

THE PARADOX OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN NIGERIA- INSIGHTS FOR A POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

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Abstract

Nigeria is perhaps the most blessed country in Africa, in terms of its abundant mineral resources, agricultural and forest resources, distinctively more favourable climatic conditions and highly diverse human resources. These factors, alongside its overwhelmingly increasing population for foreign investment potentially and strategically put the responsibility of economic development on Nigeria, with its citizens expected to live not below the average standard of living. It is paradoxical however, that most Nigerians are poor. This study reviewed trends in poverty level in Nigeria from 1980-2014, examined the causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria, evaluated Nigeria's potentials for a post-2015 development agenda, evaluated the level of satisfaction with the implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as the desirability level for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The study found corruption, weak institution and poor governance; unemployment and underemployment; and high population growth as the major causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria.

Key words: development agenda, inequality, MDGs, paradox, poverty, SDGs

INTRODUCTION

According to the International Monetary Fund World Outlook Database for 2013 [23], the 2013 ranking of countries from the richest to the poorest, using Gross Domestic Product (GDP) based on Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) per capita, African countries occupied the bottom with 9 of the last 10 places. The Democratic Republic of Congo was the poorest with a per-capita GDP (PPP) of \$394. Zimbabwe (\$590), Burundi (\$649) and Liberia (\$716) were poorest, following The Democratic Republic of Congo. Nigeria was the 44th of the poorest listed countries with less than \$3000. The top of the table was occupied by Europe, a few Gulf States and North America. It is therefore, not out of place to say that, poverty is endemic to Africa. Although, GDP is not a perfect measure to describe the wellbeing and quality of life of populations, it is the most commonly accepted method of determining the wealth of countries and comparing generalized differences in living standards on a whole between nations, using GDP per capita on a PPP basis in current international dollars. The two mostly used poverty indicators are the

aggregate headcount and the headcount ratio [22]. Other indexes are not in discordant tone with the GDP PPP. For instance, according to Human Development Index (HDI) of World Bank for the year 2011 [33], Nigeria occupied the 156th position among 177 countries as compared to the 151st position in 2002. Poverty, inequality and high unemployment rates continue to be notable characteristics of the African continent. These and many other economic challenges continue to be on the increase rather than be abated in many African States despite aids and grants from the West and international development agenda like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). African countries have not utilised their resource riches: agriculture, forestry and wildlife as in Kenya, Malawi and Nigeria, mineral resources as in Angola, Niger, and Nigeria to close up the gap between the rich and the poor. Rather, the exploration of these resources has widened the wealth gaps.

One of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is to end extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 [4, 29]. In the African Economic Outlook for the year 2014 [1], it is observed that countries like Cameroon, Egypt, Guinea

and Tunisia have already attained this goal. While countries like Senegal, The Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, South Africa, Swaziland and Uganda were close to meeting the target, Nigeria and others which include Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Madagascar and Morocco were falling behind in attaining this goal.

Nigeria has unjustifiable increasing rate of poverty in the face of its recently rebased GDP which make it the largest economy in Africa. The economy is still characterized by high unemployment rate, high inequitable distribution of wealth, low quality human resources and high out migration in the face of high economic growth measured by GDP. In 2004, there were 68.7 million Nigerians regarded as poor. Only six years after, in 2010 the number of poor Nigerian sky-rocketed to 112.47 (65.7%) million in 2010 [18]. The NBS report warned that the trend would be on the increase, if the potential positive impacts of several anti-poverty and employment generation intervention programmes are not taken into account [18]

Nigeria's human poverty index (HPI) for 2009 was only 36.2% placing Nigeria at the 114th position and among the 7th poorest nations in the world while the ratio of the richest 10% to the poorest 10% was 16.3 with Gini index from 42.9 in 2004 to 44.7 in 2010 [18, 27]. This was against the fact that Nigeria ranked 6th and 7th as oil producer and exporter and ranks 10th as the most populous country in the world with a real GDP growth rate of 7.0 in the year 2009 which grew to 8.0 in 2010 but however dropped to 6.3 in the year 2013 [19]. In face of the enormous natural, mineral and human resources, it is only an economic paradox to still have most Nigerian living on less than \$1 per day.

The Post 2015 Development Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals

The Post-2015 Development Agenda refers to a process led by the United Nations that aims to help define the future global development framework that will succeed the Millennium Developments (MDGs) [26, 28]. The MDGs encapsulate eight globally agreed goals in the areas of poverty alleviation, education, gender equality and empowerment of women, child

and maternal health, environmental sustainability, reducing HIV/AIDS and communicable diseases, and building a global partnership for development. The MDGs' overall target date is 2015 [4, 28]. While many developed countries fared largely better in achieving the MDGs, the same could not be said for African nations holistically. Only a few have achieved some of the goals, considering their targets. At the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, 192 UN member states agreed to establish an intergovernmental working group to design Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a successor of the MDGs. More precisely the SDGs comprise 17 goals and 169 targets according to the Press Release by the United Nations General Assembly on 19th July, 2014 [26, 27]. This study however, considered the first 10 SDGs which border on the issues of poverty and inequality in Nigeria. They are as follows:

- (i) End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- (ii) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- (iii) Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- (iv) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- (v) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- (vi) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- (vii) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- (viii) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- (ix) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and "foster innovation
- (x) Reduce inequality within and among countries.

As the year 2015 target time for the achievement of the MDGs draws to an end, available statistics revealed poor performance of the many African countries including

Nigeria in achievement of the MDGs. In view of the above therefore, it very pertinent to have a critical look at the issue of poverty and inequality in Nigeria. Has Nigeria failed to achieve the MDG 1? Which is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. In fact, poverty during the period increased regardless of government posting of increased economic growth rates. As the international community again is set for another sets of development goals with a view to building on the lessons learnt from the MDGs, ending poverty in all its forms everywhere is again the first of the new 17 SDGs. The questions are, what are the trends in poverty level in Nigeria from 1980-2014? What are the causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria? What are Nigeria's potentials for a post-2015 development? What is the level of satisfaction for the implementation of the MDGs in Nigeria and what is the level of desirability for the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria? Taking premise from the above, this study looks at the following specific objectives which are to:

- (i) Investigate the trends in poverty level in Nigeria from 1980 -2014
- (ii) Investigate the causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria
- (iii) Evaluate Nigeria's potential for a post-2015 development
- (iv) Evaluate the level of satisfaction for the implementation of MDGs in Nigeria
- (v) Evaluate the level of desirability for the implementation of SDGs in Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study area

The study was carried out in Lagos and Kano States, Nigeria. The duo are Nigeria's largest states, most diverse, in terms of economy (business activities), people, culture, and income distribution. Lagos State is located in the southwestern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It is bounded by Ogun State on the North and East and in west by the Republic of Benin. Behind its southern borders lies the Atlantic Ocean. It is the smallest in area of all the 36

states [16] and still 22% of its 3,577 km² are lagoons and creeks [31]. Though small in size, it is the economic hub of the nation. Lagos in Lagos State is the nation's largest urban area. Lagos State is the home to several multinational companies, indigenous industries, financial institutions, residential estates, markets and religious grounds. Ajayi in [5] observed that Lagos is home to the largest agribusinesses in Nigeria. In 2014, Lagos State had a total GDP of \$91 billion and a per capita of \$4,333 [31]. Lagos is the most populous city in Lagos State and in Nigeria as a whole. It is the second fastest-growing city in Africa and the seventh in the world [10]. The population of Lagos city was approximately put at 15 million by the State Government in 2011 [15]

Kano State is located in North-Western Nigeria. Ibrahim [12]. Kano state shares borders with Katsina State to the north-west, Jigawa State to the north-east, Bauchi State to the south-east and Kaduna State to the south-west. Agriculture is mainstay of Kano State's economy. The food crops cultivated include millet, cowpeas, sorghum, maize, and rice for local consumption while groundnuts and cotton are produced for export and industrial purposes. Kano State was prominent for the groundnuts produced in the state which was a major foreign earner for the country during the colonial period and the early days of the country's independence. Kano State is a major producer of hides and skins, sesame, soybean, cotton, garlic, gum, Arabic and chili pepper [31]. Kano State is the second largest industrial center in Nigeria and the largest in Northern Nigeria with textile, tanning, footwear, cosmetics, plastics, enamelware, pharmaceuticals, ceramics, furniture and other industries [31]. Others include agricultural implements, soft drinks, food and beverages, dairy products, vegetable oil, animal feeds etc. Kano, a metropolis is the capital of Kano State. In 2007, Kano State had a total GDP of \$12.39 billion and per capital of \$1,288 [9].

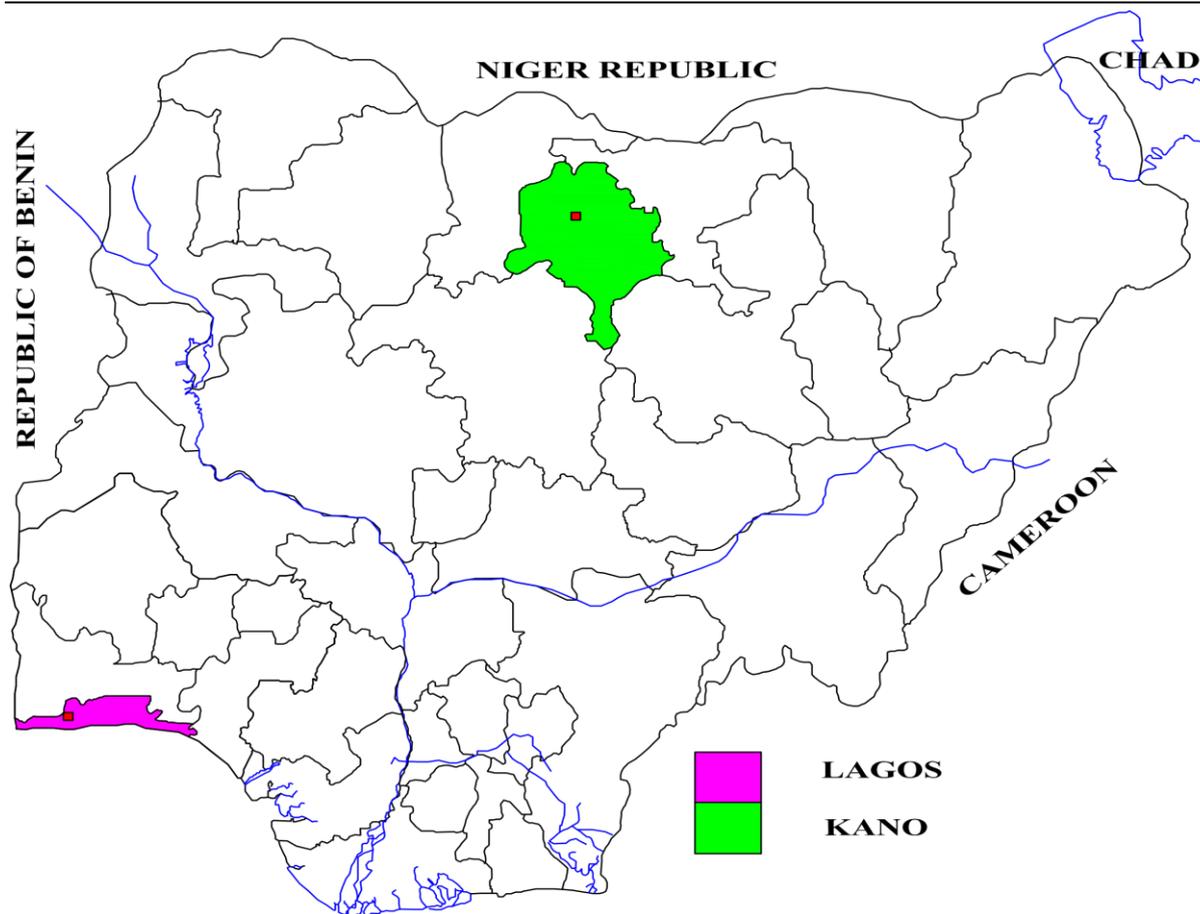


Fig. 1. Map of Nigeria showing Kano and Lagos States
Source: Authors' representation

Sampling technique, size and data collection

The study made use of both primary and secondary data. The secondary data covered a 34 year period on Relative Poverty Headcount from 1980-2014. These data were sourced from the National Bureau of Statistics and the World Bank. Descriptive statistics was employed in analysing data. The justification for using this period according to [14, 20] rests on the ground that the beginning of the second republic was October 1, 1979 (1979/1980) and prior to that, it was believed that the problem of Nigeria was not having cash but how to spend it. Over thirty years later, salaries are unpaid as at when due and pensioners who were probably starting their carriers in 1970s are not sure of getting their pensions [30]. The secondary data provided information for the analysis of trends in poverty level in Nigeria from 1980-2014.

For the primary data, a multistage sampling technique was used for the sampling. In the first stage, two states of Lagos and Kano were purposively selected for the study. The rationale for the purposive selection of the two states include their diversity in terms of economy (business activities), people, culture, and several strata of income distribution. In the second stage, Kano metropolis in Kano State and Lagos metropolis in Lagos State were purposively selected. The two metropolis were purposively selected for the same reasons as for their states. The two metropolis were stratified into six (6), making a total of twelve (12) strata for the study. Thirty six (36) respondents were randomly selected from each of the strata. This gave a total of Four hundred and thirty two (432) respondents for the study. The primary data provided information for investigating the causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria,

evaluating Nigeria's potential for a post-2015 development, evaluating the level of satisfaction for the implementation of the MDGs in Nigeria and evaluating the level of desirability for the implementation of the SDGs in Nigeria.

Primary data were collected with the aid of questionnaire administration and interview schedule. A total of four hundred and thirty two (432) copies of well-structured questionnaire were administered to respondents in the study area. However, only four hundred (400) copies were returned completed. This indicated an approximated response rate of 93%. Field data collection was conducted between March and June, 2015

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used in the data analysis. The secondary data were analysed using tables and charts. The primary data collected from Lagos and Kano States were analysed using descriptive analysis which included, tables, chats and the Likert scales. The causes of poverty and inequality in the study area were analysed using frequencies and percentages. Respondents' satisfaction level on the implementation of the MDGs and their desirability level for the SDGs were also measured on a five-point Likert scale. Satisfaction level with mean scores of 4.50-5.00, 3.50-4.49, 2.50-3.49, 1.50-2.49 and less than 1.50 were rated 'extremely satisfied', 'very satisfied', 'moderately satisfied', 'slightly satisfied', 'not at all satisfied' respectively. In the same vein, desirability level with mean scores of 4.50-5.00, 3.50-4.49, 2.50-3.49, 1.50-2.49 and less than 1.50 were rated 'very desirable', 'desirable', neutral, 'undesirable', 'very undesirable' respectively. Both measures of levels of satisfaction and desirability for the MDGs and SDGs respectively are according to [25]. The total means for satisfaction level of the MDGs and desirability level of the SDGs are given as:

Satisfaction level of implementation of MDGs=

$$\Sigma(\text{MDGm}_1 + \text{MDGm}_2 + \dots + \text{MDGm}_8) / \text{MDGn}$$

Where $\text{MDGm}_1 - \text{MDGm}_8$ = Mean scores of $\text{MDGm}_1 - \text{MDGm}_8$

MDGn = number of MDGs = 8

Desirability level of implementation of SDGs=

$$\Sigma(\text{SDGm}_1 + \text{SDGm}_2 + \dots + \text{SDGm}_8) / \text{SDGn}$$

Where $\text{SDGm}_1 - \text{SDGm}_8$ = Mean scores of $\text{SDGm}_1 - \text{SDGm}_8$

SDGn = number of SDGs = 10

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Trends in Poverty level in Nigeria 1980-2014

As reflected in table 1, poverty level was lowest during the period under review in 1980 with 27.20%. It however increased by 19.10% to 46.30% in 1985 only within a record time of 5 years. With marginal decline to 42.70% in 1992, poverty level rose by 22.90% which was the highest change to 65.60% in 1996. The coming of democracy in 1999 only managed to have it at 69.00% by the year 2010. In the year 2014, with only a year to the target time of the MDGs and more than three successful democratic governments, Nigeria witnessed a further decline in poverty level to 33.10%. However, this decline in poverty was not enough to put the country on path to achieving the MDG1 which seeks to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger [4].

A comparison of total population and population living in poverty in Nigeria over the period under review as reflected in figure 2, shows that both were increasing almost together from 1980 to 2010, expect a small decline in population in poverty while total population increased in 1992. This implication of this is that, the issue of poverty reduction and widening gaps in wealth did not receive enough attention by the subsequent governments during this period. Several factors could have been responsible which might include political instability and gross misrule by the military in the early period of the time under review.

Inibehe in [13] observed that population imposes a challenge on a country in terms of economic planning, by influencing the demand magnitude of the people for basic necessities of life. High population growth increases the country's demand for food, infrastructure, shelter, employment and other basic needs of life.

Table 1. Nigeria Poverty profile 1980-2014

Year	Poverty level	Total population	Population in poverty
1980	27.20	65.00	17.70
1985	46.30	75.00	34.70
1992	42.7	91.50	39.30
1996	65.60	102.30	67.10
2004	54.40	126.30	68.70
2010	69.00	163.00	112.47
2014	33.10	178.52	59.09

Source: NBS, various issues; World Bank, 2014

Consequently, rapid population growth that is not matched with continuous and rapid provision of resources is a challenge on economic growth [13, 32]. Other reports such as the [34, 35] also rated Nigeria low.

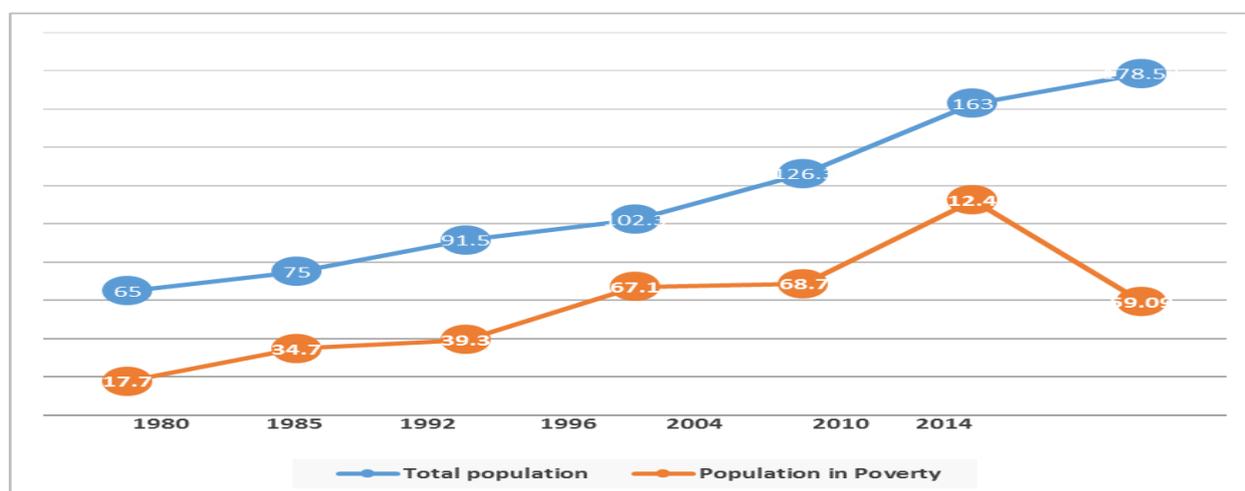


Fig. 2. Population in Poverty 1980-2014

Source: Computed from data from NBS, various issues; World Bank, 2014

Causes of Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria

The study further analysed the respondents' perceived causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria as shown in Table 2. The literature has a plethora of poverty and inequality causes [2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 14, 21]. However, fifteen (15) categories of the causes were examined by this study with specific bearing to the Nigerian socio-economic, geo-political, cultural and environmental characteristics. Most of the respondents regarded corruption, weak institution and poor governance as the major cause of poverty and inequality. Other major causes are unemployment and underemployment; and high population growth. The very high percentage of corruption, weak institutions and poor governance is a testimony that the citizenry were aware that corruption had eaten deep into the fabrics of governance in Nigeria. This further asserts why revenue from petroleum-Nigeria's highest foreign exchange earner and the huge amount allotted to annual budgets end up in private pockets. The result of this finding corroborates the report of the

Transparency International [24] which ranked Nigeria 144th among 177 countries rated in Corruption Perceptions Index for 2013. Corruption in Nigeria and by extension in other African countries remains the most important cause of poverty and inequality. It threatens economic, environment and social development for which the MDGs sought to achieve. Corruption in Nigeria affects ethnic groups in different ways, often creating few privileged ones and large excluded masses. Worst still, not many administrations have shown the political will, commitment and the needed financial resources to fight corruption and develop proper law enforcement agencies in Nigeria, despite having the Economic Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC).

On the bright note however, the new administration which came into power on 29th of May, 2015 appears to be committed to fighting corruption and offers hope to reducing the wanton waste of the country's resources. It is however too early to evaluate that, the government's performance level

towards the achievement of the post-2015 development agenda encapsulated in the SDGs will provide appropriate benchmark.

Table 2. Causes of Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria

Causes of poverty and inequality	*Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Corruption, weak institutions and poor governance	342	93.96	1 st
Unemployment and underemployment	243	67.31	2 nd
High population growth	231	63.46	3 rd
Negligence and lack of political will	182	50.00	4 th
Poor economic growth performance and underdevelopment	176	48.35	5 th
Inadequacy or non-existence of social and welfare programmes	123	33.79	6 th
Low human capital development and inadequate education	116	31.87	7 th
Large families and high dependency ratio	118	32.42	8 th
Low technological capacity	109	30.00	9 th
Capital inadequacy	106	29.12	10 th
Environmental degradation, disaster and climate change	67	18.41	11 th
Debts	44	12.09	12 th
Migration-emigration and capital flight	28	07.70	13 th
Insecurity, insurgency and terrorism	27	07.42	14 th
Health and outbreak of diseases	19	05.22	15 th

*Multiple responses exist

Source: Computed from filed Survey, 2014

Evaluation of Nigeria' Potential for a Post-2015 Economic Development

Table 3 and 4 provide information on Nigeria's key economic indicators. Table 3 shows Nigeria Gross National Product (Current Prices) from 2010 to 2014 following a re-based GDP. Given an increasing percentage increase in the GDP, should it be sustained and the proceeds equitably distributed within the economy. The growth may bring about economic development. More also, a more consolidated oil sector and transparency will make more funds available for development project given that, the government is keen on blocking loopholes for

siphoning the nations' oil wealth. For instance, Nigeria sold about 4 billion barrels of crude oil at an average rate of 1.5 million barrels per day from 2004 and 2010. The oil sale would have given the nation over ₦30 trillion, if one dollar exchanged for ₦120 and a barrel was sold for \$70 [20]. Nevertheless, this oil wealth and many others have not really impacted on the economy to reducing poverty level and inequality, since they were grossly mismanaged on projects that did not have add to the quality of life of the citizens while significant proportions of the oil wealth ended up in privates pocket.

Table 3. Nigeria Gross National Product (Current Prices)

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013
	Million Naira (Million US\$)			
Previous	33,984,754.13 (\$226,112.80)	37,409,860.94 (\$241,759.47)	40,544,099.94 (\$258,555.58)	42,396,765.71 (\$269,515.22)
New (re-estimates)	54,612,264.18 (\$363,355.05)	62,980,397.22 (\$407,007.86)	71,713,935.06 (\$457,330.12)	80,092,563.38 (\$509,146.50)
Percentage increase	60.70%	68.35%	76.88%	88.91%

Source: Nigeria Economic Report, World Bank, 2014

The diversification of the economy is being encouraged. This is giving impetus to either neglected sectors or sub-sectors of the economy. For instance, agriculture is being

revamped with the deployment of information and telecommunication technology to it to boost production, enhance electronic distribution of subsidised inputs directly to

farmers without a third party arrangement thereby removing the long-term established sharp practices of middle men. This is done through a national framers’ bio-data registration known as Growth Enhancement Scheme and the package called e-wallet

through the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. The population of Nigeria also provides for large market and investment opportunities for several business activities. The mines sector is full of untapped resources. The list is inexhaustible.

Table 4: Selected Economic Indicators

	2011	2012	2013	2014
GDP (%)	5.30	4.20	5.50	7.40
Inflation Rate (CPI Dec/Dec. %)	10.30	12.00	8.00	7.50
General Government Budget (% of GDP)	-1.30	-1.10	-2.40	0.50
Federal Government Budget Balance (% of GDP)	-1.60	-1.40	-1.00	-1.00
Fiscal Reserves (ECA/SWF) US \$b	4.60	8.60	3.00	6.00
Gross Monetary Reserve (\$b)	32.60	46.00	43.60	40.00
Nominal Exchange Rate (N/US \$b eop)	158.00	157.00	158.00	159.0
Sovereign Debts (% of GDP)	9.70	10.30	10.60	10.60
External	1.30	1.40	1.40	1.70
Domestic	8.40	8.90	9.20	8.90
Credit to Private Sector (% of GD)	1.50	15.00	14.00	16.00

Note: General Government Balance includes Federal, State, Local, Extra budget Funds, Fuel Subsidy, Net Change in ECA

*Projects

Note: Estimate as share of GDP use re-based GDP numbers

Source: Nigeria Economic Report, World Bank, 2014

Respondents’ level of satisfaction with the implementation of the MGDs

The study sought to analyse the level of satisfaction of Nigerians from their Government’s implementation of the MDGs. The result of the analysis is as reflected in Table 5.

Nigerian were not at all satisfied with level of Government performance on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. They were moderately satisfied with level of achievement in archiving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; and developing a global partnership for development. They were however slightly satisfied with the level of achievement on ensuring environmental sustainability. Overall, they were moderately satisfied with the level of achievement of the eight MDGs. The result of this findings which revealed that Nigerians were not at all satisfied with the level of achievement on MDG 1, is in consonance with [1] AfDB, OEC and UNDP report in its African Economic Outlook for 2014. The finding also justified many of the international development data and reports: [23, 34].

Table 5. Level of satisfaction with the implementation of MGDs

	Millennium Development Goals	Mean	Decision
MDG 1	Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Mean	Decision
MDG 2	Achieve universal primary education	1.34	Not at all satisfied
MDG 3	Promote gender equality and empower Women	2.56	Moderately satisfied
MDG 4	Reduce child mortality	3.43	Moderately satisfied
MDG 5	Improve maternal health		
MDG 6	Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other Diseases	3.31	Moderately satisfied
MDG 7	Ensure environmental sustainability	2.44	Slightly satisfied
MDG 8	Develop a global Partnership for Development	3.39	Moderately satisfied
MDGs’ Grand mean		2.68	Moderately satisfied

Source: Computed from field survey, 2015

They have all rated Nigeria low at efforts aimed at eradicating poverty despite Government’s posting of high growth rates. In

essence, it means that the growth rates have not translated into meaningful impacts in reducing poverty and preventing inequality.

Respondents’ level of desirability for the SDGs

The study measured and analysed the level of desirability for implementation of the first 10 SDGs bordering on poverty and inequality as reflected in Table 6. Seven (7) of the SDGs were very desirable by the respondents. These SDGs included ending poverty in all its ramifications and ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. These SDGs 1 and 2 received the highest mean of 4.96.

Table 6. Desirability for implementation of SDGs by Nigerians

	Sustainable Development Goals	Mean	Decision
SDG 1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	4.96	Very desirable
SDG 2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	4.96	Very desirable
SDG 3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	4.89	Very desirable
SDG 4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	4.43	Desirable
SDG 5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	4.42	Desirable
SDG 6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	4.86	Very desirable
SDG 7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	4.88	Very desirable
SDG 8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	4.89	Very desirable
SDG 9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and “foster innovation	4.24	Desirable
SDG 10	Reduce inequality within and among countries	4.78	
Grand Mean		4.73	Very desirable

Source: Computed from field survey, 2015

The three remaining SDGs were desirable by the respondents. These SDGs include SDG 4

–ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. SDG 5-achieving gender equality and empowering women and girl. Holistically, the respondents were very desirable of the SDGs, given a response grand mean of 4.73.

CONCLUSIONS

On a final note therefore, the study has done a trend analysis in poverty level in Nigeria from 1980-2014, examined the causes of poverty and inequality in Nigeria, evaluated Nigeria’s potentials for a post-2015 development agenda, evaluated the level of satisfaction with the implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as the desirability level for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The study found that poverty and inequality are still endemic in Nigeria. For Nigeria to tackle the issues of poverty and inequality therefore, corruption, weak institution and poor governance must be given priority by government and stakeholders. Strong political will, resources allocation to and empowerment of law enforcement and anti-corruption agencies are most needed. Also government must create new jobs and make the underemployed more comfortable with more incentives to tackle unemployment and underemployment. While Nigerians are very desirable to see their government implement the SDGs, they rated government low with the implementation of the MDGs. For a post-2015 development agenda however, Government is got to be more proactive, committed and result-oriented so that that citizenry can be free from poverty and inequality while strongly achieving the SDGs to ensure the much targeted development.

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