ADDRESSING UNFINISHED AGENDA OF MELLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs) AND THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs) IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

With the quest and desire for development among nations as a way to combat socio-political and economical problems in different parts of the world, international organizations decided to come together and adopt a common goal to help them position towards global development. First, came the millennium development goals, with a time period of fifteen years and at the end, the second came into place which was a more advance goals known as the Sustainable Development Goals with the same time frame of fifteen years meant to end by the year 2030. This conceptual paper then seeks to look at what extent Nigeria has achieved the MDGs, look at the transition from MDGs to SDGs as well as some of the benefits and the challenges facing the achievement of the SDGs and then draw conclusion as to what the country Nigeria needs to achieve the SDGs and to what extent.

Keywords: *Social-political, Economical, International organizations, Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals.*

INTRODUCTION

International organizations has long been trying to impact development among nations in order to combat socio-political and economical challenges which are prevalent in different parts of the world. These challenge which varies from poverty, climate change, food security, corruption, unemployment and low income etc. International organizations in the likes of the United Nations have long recognized the key role of development since 1960, when development became its central theme (Jackson, 2007; Hong, 2015; Durokifa and Abdul-wasi, 2016).

At first they were interested in reducing hunger, which was common among countries especially Africa, Asia and Caribbean. As time goes on the United Nations started addressing issues beyond hunger and started venturing into intervention program so as to bring about development.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) came into existence after been endorsed by 189members states of the United Nations. It is made up of different developmental goals that were incorporated into the resolutions of the United Nations millennium summit in New York, in September 2000. The MDGs was made up of eight major goals which were meant to be achieved by the year 2015. These goals were meant to address thematic developmental areas like; Poverty, Education, Health Care, Environmental sustainability and International cooperation. African and developing countries take into cognizance the great opportunity MDGs have in promoting development trough human welfare in the world (ADB, 2002; UNECA, 2016).International community came together in 2015 and adopted the seventeen (17) sustainable development goals SDGs as the gold standard which would guide all development and by which all development would be evaluated. These 17 SDGs were far more advanced that the MDGs and virtually touched all aspects of life in all its totality starting from poverty to partnership for development. Despite the advent of the MDGs there still seems to be problems of development, poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and others among the developing countries (Sahn and Stifel, 2003; Aleyomi, 2013; MDG Report, 2015). Even with not been able to have fully implemented the MDGs we are already faced with a more advanced version, emerging evidence shows that most developing countries especially in the sub Saharan Africa are falling behind in their pursuit of the SDGs. This paper seeks to look into the unfinished agenda of the MDGs and also to look at the challenges of implementing the SDGs in Nigeria, the transition from MDGs to SDGs and as well some benefits of the SDGs if achieved.

THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) (2000-2015)

In every society the main purpose of the government is to ensure development in all aspect and all levels, in the social, cultural, political and economic sectors. For this to be possible certain foundation has to be in place which is necessary; like shelter, clothing, food, equality, employment and freedom must be made accessible to the citizens. It was on this ground that UN formulated the Development Goals to address these challenges and ensure development.

The MDGs were goals incorporated into the resolutions of the United Nations millennium summit in New York and endorsed by 189 member states to be known as Millennium Development Goals(MDGs) in September 2000. These goals were eight (8) in number with a time limit of fifteen (15) years to be achieved. The goals are as follows;

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Achieving universal primary education

Promoting gender equality and women empowerment

Reduction of child mortality

Improvement in maternal health

Combating HIV/AIDs, malaria and other Diseases

Ensuring environmental sustainability

Developing global partnership for development

Prior to the introduction of the MDGs the international development agenda primarily focused on the economic performance of mainly developing countries. The MDGs embodied an increased focus on sustainable human rather than only economic development (Fukuda-parr et al, 2014; Vandermoortele, 2011; De jong and Vijge, 2021). Such development was however believed to be reached mainly through the global eradication of extreme poverty (UN, 2002, Fukda-parr and hulme, 2011; Fukuda-parr, 2016; Nayyar, 2011;2012;UN 2015; De jong and Vijge 2021.).

Nayyar, 2012; Vandermoortele, 2011, opined that the MDGs reflected the belief that poverty is caused by and could be eradicated through addressing lack of economic growth, aid/or governance, which were in turn seen as a consequence of not participating in the global economy or trade system (Weber, 2015). Poverty reduction was thus mainly framed as something that could be addressed through economic rather than social or political reforms (Briantcarant, 2017, Fukuda-parr and Hulme, 2011; Fukuda-parr et al 2014).

Although the MDGs aimed to stimulate universal aspirations they were not universal in focus rather the MDGs focused on addressing development problems in developing countries (Battersby, 2017), with the help of developed

countries. Most of the MDG goals and targets required changes in or by developing countries, with only MDG 8 (Global partnership for development) pointing to responsibilities of developed countries (UN, 2000; Picciotto, 2005; Hulme, 2010).

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (2015 – 2030)

The international community came together in 2015 and adopted another set of goals known as the 17 Sustainable Development Goals which is to be the gold standard which would guide all development and by which all development would henceforth be evaluated. The 17 SDGs touched on virtually all aspects of life, starting from poverty to partnership for development.

The SDGs is quite different from the MDGs when compared on a number of elements, the SDGs is a more advanced form of the MDGs with more reference to the reduction of extreme poverty, taking a four dimension approach; inclusive social development, inclusive economic development, environmental sustainability and peace and security (UN, 2015). The SDGs offer a more people centered development agenda, while the MDGs only included limited notions are deeply rooted in the SDGs (Kumar et al, 2016; Freistein and Mahlert, 2016; De jong and Vijge 2021). These SDGs are as follow;

No poverty (End poverty in all its forms, everywhere)

Zero hunger (End hunger and achieve food security)

Good health well being

Quality education

Clean water and sanitation

Affordable and clean energy

Decent work and economic growth

Industry, innovation and infrastructure

Reduced inequalities among countries

Sustainable cities and communities

Responsible consumption and production

Climate action (combat climate change and its impact)

Life below water (conserves and sustainably uses the ocean and seas for sustainable development)

Life on land (protects, restore and promote the ecosystem, combat desertification and bio-diversity loss and halt and reverse land degradation).

Peace, justice and strong institutions

Partnership for the goals (global partnership for sustainable development)

From the above stated goals it could be seen that SDGs calls for an all inclusive participation of the nation, including the private sector which wasn't included in the MDGs. The SDGs presents a much more integrated approach to sustainable development than the MDGs, embodied in a focus on the interplay between the 5Ps; people, prosperity, planet, partnership and peace (UN, 2015). The SDGs are framed as "indivisible and interlinked" with a large focus on "policy and institutional coherence" and coordination across all sectors and policies in order to achieve the three economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development (UN, 2015).

REVIEW OF MDGs PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIA

With the completion of the MDGs era after 15 years, the period has indicated incremental improvements in some areas, even when the target wasn't achieved. Let's examine the extent of achievement below;

Table 1

MDGs	Target met 100%	Strong progress 60<100%	Fair progress 45-59%	Weak progress < 45% of target met	Policy environment
MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger Target 1A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people living in extreme poverty					
Indicator 1:1 proportion of population below $1 per day				x	Good
Indicator 1:2 poverty gap ratio (%)			x		Good
Indicator 1:3 share of poorest quintile in national consumption			x		Good
Target 1C: halve, between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer hunger					
Indicator 1:8 prevalence of underweight children under five years of age			x		Good
MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education					
Target 2: Ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.					
Indicator 2:1 net enrolment in primary education			x		Good
Indicator 2:2 primary six completion rate			x		Good
MDG 3: promote gender equality and empower women					
Target 3: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015.					
Indicator 3:1A: ratio of girls to boys in primary education		x			Good
Indicator 3:1B: ratio of girls to boys in secondary education			x		Good
Indicator 3:1C: ratio of girls to boys in tertiary education			x		Good
Indicator 3:2: share of women in wage employment in the non agricultural sector (%)				x	Poor
Indicator 3:3: proportion of seats held by women in the national parliament.				x	Poor
MDG 4: Reduce child mortality					
Target 4: Reduce by two-third between 1990 and 2015, the under five mortality rate					
Indicator 4:1: under five mortality rate		x			Good
Indicator 4:2: infant mortality rate			x		Good
Indicator 4:3: proportion of 1 year old children immunized against measles				x	Good
MDG 5: Improve maternal mortality					
Target 5: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2915, the maternal mortality ratio.					
Indicator 5:1: maternal mortality ratio	X				Good
Indicator 5:2: proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel				x	Good
Indicator 5:3: unmet need for family planning				x	Good
Indicator 5:5: antenatal care coverage (at least one year)				x	Good
MDG 6: Combat HIV and AIDS, Malaria and other diseases					
Target 6A: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the					

spread of HIV and AIDS.					
Indicator 6:1: HIV prevalence among pregnant young women aged 15 – 24				x	Good
Indicator 6:2: young people aged 15 – 24 reporting the use of condom during sexual intercourse with a non-regular sexual partner				x	Fair
Indicator 6:3:proportion of the population aged 15-24 years with comprehensive correct knowledge of HIV and AIDS				x	Fair
Indicator 6:5: proportion of the population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs				x	Fair
Target 6C: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.					
Indicator 6:6: incidence and death rate associated with malaria		x			Good
Indicator 6:7: proportion of under five years children sleeping under insecticide treated bed nets				x	Fair
Indicator 6:9: incidence, prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis				x	Poor
MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability					
Target 7A: integrate the principles of sustainable development into the country's policy and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources.					
Indicator 7:1: proportion of land area covered by forest			x		Fair
Target 7C: Have by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation.					
Indicator 7:9: proportion of population using an improved drinking water source		x			Good
Indicator 7:10: proportion of the population using an improved sanitation facility			x		Poor
Target 7D: by 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100million slum dwellers		x			Poor
MDG 8: Develop a global partnership for development					
Target 8D: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries.					
Indicator 8:1: per capital ODA to Nigeria (USD)	X				Good
Indicator 8:2: debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services.	X				Good
Target 8F: in cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technology.					
Indicator 8:14: fixed telephone lines per 100 people			x		Poor
Indicator 8:15: cellular phone subscribers per 100 people	X				Good
Indicator 8:16: internet users per 100 people	X				Good
Indicator 8:17: tele-density	X				Good

Source: Nigeria 2015 MDGs End Point Report

From the above table, the statistics shows that there was progress towards meeting the MDGs, but the table below shows an overview of the progress made and if the goals were met or not using the MDGs Nigeria actualization target gauge.

Table 2

MDGs	Progress towards target	Conclusion
Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Appreciable progress especially in reducing hunger and underweight children	Goal not met
Achieving universal primary education	Slight progress mainly because of the insurgencies and insecurities in some parts of the country	Goal not met
Promoting gender equality and women empowerment	Satisfactory progress in areas in the ratios of girls to boys in school and weak progress in women empowerment	Goal not met
Reduction of child mortality	Satisfactory progress	Goal not met
Improvement in maternal health	Appreciable progress in maternal mortality ratio. Weak progress in other indicators	Goal not met
Combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases	Weak progress	Goal not met
Ensuring environmental sustainability	Appreciable progress in the provision of safe drinking water. Weak progress in other indicators	Goal not met
Developing global partnership for development	Appreciable and satisfactory progress	Goal met

Source: Nigeria MDGs Report (2015)

TRANISTION FROM MDGs TO SDGs

The agenda, with which the MDGs and SDGs were formulated, are important indicators for the evolution in discourses around sustainable development that is deep rooted with its application in global and national governance strategies. The MDGs was characterized by a technocratic process with limited consultations, while the SDGs were formulated by means of multi-stakeholders consultation around the world.

There has been quite a positive effect in the pursuit of development globally, mainly through array of issues such as reduction of poverty, hunger, disease, gender inequality, child mortality and improving maternal health during the 15years period of MDGs. However, not all countries especially in sub-Saharan African countries are on track with the realization of the goals. Poverty, gender inequality, child mortality and combat of disease still remain a daunting challenge in most countries (MDG Report 2015). These daunting challenges that where related to MDGs, were now meant to be overcome by a new program, which was formulated and adopted by the global community in a post 2015 development agenda known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs was launched 25th September 2015 and was operational in 2016, comprises of 17 goals with the aim to improve livelihood, stability of the economy and environment, and protect the planet for future generations (Sachs, 2012; Waziri 2015).

These SDGs as mentioned in the early part of this article are in line with Spangenberg (2005) and Rio Earth Summit (1992) is seen as a prerequisite for the sustainable development. The SDGs places more emphases on the economic, environmental, social and institutional issues of the society.

It could be seen and understood that the SDGs is a more advance and broader version of the MDGs, which took into cognizance the shortcomings of the MDGs and the current challenges of the society. For an illustration; The MDGs focused on achieving universal primary education, without taking into account secondary and tertiary education, but SDG 4 takes into account quality education in its totality. Notably also in year 2000, there was relative stability, prosperity, climate calmness and global harmony. Now on the contrary, the world is experiencing complex problems like; global warming, population influx, increasing urbanization, insurgencies, insecurity, terrorism, depleting economy and food security (Igbuzor, 2015; UNDP, 2016; Durokifa and Abdul-wasi 2016).

These challenges among others gave need for the SDGs, the attainment of the SDGs will free the human race from tyranny and want and secure the planets for the present and yet to come generations (Waziri, 2015).

ACHIEVING THE SDGs; THE NIGERIAN APPROACH

The sustainable development goals was endorsed by Nigeria alongside other member countries of the United Nations at the 70th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York, with the aim of transforming our world; the 2030agenda for Sustainable development, it has 17 goals and 169 targets. The SDGs and its target have its foundation in the MDGs. It is designed to continue and finish what the MDGs started. The current Nigeria Administration with its mantra for "change" affirmed its support for the SDGs and its success in Nigeria.

In the journey towards the SDGs achievement the global vision includes the protection of the planet in order to improve the standard of living of the people in it and for future generations. In Nigeria the vision is to ensure that no Nigerian is left behind, the integration of the SDGs in an all inclusive manner that is people centered and also to emphasis on institutional and policy firming up (Mcdickson, 2016).

The Nigerian approach to the SDGs is centered on seven thematic issues that are necessary for a successful exodus to the SDG. They are; institutional framework, partnership, data monitoring and reporting, human resources, communication framework and financing framework. For these key issues to be achieved the implementation process was divided into three phases and it is in line with the various needs of different sectors of the economy (UNDP 2015).

Phase one: 2016 – 2020 - Building on existing foundations.

Phase two: 2021 – 2025 - Scale up

Phase three: 2026 – 2030 - leave no Nigerian behind

In order to achieve this office of special assistant to the president on SDGs was created. The basic role of this office is for coordination of the implementation, partnership and advocacy of the SDGs (Udo, 2016). In addition to this office, to ensure that there is equal participation of all major stakeholders, the private sector advisory group on SDGs was created, as well as the Civil Society Organization (CSOs).

SDGs PROSPECTS IN NIGERIA

If the SDGs could be achieved the following are the likely benefits;

Good standard of living: The achievement of the SDGs will bring about sustainable income, reduced poverty, reduction in unemployment, quality infrastructure, quality health care, education, etc all these which contributes to a good standard of living.

Good economic sustainability: achieving the SDGs on the environment through low carbon economy (LCE) is a guarantee of a good economic structure, knowing that LCE ensures that there is little emission of green house in areas of transportation, manufacturing, agriculture, industry, production technology, etc (Olagunju, 2018).

Revenue generation: Achieving the SDGs will increase revenue generation in the economy, create new opportunities for market differentiation and growth through innovation.

Friendly environment: A friendly environment is essential to man's survival because it connotes an environment that is safe, pollution free, resilient, sustainable and low level of emission and achievement of SDGs will ensure that all these mentioned are obtainable. The atmosphere (air) will be free of harmful and toxic substance that can harm life, the hydrosphere (water) will be clean, thus creating a safe place for its habitat and making it safe for human use, the land will be arable, fertile and free of contamination.

Better and secured future: Achievement of the SDGs will ensure that there is a secured future for the present and future generations. The present generation will be able to meet their needs without compromising the ability of the future generation.

CHALLENGES MTIGATING ACHIEVEMET OF SDGs

There are quite a number of issues that challenges the achievement of the SDGs n Nigeria, below are some of them;

Competing interest: When administrators of a country's resources have competing or selfish interest it affects the achievement of the SDGs, because any stakeholder with a contrary view to achieving the SDGs will frustrate the effort of others towards achieving it.

Accountability and monitoring of progress: This pose a serious threat to the achievement of the SDGs lack of monitoring to make sure that proposed plans made towards the goals actualization is achieved. Accountability and monitoring of progress is ensured by data collection and the country lacks proper data collection method.

Lack of quality infrastructure: This hinders the achievement of the SDGs, because to achieve the SDGs an adequate infrastructure has to be in place, advance information technology as well.

Lack of adequate institutions: weak institutional capacity can hinder achievement of the SDGs because institutional capacity goes beyond education and availability of professionals; it includes the government capacity, businesses, NGOs, and private individuals (Olagunju, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This paper has successfully discussed the Millennium Development Goals and how it later metamorphosed into Sustainable Development Goals. This paper shows how changes in the MDGs and SDGs relate in their storyline and the extent they both have gone in the Nigerian system.

It has been seen that the SDGs can aid nations and organizations in generating revenue which runs into billions of dollars and creating more resilient and sustainable economic and social environment for all, there s still hope that if the managers of Nigeria will bravely and resolutely embrace the SDGs and work with every intention to actualize its realization.

The global progress towards the SDGs can be found on the SDG – Tracker which was launched on 28th June 2018. The challenge has always been there for quite some time now and if the nation does not react in time, they risk losing a life time opportunity to embark on the trajectory of sustainable longevity and growth. So the authors suggest that the time to employ all resources, human and technological instruments for the actualization of the SDGs is now.

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