

OVERVIEW OF MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) IN NIGERIA: TRENDS, ISSUES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND POLICY OPTIONS

O.O. Olayiwola

Research Fellow, Department of Economics Policy Unit,
Development Policy Centre (DPC), Nigeria
Email: olubodun_2008@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Nigeria is currently grappling with numerous governance challenges where cabalism and the lifestyles of the nation's elites are undermining its long term goals of poverty alleviation. Government reforms to strengthen participatory governance structures. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks in the country and increased civil society actions in the area of advocacy and public enlightenment are regarded as important prerequisites for sustainable poverty reduction in the country.

Keywords: Millennium Development Goals, Trends, Implementation, policy options, and Nigeria.

Trends Status Information

Since the return of democratic rule to Nigeria in 1999, the nation has been experiencing a consistent increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of its economy. According to the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN (2009), GDP refers to the financial value of all goods and services produced within the economy in one year, including agriculture, industry, building and construction, wholesale and retail trade, services such as transport, communication, utilities, hotel and restaurant, finance and insurance, real estate and business services, producers of government services, community, social and personnel services. The Nominal Economic Growth Rate of the country, reflecting the absolute changes in the Total GDP at Current Basic Prices, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Total GDP of the country is as follows:

- Between 1999 and 2000, it increased by 44% ;
- Between 2000 and 2001, it increased by 3%;
- Between 2001 and 2002, it increased by 46%;
- Between 2002 and 2003, it increased by 23%;
- Between 2003 and 2004, it increased by 35%;
- Between 2004 and 2005, it increased by 28%;
- Between 2005 and 2006, it increased by 27%;

- Between 2006 and 2007, it increased by 11%;
- Between 2007 and 2008, it increased by 18% ;
- Between 2008 and 2009, it increased by 2%;
- Between 2009 and 2010, it increased by 18% ;
- And between 2010 and 2011, it increased by 29%.

The percentages just mentioned reflect the absolute changes in GDP during successive years from 2000 to 2011 and are quite different from the 'Real GDP Growth Rate' which adjusts the Nominal Economic Growth Rate for inflation. In spite of this impressive trend and according to the National Bureau of Statistics, NBS(2012), the proportion of Nigeria's population living in extreme poverty changed as follows:

- Between 1999 and 2000, it increased by 7.74%;
- Between 2000 and 2001 it fell by 11.78%;
- Between 2001 and 2002, it increased by 10.33%;
- Between 2002 and 2003 it increased by 1.17% ;
- Between 2003 and 2004, it increased by 0.2%;
- Between 2004 and 2005, it fell by 1.34%;
- Between 2005 and 2006, it increased by 4.12%;
- Between 2006 and 2007, it increased by 1.25%;
- Between 2007 and 2008, it increased by 1.63%;
- Between 2008 and 2009, it increased by 1.74%;
- Between 2009 and 2010, it fell by 0.72% ;
- Between 2010 and 2011, it increased by 2.72%.

According to the Statistician-General of the National Bureau of Statistics(2012), households in Nigeria with less than one-third of the Total Household per capita expenditure, at the time of the survey on goods and services to maintain a minimal standard of living such as food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, etc are core or extremely poor at the time of measurement. This, according to him is part of the relative poverty measurement method and is Nigeria's official measure of poverty. The purpose of this paper is to identify and explain the causes of economic growth in the country without a commensurate reduction in poverty within the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), assess Nigeria's progress in MDGs attainment since 2000 and proffer practical solutions to move MDGs attainment in the country forward.

Why Focus on the MDGs?

Nigeria is among the member nations of the United Nations (UN) that signed and ratified the MDGs in the year 2000 at the UN General Assembly in New York. The MDGs are ambitious, time-bound goals, objectives and targets, specified as follows to:

Eradicate Poverty and Hunger through

- Halving the relatively poor population;
- Halving the number of hungry people;

Achieve Universal Primary Education with

- All boys and girls enabled to complete primary school;
- Achieve Gender Equality at all levels of education;

Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

- Boys and Girls to have equal access to all levels of education;
- Empower women to reduce poverty, hunger, disease and promote
- Sustainable development;

Reduce Child Mortality and;

- Reduce under-5 mortality by two-thirds;
- Provide special assistance to children orphaned by HIV/AIDS;

Improve Maternal Health and;

- Reduce Maternal Mortality by three-quarters;

Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases

- Halt and reverse HIV/AIDS, Malaria spread and other major diseases

Ensure Environmental Sustainability with

- Sustainable management of the world's biodiversity, forests and water resources;
- Implement Kyoto Protocol(1997) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Halve the population without access to safe drinking water;
- Improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020;

Develop Global Partnerships for Development;

- To provide debt-relief, development and technical assistance to committed developing countries;
- To develop partnerships with the private sector and civil society to promote development.

The relevance of the MDGs in the international community comes against the backdrop of the ongoing debate in the U.N. about a post 2015 international development framework that the U.N. is expected to ratify after the timeline of the MDGs lapses in 2015. Nigeria, being a member of the U.N., is actively contributing to the discourse that will shape this framework, as exemplified in the organization of a 'National Stakeholders' Consultative Forum on Post 2015 Development Agenda' by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Millennium Development Goals (OSSAP-MDGs) at the State House, Presidential Villa,

Abuja between 31 May and 1 June 2012. The DPC actively participated in this forum. This proposed 2015 development framework is expected to articulate the development goals and targets that developing countries should achieve in order to continue to receive technical and financial assistance from developed countries. Interestingly, it comes against the backdrop of efforts of developed countries such as the United States of America, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Canada and Japan, etc to increase the market share of their goods and services in emerging developing countries such as Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, newly industrializing countries like Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc, as well as other developing countries in Africa, South America and Asia.

Although, the developed countries seek to achieve this objective by strengthening the capacity of developing countries to accelerate their development, thereby enlarging their markets for the products and services of the developed countries, it is important that Nigeria intensifies its own development efforts for the benefit of its own people. For the developed countries, this strategy is meant to absorb the shocks of the ongoing global financial crises, particularly the European Union, Eurozone debt crisis. In addition, accelerated development in developing countries is expected to reduce uncontrollably high emigration to developed countries from developing countries. Hence, the ability of Nigeria to continue to secure technical and financial assistance from international donors will depend to a large extent on the country's commitment and actual progress in attaining the MDGs. Although the MDGs are not exhaustive development targets, they reflect the more significant challenges that the country currently faces in terms of poverty reduction, improving the quality of primary education, achieving gender equality in the economy and polity of the nation, reducing child, maternal mortality, the prevalence of HIV and other diseases, improving the environment and developing global partnerships with the international community for development.

The Relationship between Economic Growth and Extreme Poverty in Nigeria (2000-2011)

To provide a more accurate and precise basis for analyzing the relationship between economic growth and extreme poverty levels in Nigeria, a 'Regression Analysis' was carried out using secondary data from the CBN(2010) on Nominal GDP at Current Basic Prices as the independent variable and the Proportion of Nigeria's Population living in Extreme Poverty, based on the measurement of the NBS (2000-2011). According to the Statistician-General of the NBS(2012), extreme poverty represents the proportion of the nation's population occupying the lowest segment of the population's income ladder and are the worst off in terms of access to food, shelter, clothing, and healthcare. The multi-dimensional nature of extreme poverty that tends to include the Governance, Economic, Social and Environmental aspects of development make it a suitable development indicator for the country. The Regression Model reveals to us the probability (also known as significance level) that the influence of GDP on extreme poverty levels in the country is based on chance. In other words, the lower the absolute value of the significance level, the lower the probability that this relationship is based on chance. The analysis was carried out using a Non-Linear Regression Software Programme. A risk or significance level of 1% was chosen because of the policy implications of the study and the possibility of its recommendations affecting millions of people in the country. In other words, a 1% probability that the influence of GDP on Extreme Poverty levels in Nigeria is based on chance was deemed an acceptable risk level for a study of this nature. The year 1999 was chosen as the reference

year, marking the resumption of democratic rule under the 4th republic of Nigeria, a year before Nigeria together with other U.N. members ratified the MDGs agreement.

Table 1. Secondary Database of GDP of Nigeria and Levels of Extreme Poverty in Nigeria (2000-2011)

Serial Number	Year	GDP of Nigeria at Current Basic Prices(Millions of Naira,N)	Proportion of Nigeria's Population Living in Extreme Poverty (%)
1	1999	3.194015	58.80
2	2000	4.582127	66.54
3	2001	4.725086	54.76
4	2002	6.912381	65.09
5	2003	8.487032	66.26
6	2004	11.41107	66.46
7	2005	14.57224	65.12
8	2006	18.56459	69.24
9	2007	20.65732	70.49
10	2008	24.29633	72.12
11	2009	24.79424	73.86
12	2010	29.20578	73.14
13	2011	37.54365	75.86
AVERAGE		17.14599	68.245
STANDARD DEVIATION		10.51758	5.60942

Source: NBS Zonal Office, Federal Secretariat, Agodi G.R.A, Ibadan (2012) NBS Headquarters, Abuja (2010)

The descriptive analysis of the database above shows that the average value of GDP between 2000 and 2011 is N17.14599 million. The GDP values for the country between 1999 and 2006 were lower than the average while the values for 2007 – 2011 were higher than the average, thereby confirming the steady improvement and increase in GDP in the country in recent years. The average value of extreme poverty levels in the country is 68.245%. The extreme poverty levels in the country between 1999 and 2005 were lower than this average while values between 2006 and 2011 were higher than the average, confirming the worsening of extreme poverty levels in the country in recent years. What is particularly worrisome is the extreme poverty level for the country in 2011 which stood at 75.86%, a little over three-quarters of the country's population! The differences in the values of GDP are larger than those of Extreme Poverty levels, as reflected in their corresponding standard deviation values. This suggests that extreme poverty levels in the country have not changed as much as GDP, although the absolute values of extreme poverty should give stakeholders cause for concern.

Table 2. Results of the Regression Analysis between GDP and Extreme Poverty Levels in Nigeria (2000-2011)

Independent Variable	Regression Coefficients (e)	Test of the significance of the regression coefficients (t-test)	Significance Levels	Coefficient of Determination (R square)
Total GDP	0.481646951	5.84	0.00011	0.7561

The regression results above show that the contribution of GDP to the explanation of the temporal variance in extreme poverty levels in Nigeria was 75.61%, accounting for a little over three-quarters of the variance. The significance level was 0.011%, well below the 1% benchmark for the study. This confirms that the contribution of GDP to the explanation of temporal variance in extreme poverty in the country is significant. The regression coefficient of 0.481646951 confirms a positive direct relationship between GDP and Extreme Poverty. In other words, an increase in GDP causes a corresponding increase in Extreme Poverty and vice-versa, which is amazing!

Causes of Rising Extreme Poverty in Nigeria

To better understand the causes of rising extreme poverty in Nigeria and give an insight into the drivers of Nigeria's GDP growth, I use elite theory, the concept of cabals by Albert(2012), and evidence based findings of the DPC from its partnerships with federal and state government institutions regarding the MDGs.

Elite Theory

According to the Wikipedia Encyclopaedia(2012), elite theory is a theory of the State which seeks to describe and explain the power relations in contemporary society. The theory states that a small minority making up the economic elite holds the most power and that power is independent of the State's democratic election process. This small minority, through several channels or instruments like corporations, political positions, family and kinship ties, relationships with other powerful individuals in the society, etc cause this small minority to exert significant power over the policy decisions of corporations and governments.

After a review of the Classical Elite Theorists such as Vilfre do Pareto, Gaetano Mosca, Robert Michels and Elite Theorists such as Wright Mills, Floyd Hunter, William Domhoff, James Burnham, Robert D. Putnam and Thoma R. Dye, I argue that some of the theoretical arguments of Gaetano Mosca best fit Nigeria's socio-political context. According to him, the sociological and personal characteristics of elites are strategic in understanding how they operate. Furthermore, he stated that elites are an organised minority and that the masses are an unorganised majority. The ruling class is composed of the ruling elite and the sub-elites and he divided the world into two groups: the ruling class and the class that is ruled. Mosca asserts that elites have intellectual, moral and material superiority that is highly esteemed and influential.

Understanding the Influence of Cabals on Rising Poverty in Nigeria

To better understand the characteristics of the ruling elite in Nigeria and their influence on extreme poverty, I reviewed the concept of 'Cabalism', provided by Professor Albert at a

NISER seminar early this year. In his paper 'The Securitized Elite: A Deconstruction of the Cabals in the Nigerian Political Economy', Professor Albert defined cabals as a shadowy, broad-based group of people involved in subversive activities that weaken and threaten the long-term stability of the state. The cabals are bound by sinister political interests, are extremely powerful politically and economically and operate in secret and constitute a highly securitized elite class. Professor Albert went on further to classify this cabal into four groups, namely:

1. **Internal, Benevolent Cabals** – They constitute the backbone of the government in power. Often times, they contribute to the campaign activities that brought the leaders to power and influence who gets political appointments, contracts and they threaten those who fail to yield to their demands. They are usually a part of the ruling government, occupying strategic and influential political posts.
2. **Internal Malevolent Cabals** – They are referred to as the 'Fifth Columnists' in the ruling government. They are regarded as the government's enemy because they felt cheated and are not happy with the positions the government has given to them in the political system. Hence, they focus on sabotaging and overtly undermining the political system to ultimately collapse the system and replace it with their agenda.
3. **External, Benevolent Cabals** – They usually do not occupy political positions within the government, unlike the Internal, Benevolent Cabals. They are business leaders, particularly in the lucrative oil industry who often contribute to the campaign funds of the government that came to power. In addition, they provide other support services like the 'insiders' within the political system. The ruling government usually compensates them with government contracts and allows them to circumvent the nation's laws and regulatory frameworks, thereby giving them an unfair economic advantage over other business leaders who do not have their 'Political Connections'.
4. **External, Malevolent Cabals** – They also constitute the enemy of the government in power and are engaged in subversive activities to bring down the government. Their activities include their sponsorship of militant and insurgent groups. They operate in very circumspect ways or by proxies, making it difficult for the ruling government to establish criminal charges against them.

Issues Relates To MDGs Implementation in Nigeria

Insufficient Transparency in the management of public funds

The recent reforms of government in making information about government business, the state of the economy and general information about the development status of the country are commendable, as such data are usually available on the website of most government agencies. For example, the secondary data from the CBN on GDP in the country that was used to calculate Nominal GDP was easily downloaded from the website of the CBN. However; there is scope for improving transparency in terms of releasing data on how much money the government actually releases for the development of projects, as such projects are being developed. Together with data on how much money was budgeted for these projects, the M&E of such projects will become more insightful to accurately determine sources of waste and inefficiency in the management of public funds for project development, thereby improving the quality of projects, service delivery to the public and enhanced productivity of

the citizens to strengthen their capacity to reduce poverty through the development of 'Wealth Creating' ventures.

Unrealistic Pricing of MDGs projects

The 2008 and 2009 M&E exercises of MDGs projects report in Oyo State revealed unrealistic pricing of some of the MDGs projects. For example, secondary data electronically from NMET showed that all MDGs handpump boreholes in Oyo State, under the Conditional Grants Scheme (CGS) were priced at N1,200,000.00 and N1,400,000.00 respectively. The investigation at the time from project gatekeepers and community leaders revealed that the average cost of developing a handpump borehole at the time was about N500,000! Hence, each of the boreholes was overpriced by N700,000 and N900,000 during years 2008 and 2009 respectively. According to the NBS(2012), 60.4% of the population of Oyo State did not have access to safe drinking water as at 2011! This is an example of wasted public funds that should have been used for investments in strategic community projects to alleviate poverty!

Another leader at the Opening Conference of the Society for Monitoring and Evaluation (SMEAN) on Tuesday, 25 October 2011, confirmed the prevalence of insufficient transparency and corruption in government as prime causes of retarded development in the country. According to him, Nigeria has lost the capacity to properly implement development projects over the past thirty years because corruption has eroded the capacity of Nigerian governments to provide public goods for the good of the people. Furthermore, he stated that budgets were simply paperwork that had no bearing on money released for projects. He also acknowledged government reforms to restore probity in the management of public funds through the creation of OSSAP-MDGs in 2005, the year the Paris Club of international creditors granted Nigeria \$18 billion in debt relief.

Practical Solutions to reduce Extreme Poverty in Nigeria

Training Workshops

The Initiative from the on-set deemed it necessary to impart general business rudiments into all project participants and provide them with in-depth operational knowledge and skills in their chosen enterprises. This was to enable them to create and manage viable enterprises, with the capacity to create jobs for others, hence contribute to poverty reduction in the city. Because of the high demand for loans by aspiring entrepreneurs in the city, the Board made it mandatory for all would-be beneficiaries of its programme to undertake the Board's training workshop before loans are granted. Since its inception, the Board has organised forty (40) Training Workshops for 6,411 participants in the areas such as Pineapple Production, Bee-keeping, Poultry, Cassava Production, Piggery Snailery, Aquaculture, Sericulture, All Seasons Vegetable Production, Motorcycle and Tricycle Transportation business, Maize, Agro-forestry, Food Processing and Programme Planning, IDIPR Co-operative Principles and Practices, Broiler Production, Fadama II Principles and Practice. The organisers of the training programme also showcased Ijebu-Ode's model of the Poverty Reduction Programme to 37 National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) Coordinators from the 36 States of Nigeria and Abuja. Micro-Credit Delivery for Market men and women in Business, Plantain production, etc.

In addition, organisers have designed 3 training workshops for nominees from the three divisional zones of Ogun State . This was sponsored by the Ogun State Government to enable other zones of the state to replicate the Board's prototype model.

Formation of Cooperative Societies

The IDIPR operates through Cooperative Societies and does not deal with individuals, as a matter of policy. It now has over 569 specialised IDIPR Cooperative Societies. The group methodology remains the cornerstone, cost-effective and sustainable strategy in the micro-finance programme of the Board.

Micro-Credit

In the area of micro-credit, the Board has since inception disbursed a total sum of ₦218,450,000.00 (\$ 1,456,333) as revolving loans to 6,268 beneficiaries. NAPEP loans to the board have since been increased to N45 million (\$296,053). The repayment period is now six months, thus enabling the Board to revolve the loan among numerous stakeholders. The amount of loan varies depending on the trade and capacity of the beneficiary and it ranges from N1,000 (\$7.0) to ₦50,000 (\$329) per beneficiary. The board has a very impressive recovery rate of about 99.5% and is very appreciative to the market women and men who are leaders in the cooperative groups for their sincerity of purpose in this regard. Group Pressure Methodology is being used to substitute collateral security that is often demanded by the Conventional Commercial Banks before any loan can be granted. The group method as canvassed by UNDP, Nigeria , to the Micro Finance Institution (MFI) as done in ASA, Bangladesh is the methodology being adopted by the board.

Enterprise Development Programme (EDPs)

This programme includes pineapple production, all season vegetable production, water melon production, potato production, cucumber production, piggery, aquaculture, honey-bee production, poultry production, etc.

Since inception, 1,671 stakeholders have benefited from a total loan of ₦177,971,936.00 (\$ 1,186,479) . In recognition of the outstanding performance of the board in this programme, the Food and Agricultural Organisation of United Nations (FAO/UN), under the co-ordination of Federal Ministry of Agricultural and Rural Development deployed two Chinese Technicians, free of charge, to the Board between years 2004-2006 . The deployment of the technicians provided another opportunity for the board to strengthen its capacity in the area of fish production and Crop farming.

Youth Information Programme

The Youth Information Programme provides for health counselling of youths, in-door games, information and business centre, training and other recreational activities.

Eriwe Farm Village

The board considers access to land and security of tenure as important prerequisites for poverty reduction initiatives to succeed. The 156 hectares of farmland acquired from the Ogun State Government where the board settled its farmers has witnessed accelerated growth and has continued to receive worldwide commendations including those of UN, FAO, etc. The Fish Farmers' Cooperative Societies operating at the Eriwe Farm Village have grown tremendously in assets building and productivity. The assets include: 67 fish concrete fish

tanks, 1,433 earthen (dugout) fish ponds, 346 boreholes, a smoking kiln, and several pumping machines. In addition, there is a modern feedmill, six modern poultry pens, fish hatchery, three piggery pens and hundreds of bee hives. The present value of the infrastructural assets at Eriwe is over N400, 000,000.00 (Four hundred million naira) (\$2,666,666).

With regard to production of fish in Eriwe Farm Village in Year 2011 alone, 1,024 metric tons of fish valued N503,911,800 (Three hundred and forty nine million eight hundred thousand naira only) was sold. In addition, 3,500 litres of honey (valued N5, 250,000.00 (Five million two hundred and fifty naira only) (\$35,000) was produced by the board's beekeepers cooperatives as at December, 2011.

Looking at the level of production in the board's aquaculture project professionally compared with the number of earthen ponds, there is a wide gap of under-utilization of capacities which the board values at an estimated one billion naira. This is because of insufficient funding of the project.

To promote probity and accountability in the management of the board's resources, the board holds Twelve (12) Annual General Meetings where Annual Reports and Audited Accounts are presented to its stakeholders/friends for approval. The board has Accounts for the Financial Years between years 2000 to 2011.

As a result of its success over the years, the IDIPR has received both national and international recognition for its activities. These include:

1. Dubai International Award and Best Practice Certificate by an Independent Technical Advisory Committee of the Municipality of Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and UN – Human Settlements Programme (HABITAT) - November, 2002. The award was placed on website <http://www.bestpractices.org/>.
2. Experience sharing in a workshop in Cairo , Egypt at the invitation of Netherlands Development Assistance Research Council (RAWOO) - April, 2002
3. Marking of the International Day on Poverty Eradication for the Year 2003 with the Board at a colourful ceremony by National Poverty Eradication Programme Management and some Members of the House of Representatives, Abuja on 17th October, 2002.
4. Mention in International Publications on the initiatives and experiences titled 'Africa's Experiments' by National Academy of Sciences of USA at 141st Annual Meeting in April 18, 2004.
5. Mention in International publication on the initiatives and experience titled "Economic Empowerment for Sustainable Development – The case of a Nigerian Poverty Reduction Project" at the International Conference Education for sustainable Development preparing for UN Decade, Portugal - May 2004.
6. Letters of commendation from the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, and the Ogun State Governor, Otunba Gbenga Daniel, for the "Best Practice" Organization to improve standard of living of resource-poor stakeholders - 20th July, 2006.

7. Mention in International Publication on the initiative and experiences titled “Tackling the African “Poverty Trap”: The Ijebu-Ode Experiment” in the proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the USA - October, 2007. (PNAS October, 2007) www.pnas.org.
8. Best Award as the Leading Grassroots Non-Governmental Organization on Poverty Eradication by the President and Commander-in-Chief, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Umaru Yar’Adua, GCFR - October, 2008
9. Experiments sharing on the solution to Global Food Crisis:-Perspective from Civil Society Organisations Country Dialogue and the CSO-RB2 Roundtable” at the World Bank Headquarters, Abuja - May 23rd 2008.
10. Governor’s Forum of Nigeria – March, 2010.

Policy Recommendations

In the light of the discussion above, I would like to suggest the following points for discussion:

1. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of government projects at all levels is a prerequisite for promoting good governance, improved service delivery of projects to enhance societal productivity for poverty reduction. Although the government, particularly at the Federal level is trying to strengthen its capacity to carry out M&E by outsourcing such jobs to competent private firms and civil societies, the scope of M&E should be expanded to cover all government agencies and should involve the consultants right from the beginning of the project design phase. In particular, civil societies should be involved in advocacy programmes to carry out needs assessments based on priority needs of local communities through channels of dialogue with community leaders. This will strengthen participatory governance structures at the grassroots and ensure local community of projects and raise the likelihood of community mobilising local assets to ensure their sustainable management;
2. As the government implements M&E and advocacy frameworks to strengthen its Participatory Governance structures, its focus should be to stimulate the development of ‘Social Capital’ in local communities, networks of trust and goodwill among the people to facilitate the mobilisation and accumulation of local assets like cash donations, building materials, labour, etc to support and augment the development of proposed public facilities in their communities. Such reforms will ensure local ownership, proper maintenance and sustainable management of such projects;
3. Governments should strengthen their political will and release data on public funds actually released for all projects budgeted and appropriated for to provide a basis for civil society organisations to track the efficiency with which such funds are being managed to promote transparency and accountability in the management of such projects;
4. Service Providers of public facilities should ensure that local socio-economic conditions, regarding the cost of raw materials, spare parts, local labour and other factors of project development dictate the cost of developing the projects and spatial

variance of similar projects developed in different communities should be reflected in such price databases;

5. Governments should re-examine the incentive structure of the economy and initiate reforms to make the cost of manufacturing goods and services significantly cheaper than importing and trading in such goods and services. If successful, the same cabals that are working against the long-term interests of the State will likely turn around and begin to make strategic investments to industrialise the country, thereby creating opportunities for job creation and sustainable poverty reduction in the long-run.

CONCLUSION

Since the return of democratic rule to Nigeria in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed a significant increase in the GDP of its economy without a commensurate reduction in extreme poverty levels in the country. The country is currently grappling with numerous governance challenges where cabalism and the lifestyles of the nation's elites are undermining its long term goals of poverty alleviation. Government reforms to strengthen participatory governance structures. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks in the country and increased civil society actions in the area of advocacy and public enlightenment are regarded as important prerequisites for sustainable poverty reduction in the country.

REFERENCES

1. Albert, I.O(2012) 'The Securitized Elite: A Deconstruction of the Cabals in Nigerian Political Economy', A paper delivered at the Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER) Research Seminar Series, NISER, U.I-Ojoo Road on June 12, 2012.
2. Central Bank of Nigeria(2009) 'Central Bank of Nigeria Statistical Bulletin 2009', Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Abuja, [www.cenbank.org/ OUT/2010/PUBLICATIONS/STATISTICAL BULLETUNS/2009/PartC/PartC.html](http://www.cenbank.org/OUT/2010/PUBLICATIONS/STATISTICAL%20BULLETUNS/2009/PartC/PartC.html).
3. Central Bank of Nigeria(2010): Annual Report Book on MDGs.
4. Ijebu-Ode Initiative on Poverty Reduction(2012) 'Progress Report of the Ijebu-Ode Initiative on Poverty Reduction (IDIPR)', Aafin Awujale, Awujale Street , P. O. Box 891 , Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State , Nigeria .
5. Kale, Y(2012) 'Press Briefing on Nigerian Poverty Profile', A Press Briefing by the Statistician-General of the Federation/Chief Executive Officer, National Bureau of Statistics, Dr. Yemi Kale held at the Conference Room, 5th Floor, NBS Headquarters, Central Business District, Abuja on Monday, 13th February, 2012, proshareng.com/news/16302.
6. Wikipedia (2012) 'Wikipedia–The Free Encyclopaedia', <http://en.wikipedia.org>.