National Development and Milleniun Development Goals

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Abstract: Development depends upon the successful interaction of the material resources of a given geographical area with the human resources in the area. In September 2000, building upon a decade of major United Nations Conferences and summits, world leaders came together at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Declaration committed nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and set out a series of time-bound targets – with deadline of 2015- that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs established measurable, universally-agreed objectives for eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, preventing deadly but treatable diseases and expanding educational opportunities to all children, among other development imperatives. The concerted efforts of national governments, the international community, civil society and the private have helped expand hope and opportunity for people around the world. Fifteen (15) years after these world leaders committed to the new global partnership to reduce poverty, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have made a significant difference. The MDGs drove progress in several important areas: Access to improved sources of water, Primary school enrollment and Child mortality. This paper presents ways the MDGs have rallied the world around a common 15-year agenda to tackle the indignity of poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals for National development. The paper will also look at the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda comprises 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Global Goals, which will guide policy and funding for the next 15 years, beginning with a historic pledge to end poverty, permanently, everywhere. The SDGs replace the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The new development agenda applies to all countries, promotes peaceful and inclusive societies, creates better jobs and tackles the environmental challenges of time- particularly climate change. The Sustainable Development Goals aim at finishing the job that the Millennium Development Goals started and leave no one behind. Keywords: National development, Millennium development goal and Poverty

Key words: Millenium • National developments • Education and leaders

INTRODUCTION

National development can be seen as the sustainable improvement in both material and spiritual life of a nation and which must be realizable in ways consistent with the protection of human dignity. Governments draw up national development plans and policies based on the perceived needs of their citizens. Many of these needs include an emphasis on reducing poverty, affordable and available housing and community development. This is because the goal of all national development is to improve the lives of the citizens in question within the context of a growing economy and an emphasis on the good of the community as a whole.

The first step to national development should be therefore be the human mind which is the main producer and sustainer of the physical referents often equated with national development [1]. National development is a process of human civilization; hence the human person must take the main focus.

In the past, governments typically served the citizens of their own nations, but now, the world is much more globally connected, which means politics often times takes place in a globally connected setting. Today, the concerted efforts of national governments, the international community, civil society and the private have helped expand hope and opportunity for people around the world.
The millennium development goals (MDGs) is a set of eight point agenda adopted by 149 world leaders on how to stem the problem of poverty and its attendant horror in the least developed countries (LDCs) of the world. The decision to formulate a long term poverty reduction strategy was reached during the United Nations Millennium summit held in September 2000, in line with the International Development Targets (IDTs) which aims at improving economic well being, social and human development and ensuring environmental sustainability and regeneration [2].

In this study, it is observed that the development of any society is the inter-play between man and his environment. This interplay that ensures self discovery plays a major role in energizing, conscientizing, motivating and mobilizing the people towards a common goal. The beginning and the end of national development therefore is that a nation develops in a way that is consistent with the promotion of human dignity in a way the human person is not undervalued.

**Defining National Development:** The term national development is very fashionable in the so called developing nations and all government claims to be working towards it, some, as yet undefined ideal of national development. It would however be said that national development means progress, in the sense that a political entity (like a nation state) strive to improve the state or quality of human welfare by gradually moving towards a more optimum condition of living for its citizens. Development means providing qualitative improvement in the lives of the people or providing greater quality of life for humans. Development is a concept usually associated with living entities. As a living entity, a nation naturally desires to grow and develop [2].

Development in a nation’s economic, political, social and technological and other sectors, all things being equal, would translate to high standard of living for its people. The people’s potentials are better harnessed for further development while such a nation would likely earn a place among respectable comity of nations.

To better understand this derivative word ‘National Development’ therefore, each component is given some definitions to help us better. What do we then mean by national and development.

The term national draws its meaning from the Latin word ‘natus’ which has to do with nation and also French word ‘nacion’ meaning to be born. A nation is therefore a historically born community of people. The term has various definitions amongst political theorists. We want to adopt Ruper Emerson’s definition as contained in his From Empire to Nation States that:

The nation is a community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and that they have a destiny for the future.

From the definition given above, national involves or is an activity that affects the nation, a people of common heritage, as a whole, of all and not a part.

Development on its part is derived from the word develop which is lexically described in the BBC English dictionary as something which grows or changes over a period of time into a better, more advanced or more complete form. Development also means “the act or process of bringing to a more advanced state, growth or progress; or progressed state or form” (sustainable development).

Being that development is about growth and change to a better mode, we will want to adopt Efermin’s analysis of development as the quantitative and qualitative improvement in the material, emotional or spiritual conditions of human existence which must be sustainable and realizable in ways that are consistent with the protection of human dignity. This simply means that we cannot claim to have development when the growth, the improvement is not of man, when it is not sustainable and when it is not realizable in ways that are consistent with the protection of human dignity [3]. The absence of any one component of this analysis renders development claim in human environment bankrupt.

There are different forms of development which include: social, political, economic, educational, environmental, cultural, green development and so on. So development can also be described as: material progress or economic growth or reformation of social institutions and infrastructures.

The primary objective of all types of development is to promote authentic human development. Catherine Walsh agrees to this by stating that development has recently shifted from economic progress towards a more humanistic view focused on the individual and the quality of life, which is often referred to as “integral and sustainable human development”(n. page). This focuses on the inter-connectedness of economics with political, socio-cultural and environmental spheres, as well as the necessities, capacities and potentialities of human beings.

At this juncture it is important to distinguish between simple development and international development.
Simple development refers to short term fixes which are meant to alleviate some problems associated with lack of development. This could be on a national level (such as a government plan for solving the problem of rice shortage or fuel scarcity) or on international level- such as disaster relief or humanitarian aid.

On the other hand, international development is global and is composed of institutions and policies that arose after the Second World War, which focus on alleviating poverty and improving living conditions in Third world decolonized. It is related to the concept of ‘International Aid’. International development seeks to implement long-term solutions to problems by helping developing countries create the capacity needed to provide such sustainable solutions to their problems.

International development centers on human development. It adopts the process of exploring opportunities for public-private partnerships and promotes the idea of corporate social responsibility with the apparent aim of integrating international development with the process of economic globalization. Hence, such international institutions as IMF and the World Bank, followed by ILO, UNICEF and more recently UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) and other numerous UN bodies, saddle themselves with the responsibility of providing aid to co-operating countries on areas such as poverty reduction, healthcare services, human rights protection, environmental sustainability, education, disaster preparedness, etc, all summed up in the eight Millennial Development Goals. (International Development).

Sustainable development is defined by the Brundtland commission as “a development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (n.page). The United nations 2005 World summit outcome document refers to the interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development as economic development, social development and environmental development. Another dimension was added to it by UNESCO which is cultural development.

A sustainable approach to development is therefore one which takes account of economic, social and environmental factors to produce projects and programmes which will have results which are not dependent on finite resources. Something which is sustainable will not use more natural resources than the local environment can supply, or more financial resources than the local community and markets can sustain and will have necessary support from the community, government and other stakeholders to carry on indefinitely (Sustainable Dev.)

Sustainable development could as well be otherwise called equitable and balanced. This means that in order for development to continue indefinitely it should balance the interest of different groups of people, within the same generation and among generations too.

We can see from the above explanations that sustainable development share the same meaning with international development. Both center on human development which permits the increase in capacities and continuance or sustainability in the future.

National development is therefore the general improvement in the level of individual, groups and environment and like we said before national development can be seen as the sustainable improvement in both material and spiritual life of a nation and which must be realizable in ways consistent with the protection of human dignity. It is in line therefore to instance the combination and the highlighting of economic, social, political and technological observable indices like reduction of the level of absolute poverty, improvement in literacy, health services, housing condition and political consciousness of the people, etc when some scholars want to talk about national development. The people’s potentials are better harnessed for further development, while such a nation would likely earn a place among respectable comity of nations.

Izuwah (1997), [4], opines that national development: “Refers to the balanced, comprehensive and progressive growth of a nation in terms of desirable quantitative and qualitative indicators like life expectancy, representing long healthy life, educational attainment-representing knowledge, skills, values, etc.GDP. (Gross Domestic Product) in purchasing power-representing decent standard of living”

When development occurs, new materials and products are manufactured while new roles become possible for the individuals of that given area. Development is therefore dynamic in character, involving change or growth. Such a change may require the application of science and technology, research finding, innovative thinking, experimentation and a lot of intellectual efforts and technical knowhow conceded by the human agents of change in the development process. Therefore, national development is resource demanding, in the sense that there can be no development output without resource input. The resource input to
development as opined by Usman and Ossai (2012), [5], consist of -Natural resources; that is all non-human commodities (minerals, hydro-electric power, land, forest, etc) that can be exploited and used in industries, etc.

The human resource serving as ‘manpower’ or agent of change in that it is the manpower that initiates and under takes development project involving the exploitation of natural resource of the transformation of raw material into finished consumable products.

Continuing, Usman and Ossai said that national development in a nutshell, can be viewed essentially as the nation’s human resources acting on its natural resources to produce goods necessary to satisfy the economic needs of the community. They opined that it is not sufficient to have both human and natural resources for development to take place. The quantity (numbers) and quality (level of education and training) of the human resources are crucial factors in the development since only well motivated and skilled manpower can effectively initiate and effect action to satisfy the manpower development needs of the nation.

The main ingredients of national development is therefore in the type of character of individuals involved in the nation such that a nation develops with the presence of a majority of citizens of good character and enlightenment which will make available the observable indices of national development in such a manner that it will be sustainable and realizable. This is because development depends upon the successful interaction of the material resources of a given geographical area with the human resources available in the area. In line with this, Omoriegbe noted in his Knowing Philosophy that “to talk of national development is to talk primarily of the development of the human person”.

Also, Ake speaks of development as “the process of social transformation in which the people themselves are in charge of the process”. Development in social value, in the worth of man is quintessential to national development. One can easily get this picture clearly in the words of Martin Luther King Jnr. when he said:

The prosperity of a country depends not on the abundance of its revenue nor on the strength of its fortification, not on the beauty of its public building but it consists in the number of cultivated citizens, its men of character and enlightenment.

Also supporting this notion is the 1995 UNDP Human Development Report (1995), which states:

The real wealth of a nation is its people both woman and man….. and human development is the process of enlarging people’s choices…..not just income. Thus, national development as opined by Efika and Okeogu (2001), [6], “Should focus on the people’s growth in all aspects of a nation’s life: its philosophies, its objectives, its educational goals should focus on the people”.

**Millennium Development Goals:** The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight goals with measurable targets and clear deadlines for improving the lives of the world’s poorest people [7]. To meet these goals and eradicate poverty, leaders of 189 countries signed the historic millennium declaration at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. At that time, eight goals that range from providing universal primary education to avoiding child and maternal mortality were set with a target achievement date of 2015.

The outcome of the United Nations Millennium summit was a declaration committing all member states to strive and achieve the following millennium Development Goals by 2015:

1. **Goal 1:** Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
2. **Goal 2:** Achieve universal basic education.
3. **Goal 3:** Promote gender equality and empower women.
4. **Goal 4:** Reduce child mortality.
5. **Goal 5:** Improve maternal health.
6. **Goal 6:** Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
7. **Goal 7:** Ensure environmental sustainability.
8. **Goal 8:** develop global partnership for development.

The Millennium Development Goals all have specific targets and indicators and are inter-dependent; all the Millennium Development Goals influence health and health influences all the Millennium Development Goals. For example, better health enables children to learn and adults to earn. Gender equality is essential to the achievement of better health. Reducing poverty, hunger and environmental degradation positively influences, but also depends on better health. And as the United Nations Secretary-General rightly said as he kicked off a headquarters event on empowering youth through employment “when young people have decent jobs, political weight, negotiating muscle and real influence in the world, they will create a better future”. Recent developments like sustainable economic growth, improvements in planning and policy and growing government investment in the social sector are accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [8].
The Millennium Development Goals: Progress Recorded and Challenges: The world has made significant progress in achieving many of the Millennium Development Goals. Real achievements have been made in the world’s effort to eradicate extreme poverty since the Millennium Development Goals were adopted in 2000. Within the Millennium Development Goals era, the average overall incomes increased by approximately 21 percent. The number of people in extreme poverty declined by an estimated 130 million, child mortality rate fell from 103 deaths per 1,000 live births a year to 88, life expectancy rose from 63 years to nearly 65 years, an additional 8 percent of the developing world’s people received access to water and an additional 15 percent acquired access to improved sanitation services.

Therefore, for every Millennium Development Goal there is a positive story to be told. Although there are large variations across and within countries, more children are surviving to their fifth birthday. More of them are starting school and more are sufficiently nourished to be able to pay attention and learn. Their mothers have far less fear about giving birth and can be almost certain that their children will not succumb to polio [9]. Parents are becoming increasingly hopeful about the realization of the ambitions of their girls and boys. They have ever-increasing access to the technologies and opportunities that they need to earn income to support those they love. Also, many nations have turned the tide on HIV/AIDS, malaria and International debt.

Notwithstanding all these achievements challenges still remain. Progress has been far from uniform across the world or across the Goals. There are huge disparities across and within countries; poverty is greatest for rural areas, though urban poverty is also extensive, growing and underreported by traditional indicators. Many families still do not have access to safe water and sanitation. Many children who started primary school are still not completing their primary education. Even though more mothers and children are now surviving, avoidable deaths are still unacceptably common. And to these more effort is being made. This has given rise to the adoption and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

Sustainable Development Goals: As the Millennium Development Goals era comes to a conclusion with the end of 2015, 2016 ushers in the official launch of the bold and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by world leaders last September at the United Nations. The New Agenda calls on countries to begin efforts to achieve 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) over the next 15 years.

The history of the SDGs can be traced to 1972 when governments met under the auspices of the United Nations. Human and environmental conference, to consider the rights of the human family to a healthy and reproductive environment. It was not until 1983 that the United Nations agreed to create the world commission on Environment and Development as an independent body of the UN. In 1992 the first UN conference on environment and Development was held in Rio. It was here that the first agenda for Environment and Development was developed and adopted, also known as AGENDA 21. Twenty years later, a resolution, known as The Future we want was reached by member states. Among the key themes agreed on were poverty eradication, energy, water and sanitation, health and human settlement. Paragraph 246 of The Future We Want outcome document forms the link between The Rio+20 agreement and the Millennium Development Goals. “We recognize that the development of goals could also be useful for pursuing focused and coherent action on sustainable development. “The goals should address and incorporate in a balanced way all the three dimensions of sustainable development (environment, economics and society) and their inter-linkages. The development of these goals should not divert focus or effort from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals” paragraph 249 states that, “the process needs to be coordinated and coherent with the processes to consider the post-2015 development agenda”. Taken together, these two paragraphs paved the way to bring together the development agenda centered on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were officially established following the millennium summit of the United Nations in 2000 and the agreement under the Future We Want outcome document. The Rio+20 summit also agreed that the process of designing sustainable development goals, should be “action oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities” [10].

The MDGs were supposed to be achieved by 2015. A further process was needed to agree and develop development goals from 2015-2030. Discussion on the post-2015 frame work for international development began well in advance, with the United Nations System Task Team on post 2015 Development Agenda(12) releasing the first report known as Releasing The Future We Want (13). The report was the first attempt to achieve the requirements under paragraph 246 and 249 of the Future
We Want Outcome Document. It identified four dimensions as part of a global vision for sustainable development. Inclusive Social Development, Environmental Sustainability, Inclusive Economic Development and Peace and Security. Other processes included the UN Secretary General’s High Level Panel on post 2015 Development Agenda whose report was submitted to the Secretary General in 2013.

The goals aim to enhance North- South and South-South Cooperation by supporting national plans to achieve all the targets. Promoting international trade and helping developing countries increase their exports is all part of achieving a universal rules-based and equitable trading system that is fair and open and benefits all [10].

Strengthening global solidarity is one of 17 Global Goals that make up the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. An integrated approach is crucial for progress across the multiple goals. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are: SDG 1- No poverty

SDG 2-Zero hunger
SDG 3-Good health and well-being
SDG 4-Quality education
SDG 5-Gender equality
SDG 6-Clean water and sanitation
SDG 7-Affordable and clean energy
SDG 8-Decent work and economic growth
SDG 9-Industry, innovation, infrastructure
SDG 10-Reduced inequalities
SDG 11- Sustainable cities and communities
SDG12-Responsible consumption, production
SDG 13-Climate action
SDG 14- Life below water
SDG 15-Life on land
SDG 16-Peace, justice and strong institutions
SDG 17-Partnerships for the goals

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has this to say about the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals “The Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals are our shared vision of humanity and a social contract between the world’s leaders and the people”. They are a to-do list for people and planet and a blueprint for success”.

CONCLUSION

We have been able to establish that national development refers to the ability of a nation to improve the lives of its citizens. Measures of improvement may be material, such as an increase in the gross domestic product, or social, such as literacy rates and availability of health care. Now, the world today is more interconnected than ever before. Improving access to technology and knowledge is an important way to share ideas and foster innovation. Coordinating policies to help developing countries manage their debt, as well as promoting investment for the least developed is vital to achieve sustainable growth and development.

In a world where links between countries are greater and faster than ever, disasters that once might have had only local effects now increasingly have international ramifications. Stronger partnerships are therefore needed to take sustainable development further “if you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together”. This old African proverb supports the great need for the world to come together and plan better for the implementation of the new sustainable development. Hence governmental action takes place on a global level, where responsibilities such as the welfare of citizens and economic growth, are acted upon by an international political body.

We also noted that the MDGs drove progress in several important areas: the 15-year effort has produced the most successful anti-poverty movement in history, access to improved sources of water, primary school enrolment and child mortality. And as the UN SECRETARY- GENERAL, BAN KI-MOON says “2015 is a milestone year, we will complete the Millennium Development Goals. We are forging a bold vision for sustainable development, including a set of sustainable development goals. And we are aiming for a new, universal climate agreement”.

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