poverty and weak fragile economies.

These situations reflect the practical realities in Nigeria. From the look of things the attainment of the MDGs benchmarked for 2015 remains a daunting challenge.

If the challenges are therefore not addressed, Nigerian may remain in the doldrums for a long time to come. Especially Yobe State that is backward even among its colleagues in the North East States. The 2010 Yobe Economic Submit reveals that the level of poverty in the state is 80% as against the 72% that was reported earlier by the federal office of statistics 2006.

Amin (2006) calls into question the whole so called developed countries led project of poverty reduction. He starts by accepting the fact that of course the 8 goals are desirable; nobody in their right mind could

disagree with the goal of reducing extreme poverty and hunger by a half or ensuring environmental sustainability. However, from the beginning, he maintains the goals are so contradictory in some places or simply statements with no substance in other places that the 8 goals are ultimately unachievable. Worse than that, he argues, the process of 'liberalization' they are attached to will actually *increase* poverty, the opposite of what they were *supposedly* designed to do.

Amin raises key questions? that were the goals designed to reduce poverty or are they a cover or a smokescreen for a much more sinister project that the architects know full well will actually increase poverty, increase inequality and further disempowered the subjects.

Amin starts with giving a close look at the process through which the goals were drawn up. One would hope that a global campaign and institutional framework designed to halve poverty and hunger world-wide would begin with an open, honest, accountable and ultimately democratic debate and discussion with a party oriented led focus. This could not be further from the truth as, Amin points out. Instead of genuine committees, although these existed on paper, drawing up proposals and drafts for discussion the draft that eventually led to the Millennium Development Goals was drawn up by Ted Gordon 'a well known consultant of the CIA (Amin 2006).

He goes on to argue, "instead of forming a genuine committee for the purpose of discussing the document, a draft was prepared in the backroom of some obscure agency." Given the less than satisfactory start to the achievement of these goals and in many ways their fairly obvious failures. However, it is now a time for our political leaders and scholars alike to ask these questions, are these goals at best pipe dreams or are they a more sinister smokescreen for a well planned process of further exploitation of resources, people, culture and society in general? Are they part of a neocolonial or imperialist process designed by a triad of northern powers the US, the EU, and Japan? "Are not the authors of the document (*CIA consultant*) actually pursuing other priorities that have nothing to do with 'poverty reduction' and all the rest?"

Amin runs through each goal analyzing where each one fails and where the conditions and contradictions lie. He argues in:

Goal 1. There is neither analysis of the policies that generate poverty nor any denunciation of policies that generate poverty. Without this how can there be policies to effectively eliminate poverty proposed.

Goal 2. Ground has been lost in the area of education since the late 70's. The reduction of public expenditure and the wide-spread privatization of education need to be examined in both fact and theory.

Goal 3. Genuine discussion is needed in the area of gender equality given the powerful role religious fundamentalism is playing globally. 'Without discussion, declarations on this question are only empty talk.'

Goal 4, 5, and 6. Health issues are to be tackled with total respect to intellectual property rights and extreme privatization. These are to be conducted in partnership with global companies. Again there is no analysis or discussion of the often highly negative role played by pharmaceutical companies in the region's most affected or any discussion of the theoretical basis for intellectual property rights.

Goal 7. Environmentally sustainable policies are to integrate into national and global policies and this while the largest polluter on the planet the United States refuses to sign the Kyoto Protocol! Again there is no analysis of the role companies play in environmental destruction and the ability of states to regulate or intervene is greatly curtailed. "It is presupposed, then, that the rationality of capitalist economic strategy is compatible with the requirements of 'sustainable development.'

Goal 8. Amin as he put it here on the goal to develop a partnership for development.

The writers straight away establish equivalence between this 'partnership' and the principles of liberalism by declaring that the objective is to establish an open, multilateral commercial and financial system. The partnership thus becomes synonymous with submission to the demands of the imperialist powers. Progress in access to the market is measured by the share of exports in the GDP (an increase in this ratio is thus synonymous with progress regardless of the social price!), progress in the conditions of non-discrimination by the reduction in subsidies (Amin, 2006).

The 'real goals' of these processes Amin outlines in 5 points as 'The Real Millennium Development Goals': (1) Extreme privatization, aimed at opening new fields for the expansion of capital (2) The generalization of the private appropriation of agricultural land. (3) Commercial opening within the context of maximum deregulation. (4) The equally uncontrolled opening up of capital movement. (5) States are forbidden in principle from interfering in economic affairs. Amin clearly sees that, all the process of exploitation as being purposefully designed to benefit elites at the expense of ordinary

people and the environment and so ultimately all of humanity is being put at risk. And above all, it was carried out hand in hand with the elites in the south, with the governments of the south.

Be it as it may be, a conclusion to be drawn on tactics from Amin's analysis is that no matter how much we show the goals are not being met nothing will change because the governments that drew up the process and enforce know full well that poverty reduction isn't the desired goal at all! From their point of view states are being opened up to capital and capital is moving more freely. Their goals are being met. Therefore the northern campaigns should no longer be seeking to persuade their governments but instead should be seeking to replace and change their governments with genuine people centered alliances. A northern campaigns focus should also be to support the social and democratic movements in the south as the best way of reducing poverty long term. In many ways what the campaign needs in the north is politicization. Poverty is a political question. It is a result of politics, the politics of the few, and so needs to be tackled by politics, the politics of the many.

POVERTY PROFILE OF NIGERIA

Poverty is highly visible in Nigeria. Overcrowded settlements in major cities without basic social services, remote and isolated rural areas are major concentrations of the poor (Obadan, 1997). Data (table as shown below) by the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS, 1999) on the poverty profile in Nigeria showed that the incidence of poverty rose from 28.1% in 1980 to 46.3% in 1985. The figures dropped to 42.2% in 1992 only to rise sharply to 65.6% in 1996. It further rose to 70% in 2001 and has since remained high. A separate study conducted by Canagarajah, Ngwafor and Thomas (1997) while acknowledging Nigeria's oil wealth lamented the contradiction in terms of the high poverty level. The UNDP (2003) estimates put the percentage of the poor in Nigeria between 66% and 70%. And it was estimated that the incidence increases by 10% every three years. And on its scale of poor countries, Nigeria is ranked 151 (UNDP, 2004).

From the 2.2 table it is clear that some selected poverty indicators in Nigeria have portrayed the worsening situation of poverty scourge in the country. The use of both poverty measures of \$ 1.00/day and \$ 2.00/day stood at 70% and 91% respectively, which means both have not favored the poverty profile of Nigeria. While the poverty gap for the two measures stood at 35% each. In respect to access to improved sanitation and water sources, it is

only 59% of Nigerians that have an access to improved water sources and 62% to improved sanitation which means that 81,587,111.6 Nigerians have no access to improved water sources and 85,735,608.8 of Nigerians have no access to improved sanitation. While the life expectancy for both sexes' stands at 52 years respectively.

From the 2.3 table it is clear that the scourge of poverty in Yobe State despite several acclaimed efforts through various programmes to eradicate poverty by the state and federal governments it has reached its climax. In 2010 the rate of poverty rose to 76% in the north eastern zone of Nigeria where Yobe state belongs.

From the table 2.4 , it is noticeable that Yobe state with 50yrs life expectancy is slightly below the national average which stands at 51.6 years. In respect to adult literacy rate (aged 15 and above) while the national index is 64.2, Lagos has the highest percentage of 89.4 % while Yobe State is the lowest with only 24.3%. The same thing in terms of education index while the national index is 0.712, lagos State has the highest scores of 0.948 and Yobe State is the last with 0.308. Generally on human development index value, for the country stood at 0.513, Lagos topped the index with 0.621 while Yobe State is the least with 0.292. The above results pose a serious challenge to the government of Yobe State as the situation could be described as shameful and worrisome.

The 2.5 table is the contrast of the poverty profile in Nigeria from 2004 to 2011 and also a projection of the rate by 2011. Despite the complexity in definition and measurement of poverty the above tables uses both relative and absolute poverty definitions and, it is noticeable that the rate of poverty increases from (54.4%) in 2004 to 69% in 2010 and 71.5 % in 2011.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are various theories in sociology and other sister disciplines both in their classical and contemporary forms, which have offer different explanation on the relationship between the underdeveloped and the so called developed world. These theories include modernization, world system theory, dependency etc. however, this work finds dependency theory very much relevant in analyzing and explaining the issues of underdevelopment, particularly poverty, malnutrition, maternal mortality, illiteracy and host of others in Yobe State in particular and Nigeria at large.

Table2:1 Nigeria's population and Poverty Incidence Trends

Year	Estimated Total Population (million)	Poverty Incidence	Population in Poverty (million)
1980	65	28.1	17.7
1985	75	46.3	34.7
1992	91.5	42.7	39.2
1996	102.3	65.6	67.1
2001	125	70.0	87.5
2003	132	70.0	92.4
2010	163	69.0	112.47

Source: FOS Poverty Profile for Nigeria (1980 – 1996), Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) NEEDS document of the National Planning Commission, p21 and NBS, Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey, 2010

Table2:2 Selected Poverty Indicators in Nigeria

Variable	Value
Population living on less than \$1.00/day	70%
Population living on less than \$2.00 day	91%
Poverty Gap \$1.00/day	35%
Poverty Gap \$2/day	35%
Access to improved sanitation	59%
Access to improved water source	62%
Life expectancy (both sexes)	52 years

Source: World Resources Institute, 2004

Table 2:3 Trends in Poverty Level by Zones (1980-2010)

Zone	1980	1985	1992	1996	2004	2010
South South	13.2	45.7	40.8	58.2	35.1	63.8
South East	12.9	30.4	41.0	53.5	26.7	67.0
South West	13.4	38.6	43.1	60.9	43.3	59.1
North Central	32.2	50.8	46.0	64.7	67.0	67.5
North East	35.6	54.9	54.0	70.1	72.2	76.3
North West	37.7	52.1	36.5	77.2	71.2	77.7

Source: FOS Poverty Profile in Nigeria, 2004 and NBS, HNLSS 2010

Table 2:4 Human Development Index (HDI) for States

Source: Computation based on National Living Standards Survey 2004 and 2008/9 Human Development Report

	Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	Adult literacy Rate (%Aged 15and Above)	Combined Gross Enrolment Ratio for Primary and Secondary	GDP Per Capital (US\$)	Life Expectancy Index	Education Index	GDP Index	Human Development Index (HDI) Value
Nigeria	50	64.2	85.4	1 156.82	0.419	0.712	0.409	0.513
Abia	53	79.2	110.4	407.75	0.458	0.896	0.235	0.530
Adamawa	47	54.6	88.6	209.34	0.358	0.659	0.123	0.380
A/Ibom	49	80.0	102.0	3813.01	0.392	0.873	0.608	0.624
Anambra	47	77.0	110.8	163.14	0.358	0.883	0.082	0.441
Bauchi	50	38.7	49.2	166.82	0.408	0.422	0.085	0.305
Bayelsa	50	64.3	100.6	5388.02	0.408	0.764	0.665	0.613
Benue	48	65.4	110.0	1434.43	0.375	0.803	0.445	0.541
Borno	53	26.9	43.0	529.52	0.458	0.322	0.278	0.353
C/River	54	74.6	111.1	604.58	0.483	0.867	0.300	0.550
Delta	50	72.9	109.5	2325.23	0.417	0.851	0.525	0.598
Ebonyi	48	56.6	114.0	197.68	0.383	0.757	0.114	0.418
Edo	47	76.2	111.4	327.62	0.367	0.879	0.198	0.481
Ekiti	55	74.4	118.8	316.56	0.500	0.892	0.192	0.528
Enugu	53	74.6	111.1	307.67	0.458	0.868	0.188	0.505
Gombe	49	51.7	41.6	352.35	0.400	0.483	0.210	0.364
Imo	51	75.4	112.1	412.32	0.425	0.876	0.236	0.512
Jigawa	48	38.7	33.2	996.01	0.375	0.368	0.384	0.376
Kaduna	47	62.3	90.6	707.00	0.367	0.717	0.326	0.470
Kano	51	57.5	61.4	683.76	0.433	0.588	0.321	0.447
Katsina	53	36.5	50.7	994.28	0.458	0.412	0.383	0.418
Kebbi	51	48.6	40.5	508.50	0.433	0.459	0.271	0.388
Kogi	48	63.5	118.9	147.01	0.383	0.820	0.064	0.422
Kwara	51	55.6	96.4	320.21	0.433	0.692	0.194	0.440
Lagos	48	89.4	105.5	2 554.98	0.375	0.948	0.541	0.621
Nassarawa	51	51.1	101.2	1226.65	0.433	0.678	0.418	0.510
Niger	54	41.7	66.7	1687.79	0.483	0.500	0.472	0.485
Ogun	53	68.5	101.4	247.28	0.467	0.795	0.151	0.471
Ondo	51	75.8	114.4	1688.34	0.425	0.887	0.472	0.594
Osun	54	73.8	109.4	183.07	0.483	0.857	0.101	0.480
Oyo	52	72.6	103.5	280.29	0.450	0.829	0.172	0.484
Plateau	45	60.6	108.4	194.57	0.333	0.765	0.111	0.403
Rivers	45	80.5	116.1	5210.69	0.333	0.924	0.660	0.639
Sokoto	51	67.4	42.3	1488.98	0.425	0.590	0.451	0.489
Taraba	49	52.1	89.1	141.78	0.392	0.644	0.058	0.365
Yobe	50	24.3	44.0	261.00	0.408	0.308	0.160	0.292

Team (NBS).

Table 2:5 2011 POVERTY FORECAST (%)

	2004 (%)	2010 (%)	2011 (%)
Estimated Population (million)	126.3	163	168
Relative poverty	54.4	69	71.5
Absolute poverty	54.7	60.9	61.9
Dollar Per Day	62.8	61.2	62.8

Source: Adopted from NBS, Harmonized Nigeria Living Standard Survey, 2010

The dependency theory serves as a good model to assess the MDGs in Yobe state because it attempts to explain poverty and the western induced initiative to alleviate it from the third world viewpoint. It explains poverty and offers practical solutions to the challenges base on the standpoints of those who suffer its scourge.

Dependency theory paradigm or theory emerged as a result of the shortcomings of the modernization paradigm. The school claim Marxian tenancy, that is, their argument is based on the views of Karl Marx on society and phenomena. The school has scholars mainly from the third world societies such as Andre Gunder Frank, Walter Rodney, Dos Santos, Emmanuel Wallestein, Frank Fanon, Samir Amin, Cabral A. etc (Alanana 2006).

Also, dependency theory emerged to challenge the intellectual hegemony of the European School of Modernism. Originally the theory developed as a response to the bankruptcy of the programme of United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (UN- ECLA) in the early 1960's.

Dependency perspective argues that underdevelopment of the third world can only be understood through the historical experience of the third world countries. The historical experience is anchored on the dependent relationship between Europe and America on one hand and the third world on the other hand base on unequal exchange. The historical experience that led to the underdevelopment of Africa with its attendant poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, child mortality etc includes centuries of slavery, colonialism and neo-colonialism (Rodney, 1972 pp172).

In addition, the theory attributes the existence and sustenance of under-development primarily to dependency which is precipitated by a highly asymmetrical international capitalist system of rich and poor country relationships. The coexistence of rich and poor nations in the international system dominated by unequal power relationships between the center and the periphery fosters the development of the former and at the same time foils development of the latter (Todaro & Smith, 2004).

The theory also maintains that, what fuel the crisis of underdevelopment in Nigeria is the existence of the so called elites such as military leaders, bureaucrats, and politicians etc, who by virtue of their high incomes, social status, and political power acquiesce to the maintenance of the status quo. For this reason, they are accordingly rewarded for accepting and perpetuating the existence of international capitalist system of inequality.

It is further argued by these theorists that, the Bretton Wood Institutions such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are collaborators to this unholy scheme by virtue of their allegiance or funding to wealthy capitalist countries and Multinational Corporations. The viewpoints and activities of the bourgeoisie both national and international "often serve to inhibit any reform efforts that might benefit the wider population and in some cases actually lead to lower levels of living and to the perpetuation of underdevelopment (Todaro & Smith, 2004).

In relation to Yobe state some of these programmes like MDG's are clear examples, because the leaders or those at the helm of affairs do not hesitate to accept these programmes or offers despite its deceptive nature and not originating from the target beneficiaries simply because of their personal interest and gains out of the programmes. Worse still despite the MDGs Yobe State is one of the states that has the highest number of maternal mortality, unemployment rate, and second in terms of poverty incidence rate. In a nut shell, the dependency theorists has attributed the existence of wide-spread poverty occasioned by economic crisis to the policies of industrial capitalist countries and their re-production of a highly unequal capitalist system within developing nations. This point has been summed up by Dos Santos (1970) when he put it:

Underdevelopment, far from constituting a state of backwardness prior to capitalism, is rather a consequence and a particular form of capitalist development known as dependent capitalism... in any case; the basic situation of dependence causes these countries to be both backward and exploited.

Dominant countries are endowed with technological, commercial, capital and socio-political predominance over dependent countries – the form of this predominance varying according to the particular historical moment and can therefore exploit them and extract parts of locally produced surplus. Dependence, then, is based upon an international division of labor which allows industrial development to take place in some countries while restricting it in others whose growth is conditioned by and subjected to the power centers of the world.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting the study primary sources, questionnaires, and in depth interviews were relied upon, and these constitute the primary sources of the research. A structured questionnaire was designed and administered to gather information that would strengthen the primary data of this study. The questionnaire is made up of two sections. Section one consists of personal data while section two consists of items derived from the content of the research question. A four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) was used for the data collection. The subjects were asked to indicate their degree of agreement with the statements contained in the instrument.

Interviews were carried out with opinion leaders and masses in order to reach the cross section of the people in the area of study. In-depth interviews were held with MDGs Secretary, Directors of Engineering and Administration. However, the constraints of time, resources and security situation in the state (Yobe) limited retrieval and broad field application of the questionnaire. Nevertheless, the results are presented in the course of the study to complement the analysis of the study.

Secondary source that reflect what is obtain in Nigeria were also used, the secondary sources involve information from journals, textbooks, paper publications, annual reports and other facts book of MDGs. Secondary data are already available in records and in most cases published for official consumption. These include published and unpublished reports, journals, local and international magazines and newspapers such as, Yobe State Millennium Development Report 2007, 2008, and 2009, Millennium Development Goals Report 2004, Nigeria Millennium Development Goals 2005 Report, Millennium Development Goals 2004 Draft Report, and Action Aid International Nigeria Bulletin April-December 2004, Yobe State Economic Summit 2008 etc. The Internet and various websites were also viewed and used, but with some measure of care and

verification on the competences. These materials were useful in the study as they helped strengthen the analysis presented thereafter.

FINDINGS/RESULTS

1) It is very much clear that most of the people in the rural communities have no idea of the general philosophy and the goals of the MDGs. Based on the interviews conducted, it is evident how true the above assertion is, because it appeared that only the MDGs officials and the some few urban intellectuals are aware of the philosophy and the goals of the MDGs.

Discussion

The implication of this result is that the expected beneficiaries of the program are grossly unaware of it. This will create high level of apathy or drive them against the very program that is expected to benefit them. Thus, it will be very difficult for the program to see the light of the day. At the end, the elite that are involved in the implementation of the program will derive the maximum personal benefit out of it, leaving the poor where they were or even worse. Therefore, for Nigeria to escape from the triple bondage of poverty, diseases and ignorance, Nigeria must break-away from all western induced programmes that are having dangerous strings attached to them as well as fight corruption in all its ramifications.

2) MDG's have succeeded in failing to eradicate poverty in Yobe state. Similarly, most of the village dwellers interviewed have shown their dissatisfaction with the attitude of the political leaders that were voted by the same people, after making a lot of promises, as their major source of earning a living is farming and rearing and such leaders have neglected that area. They have received no support from the government in respect to that (Interview 2011).

In addition, to the above findings, the DFID report 2007 also shows that, Nigeria has some of the worst social indicators in the world: (a) One in five children die before the age of five (b) 7 million children are not in school (c) Around 3 million people are living with HIV or AIDS

The report added that, at the level of geo-political zones it was found that poverty tended to be lower in the Southern than in the Northern parts of Nigeria: poverty incidence actually improved in the Southern zones during the 1990s but deteriorated in the North, particularly in the rural areas. Likewise, the report indicates that, within the various geo political zones of Nigeria the incidence of poverty was found not to be uniform i.e. in the South, poverty was found to be higher in Akwa Ibom, Delta and Edo states while in

the North, the states of Bauchi, Jigawa and Yobe are the most affected.

Discussion

The above result, have clearly shown that the MDGs is heading towards failure or at least have not succeeded in eradicating poverty in Yobe State, as larger percentage of the people are still languishing in poverty. And this view have no contradiction with the report of Yobe State Economic Summit that reveals, over 79 % of the people living in Yobe State are still living in abject poverty. According to Garba (2006), all the poverty alleviation initiatives in Nigeria since independence have yielded very little fruit. He claims that the programmes were mostly not designed to alleviate poverty; they lacked clearly defined policy framework with proper guidelines for poverty alleviation; they suffer from political instability, interference, policy and macroeconomic dislocations; and are riddled with corruption, political deception, outright kleptomania and distasteful looting.

The implication of this is that our leaders have not learned lessons from the previous programmes that were meant for the same purpose of poverty alleviation. What they are after is just the personal gain for themselves, family and friends at the detriments of the larger percentage of the population of the people of Yobe State. Another important issue is that, Yobe State now is seriously hit by the challenges of Boko Haram, where it affected economic and other related activities for lively hood, particularly security for lives and properties of the people, which experts attributed to lack of unemployment and its attendants consequences. Some urgent realistic steps need to be taken at least to provide succor for the citizens.

Therefore MDGs find it very difficult to eradicate poverty simply because the appropriate steps are missing right from on set. As put by, Amin (2006), there is neither analysis of the policies that generate poverty nor any denunciation of policies that generate poverty. Without this how can there be policies to effectually eliminate poverty proposed.

3)The views expressed by respondents revealed that the MDGs have not achieve to any extent, this means that it woefully failed to achieve the goals of eradicating poverty to any extent in Yobe State , as 225 out of 240 (93.7%) disagreed that the efforts yielded meaningful result. The interview also revealed that the people especially in rural communities became even poorer than they used to be, this dwindling economic situation is said to be directly related to the continues neglect of support for agriculture by the government and indeed the high

level of corruption that has denied the rural farmers access to fertilizer and modern tools of farming (Interview 2011).

However, in an interview conducted with some MDGs officials, opinion leaders and experts reveal that MDGs in Yobe state had achieved to the extent of putting some structures on ground like the Drilling of single phase boreholes in some locations across the state (interview 2011).

Although the aforementioned projects may be termed as achievement of the MDGs in Yobe State, it is rather of less impact taking into account the overwhelming response of the target beneficiaries. It is also noticeable that some of these physical projects termed as achievement have not functioned enough to fulfill the need of their resident communities, i .e. most of these boreholes are not functional and the dispensaries have no any medical officials that can diagnose not to talk of giving expert prescription (Interview 2011)

Discussion

From the above findings, one can deduced two positions the first one was the views of the rural dwellers that constitute a larger percentage of the respondents, which opined that MDGs have not achieve eradication of poverty to any extent. While the second one is that of the MDGs officials, experts and opinion leaders which opined that MDGs despite its short comings have achieved to the extent of putting some physical structure on ground. However, one can agree that MDGs have achieved to the extent of putting some physical structure on ground, it is obvious that the better equation of these structures have not improved the lives of the so called target beneficiaries. Reason being that, most of these projects is least useful to the respective communities, as they are either not functional or misplaced priority. And if this trend continues it will reach the extent that people will no longer have confidence in whatever programmes that will be introduced by the government or its allies such as the World Bank, IMF, UN and other related agencies. And without the cooperation of the target beneficiaries no project could scale through.

4) The issue of funding is another daunting challenge for the quest to achieve the MDGs within the given time line. Because they started with only ₦489, 7000:00 as Federal share without the state counterpart funding, instead of ₦1, 770,913,080.00. And in 2007, 2008 they received the grant from the both tears of government, but since then they have not received an iota of money in the name of MDGs project. This is serious setback he added. (Interview 2011)

Discussion

From the above finding, it is clear that the MDGs office in Yobe State is being faced with daunting challenges both in terms of funding and implementation. This could be attributed to the lack of the political will by the leaders and corruption that marred the activities of the MDGs in the State. No matter how good and attainable these goals are without adequate funding and implementation the issue of poverty eradication will forever remain in theories only. Another implication is that, with the end of the Second World War, a global sense of optimism prevailed that Western nations had the technology to bring about the transformation of „pre-modern“ societies. No one was under the illusion that the societal transformations would be easy and social scientists recognized that severe problems of poverty and underdevelopment afflicted developing countries and that the process of modernization was an enormous challenge. Therefore, the project in itself needs to be reassess as the whole eight goals of the MDGs is question by the literature.

5) The responses disagree that MDGs can achieve their targets before the expiry of its term by 2015. The rate at which the MDGs is moving towards achieving its goals does not seem to suggest that it is capable of achieving its objectives by the end of 2015. This is because the paces at which its projects and programmes are implemented in Yobe state remains too slow to make any significant developmental impact on the lives of the various target communities. The disagreement of 72.92% (175 out of 240) respondents with the possibility of achieving the MDGs by 2015 reveals the level of pessimism on the side of supposed beneficiaries of the projects who ordinarily are the gauge through which these presupposed development can be weighed.

Similarly, there is agreement between the above finding and the report that, So far, the Nigerian government score sheet is unimpressive to the extent that the House of Representatives has threatened to stop financial allocation to any Ministry or Parastatals that has failed to implement the MDGs (The Vanguard, 2009) cited in Ogunmola and Badmus (2007)

Discussion

From the above finding one can argue that, the road map for MDGs in meeting its core goals by 2015 is very rough considering the challenges that it is facing ranging from the social origin of the goals itself, funding, implementation, corruption and the political will of the leaders. Also, the involvement and

sensitization campaign for the programme is nothing to ride home about. Poverty is a very complex term to be defined and determine its measurement, as a result the yardstick that used by the state to measure and ascertains the level of poverty is not clearly define and used as guide. Lenin have rightly argued that in as much capitalism is in operation the issue of poverty eradication will remain an illusion because that contradict the major philosophy of capitalism of making and maximizing profit.

6) While a minute segment of the respondents (6.3%) agree that there are prospects of overcoming the challenges being faced by MDGs in their poverty alleviation efforts, the larger percent of responses reveals otherwise. 225 respondents representing 93.75% disagree that there is any prospect of overcoming those challenges. Hence, majority of respondents are pessimistic on the chance of achieving the goals of MDGs. In addition, this view or assertion came in consonant with the view of John Moru 2004, which argued that, the MDGs challenges are still daunting with the result that Nigeria faces a threat of not meeting the MDGs if further major steps are not taken. Unemployment is still high (10.8% in 2003) and (29.3 % in 2012) (NBS 2011). Unemployment in Yobe State is 60.6 % (NBS 2011). Moru added that, the GDP average growth rate of about 3.6 % is still lower than the minimum of 5% required to prevent poverty from worsening and the 7% needed to meet the MDG target of halving the incidence of poverty by 2015.

Discussion

If the findings of the study and other MDGs reports is something to go by, there is no doubt that the prospects of the MDGs is at stake simply because of the challenges of funding and social origin of the project. There is still the challenge of reforming the public sector in to an efficient and responsive instrument for delivering services to the people, corruption and fraud need to be fought ruthlessly. Infrastructure decay needs to be reversed and the private sector empowered to become competitive and lead the growth process while the small sector should be empowered to consolidate the economy. In the same vein, the weak and vulnerable groups need to be lifted up. Moreover, there is the general need for value orientation of the people to be reshaped by deemphasizing rent seeking, over dependence on government to make provisions for everything. This by far would promote self sufficiency, productivity and lessen the expectations of something from nothing. It would also promote hard work, entrepreneurship, discipline, honesty and respect for traditional values (NEEDS, 2004).

More so, in respect of these prospects, Ogunmola and Badmus (2007) argued that; it is apparent that Nigeria is inundated with poverty and economic underdevelopment which, coupled with poor administration, lack of political will, etc have made its yearning towards achieving the MDGs in 2015 very unrealistic. This scholarly notion only tends to further galvanize and strengthen the findings of this study, as it is clear from the context of the public and the contents of various reports, how unfeasible the prospect of fulfilling the MDGs are.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

This study provides insight into the role and impact of MDG on poverty eradication in Yobe State. The study using both primary and secondary sources of data collection as methodology, also used dependency theory as guide to arrive at its findings; that, despite the MDGs intervention from 2007 to 2009 poverty at the individual, household and community levels distorts and diminishes the capacity and capability to attain and live a life of well-being in Yobe State. More so, most people in the state are not aware of the philosophy and goals of the MDGs. and lack of access to basic necessities of life has constrained the efforts of the poor towards achieving meaningful results in the drive to improve their well-being. And that the MDG'S approach, which is geared towards the logic of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger will need direct involvement of the target beneficiaries particularly in the agricultural sector in order to have any chance of success. In view of the above the researcher recommends some measures to curtail the ugly trend.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that poverty is an important challenge to achieving the MDGs. Although the first of the goals is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, from the series of reports, studies and findings it appears that poverty may still remain a feature of Yobe State economic profile for a long time to come unless the government takes a significant, foresighted and radical steps in revamping its developmental strategies. It is also of essence to give unrelenting emphasis on pro-poor policies. Another important step is to directly involve the beneficiaries i.e. the masses in laying down a coherent and priority base framework in order to get rid of them out of the poverty trap and to ensure a well characterized manner of achieving the various target goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the researcher recommends as follows,

(1) There is need for eliminating the discrimination against rural and agricultural development. A continuous flow of resources need to be provided to agriculture in the form of elements such as rural infrastructure, inputs, research and credit combined with appropriate institutions to increase the sector's productivity and potential capacity for contributing, thereby making a larger reverse flow to the rest of the economy. (2) Investment in human capital such as, education, health, improved water sources, improved sanitation, including nutrition and sanitation. So as to improve human welfare directly. Providing these services on a wide scale should be a key objective of development strategy. (3) Improvement of intra-household allocation of consumption. Public policies need to be designed to reduce deprivation of basic needs by some vulnerable household members, particularly children, widows and the aged. (4) Providing access to all markets (labour, business assets, land, social capital, food, etc.) and public infrastructure. (5) Facilitating the creation of new jobs. (6) There is need for strong institutional discipline, transparent governance and the respect for the rule of law so as to curtail corruption and to maximize opportunities. (7) Democratic governance and human rights be promoted in order to eliminate discrimination, secure social justice and promote the well being of the people. (8) Enlightenment campaigns should be widened to involve the people in decision making that affects them and their communities. (9) Monitor the budget and ensure prudent management of resources with special attention on achieving MDGs. (10) Effort should be geared towards overhauling the power sector in order to encourage setting of more industries and boast other small scale activities. (11) A massive HIV/AIDS awareness campaign with the support of key government officials and opinion leaders should be launched. (12) Women should be empowered in terms of access to education and employment and should also have access to health care services especially in the rural areas. (13) Formation of social development departments to disburse social grants like old age, pensions, grants for child support, disability un-employment grants etc

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