

## **Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria, A Reality or a Mirage**

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**Abstract:** *There are different reform models that have been developed over the years both in developed and developing countries with the aim of achieving quality of life for all, based on the principle of social justice and equity. This has served as a potent tool over the years to improve the citizen health, reduce morbidity and mortality and enhance economic development of a nation. Millennium development goals is one of these reforms adopted by Nigeria government in year 2000, alongside with other world leaders with the aim of improving different sectors of the nation economic, in which the outcome result is expected to improve the quality of life of the masses. This has gulped so much resource from the nation's purse, therefore, here comes year 2015 a long awaited year for the achievement of the targets of MDGs, as a way of evaluating the reality of this target by September, 2015. It will be necessary at this point to assess and evaluate Nigeria's achievement over the years, this is essential because it will serve as an eye opener to areas of strength and weakness in implementation of beautiful policies and programmes within the nation, thereby ensuring excellent plans and implementation in future.*

**Keyword:** *Reality, Mirage, Millennium development Goals, Morbidity, Mortality*

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### **I. Introduction**

The collaborative effort of the world leaders over the years has always been directed towards ensuring equitable and fairness of care and services to all citizens with regards to freedom, basic standard of living including health, freedom from violence and so on. Nigerian, our leaders inclusive are innovative, full with good and bright ideas, good dreams and vision, the actualization of these have been a major challenge in the nation. The Alma Alta declaration of "Health for All" in September 12, 1978, was the first international declaration made by world leaders<sup>1</sup>. which is the bedrock for primary health care.

Likewise, fourteen years ago, another declaration was made with the aim of encouraging development by improving social and economic conditions in the world's poorest countries. In September, 2000 at United Nations (UN) New York, 189 world leaders made commitment to build more equitable, prosperous and safer world by 2015 and launched the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the commitment which was time bonded by 2015. It contained details of setting eight goals, targets and indicators for each<sup>2</sup>. Nigeria is one of the African countries who embraced this declaration as a medium to achieve more development that cuts across all sectors of life for its citizens. As part of efforts to help Nigeria achieve the MDGs, the World Bank in December 2004 undertook an assessment of Nigeria's financing needs and options for achieving the MDGs, the World Bank reduced the country debt to a manageable level<sup>3</sup>. This fund was channeled towards various programmes to achieve the targets set by MDGs for 2015 Under the Special Assistant to the president on MDGs.

The Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Health, Mr Linus Awute, at the pre-57th National Council on Health (NCH) meeting reported in leadership newspaper May 11, 2014, which involves all states commissioners for health and stakeholders in the sector. disclose the uncertainty of Nigeria meeting up the MDGs target at the end of 2015. Now, fourteen years has gone, it is but a short jump from attainment of the deadline set for achievement of these goals. What is the situation of realization of these goals in spite of financial resources committed to this course? Is this target now a reality or a mirage? Hence, answer to these questions will adequately assess the achievement over the years and serves as key determinant on the effectiveness of these declarations, evaluate the strength, weakness and outcome of the MDGs goals within the set time and as a guide to implementation of future plans/policies.

### **II. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) originated from the United Nations Millennium Summit Declaration. The declaration asserted that every individual has dignity, has the right to freedom, equity, and basic standard of living and that include freedom from hunger, violence and encourage tolerance and solidarity.

MDGs have eight international development goals that were established following the summit of United Nations in 2000, following the adoption of UN member state (there are 193 at present) and at least 23

international organizations, committed to help achieve the following MDGs by 2015. Each goal has a specific target and indicators for measurement. Otiye(2011), stated the goals as follows in his paper presentation on MDGs;

2.1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

- Target 1- Halve proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day
- Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

2.2 Achieve Universal Basic Education

- Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, child everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary school

2.3 Promote Gender equality

- Target 4- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015

2.4 Reduce Child Mortality

- Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate

2.5 To improve maternal health.

- Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio
- Target 7- Reduce by three quarters the proportion of women dying in childbirth

2.6 Combat AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

- Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
- Target 9: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases

2.7 Ensure environmental sustainability

- Target 10: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources
- Target 11: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water
- Target 12- By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers. Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources

2.8 Develop a Global Partnership for Development

- Target 13: Develop further an open, rule-based predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system including a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally.

MDGs emphasized three areas of focus which include human capital, Infrastructure and human right with intent of increasing living standard.

### **III. MDGs Global Achievement**

The world has made significant progress in achieving many of the goals. Asia was recognizing as the region with the fastest progress regarding MDGs achievement<sup>7</sup>. Globally, the following assessment has been made;

**3.1 To Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger:** According to United Nation Report on MDG in 2014 almost half of the population in developing regions lived less than \$1.25 per day, this story changed over time with the commencement of MDGs implementation and between 1990 and 2002, an average overall income increased by approximately 21% and the number of people in extreme poverty declined by an estimated 130 million has been recorded<sup>7</sup>. This rate dropped by 22 per cent by 2010, reducing the number of people in extreme poverty by 700 million<sup>8</sup>. The proportion of undernourished people in developing regions has decreased from 24% in 1990-1992 to 14% in 2011-2013.

**3.2 To Achieve Universal Primary Education;** Substantial gains have been made towards reaching gender parity in school enrollment at all level of education in all developing regions. The school enrollment rate in primary education in developing region increased from 83% to 90% between 2000 and 2012. By 2012, all developing regions have achieved or close to achieving gender parity in primary education<sup>8</sup>.

**3.3 To promote Gender Equality:** In January 2014, 46 countries boast of having more than 30 percent female members of parliament in at least one chamber. More women are now holding some of the so-called "hard" ministerial portfolios<sup>8</sup>

**3.4. To Reduce Child Mortality:** Child mortality fell from 103 deaths per 1000 live birth and life expectancy rose from 63 to nearly 65 yrs<sup>7</sup>. Globally, the number of death of children under 5 years fell from 12.7 million in 1990 to 6.3 million in 2013; this was supported by WHO and UN report that indicated that under five mortality rate declines by 50% & 49% respectively in 2014. More countries are now achieving high level of immunization coverage in 2013 66% member state reached at least 90% coverage, this has contributed to decline of underweight children under 5 yrs old which dropped from 28% in 1990 to 17% in 2013<sup>9</sup>. This rate of

progress is close to the rate required to meet the MDGs target, however improvement has been unequally distributed within regions. Despite this improvement, the world is unlikely to achieve the MDGs target of two third in 1990 mortality level by the year 2015<sup>9</sup>.

**3.5.** To Improve Maternal Health: The target was to reduce maternal mortality rate by three quarter and achieving universal access to reproductive health. Maternal mortality rate dropped from 523,000 in 1990 to 289,000 in 2013, looking at this rate of decline is less than half of what is required to achieve the MDG target. Worldwide almost 300,000 women died in 2013 from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth<sup>8</sup>. Maternal death is mostly preventable and much more needs to be done to provide care to pregnant women

**3.6.** To Combat HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other diseases: Universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDs for all those who need it has greatly improved. In 2013, an estimated 2.1 million people were newly infected with HIV/AIDs from 3- 4 million in 2001. By end of 2013 about 12.9 million people were receiving antiretroviral therapy globally of these 11.7 million lived in low and middle income countries representing 36% of the estimated 32.6 million people living with HIV in these countries, should current trend continue the target of 15 million people on ART by 2015 will be exceeded.

As reported in MDG Report 2014 by UNESA, fight against malaria between 2000 and 2012 as an estimated value of 3.3 million death rates from malaria was averted due to substantial expansion of malaria intervention. By 2013, malaria incidence and mortality rate of population at risk have both fallen globally, 30% and 47% respectively. Globally the MDGs target of halting by 2015 and beginning to reverse the incidence of malaria has already been met

The annual global number of new cases of Tuberculosis has been slowly falling for a decade thus achieving MDG target and treatment success rate have been sustained at high level since 2007 at or above the target of 86.5%

**3.7.** To Ensure Environmental Sustainability: In 2012, 89% of the population used an improved sources of drinking water compared with 76% in 1990, here, the world has now met the MDG target relating to access to safe drinking water.<sup>10</sup>

Basic sanitation as at 2012 indicated that 2.5 billion people did not have access to improved sanitation facilities with 1 billion of these people practicing open defecation thus current rate of progress is too slow for the MDGs target to be met globally.

**3.8.** To Develop Global Partnership and Development-Target is to incorporate with pharmaceutical companies to provide access to affordable essential medicine in developing countries. Survey undertaken from 2007 and 2013 showed the average availability of selected genetic medicine in 21 low and middle countries was only 55% in the public sector<sup>9</sup>

#### **IV. MDGs Situation In Nigeria**

While some countries have made impressive gain in achieving Millennium Development Goals, others are lagging behind. The situation of MDGs in Nigeria can be seen from three main sources: the Nigeria MDG report 2008, 2013 and recently in the Nigeria MDG report 2014 in UN Economic and Social Affairs.

**4.1** To Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger -Underweight children proportion has markedly reduced progressively from 35.7 % (1990) to 25.5% in 2014<sup>7</sup>. This is positive decrease by 6.9% in comparison with 27.40% in 2012 as a result economic growth experienced as at that time. However, the prevalence has not met up with the bench mark of MDG for this target which is expected to be 17.85%, and economic growth has not generated enough job and its effect on poverty is not yet clear and more than half i.e. 54% of Nigeria population are poor<sup>7</sup>.

MDGs: A performance review posted by Vintagesam.O in UNDP Newsletter April 2013 agreed that there was no progress regarding the target of MDG according to them 69% of the populace still live in abject poverty and the gap between the poor and the rich keeps widening, hence, 8 out of 10 Nigerians still live in poverty. Hence, this goal has not been achieved.

**4.2** To Achieve Universal Primary Education: Target is to ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary school. UNDP 2007 and MDG Report by UNDP 2013 asserted that the country has achieved at least 80.0% in all the three indicators, net enrollment both federal and state government are currently intensified with collaborative efforts to promote access to basic education. In 2014, the net attendance rate for primary school was 68.7% which represent 3.2% decrease from 71% recorded in 2012. Primary six completion rate was about 74% in 2014 which dropped by 15.6% compared to 2012 report. Therefore, there is a remarkable progress in this goal.

**4.3.** To promote Gender Equality: Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and Secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all level of education not later than 2015. A gradual improvement in the proportion of girl enrolment in primary schools, though noteworthy, is not yet enough to meet the target<sup>7</sup>. Average improvement has been made in gender parity in Nigeria for every 10 boys in school, there nine girls

and also female economic and political empowerment is also on the line. In 2014 the Gender parity has increased to 1.02%, thus Nigeria has achieved the target.

**4.4** To Reduce Child Mortality- Target -Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate. In Nigeria, less than five percent mortality rate has fallen over the years ranging from 157 per 1000 live birth in 2008 to the lowest in 2014 with estimate of 58 deaths per 1000 live birth according to National Bureau of Statistics in 2014. Also the target of 30.3% of Infant mortality rate lag behind 2015 target as the Infant Mortality decreased to 58 deaths per 1000 live birth in 2014. Measure in immunization was 63.1% in 2014. Hence, there is an average achievement regarding this goal.

**4.5** Improve Maternal Health-Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio and Proportion of births attended by skilled health personals. According to survey carried out in Nigeria in 2014 by National Bureau of statistics in respect of MDGs performance tracking, the proportion of women who die from pregnancy related problem, child birth and six weeks after delivery reduced to 243 death per 100,000 live birth as compared to 350 death per 100,000 live birth in 2013 against the target of 250 death per 100,000 live birth. Hence, this aspect of the goal has been achieved.

The proportion of skilled attendance at delivery increases by 9.3% in 2014 (62.9%) against the target of 100.0% of 2015 and Antenatal coverage of at least four times by any provider also increased to 60.0% from 57.40% in 2012, it shows that ANC influences decline in Maternal Mortality rate. Hence, a remarkable achievement has been made regarding this target.

**4.6** To Combat HIV/AIDs, Malaria and other diseases -Eradication of polio to 98% between 2009-2010 has witnessed an appreciable development. Fall in the prevalence of HIV among pregnant young women aged 15-24 from 5.8% in 2001 has declined to 4.10% in 2014 in fact the country has begun to reverse the spread<sup>8</sup>. This achievement can be strengthened by improving access to use of Anti-retroviral Therapy and Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission (PMTCT) among rural dwellers. On malaria there was a decline in the prevalence

**4.7** To Ensure Environmental Sustainability; Target- Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water. No progress has been made regarding this target, the recent survey by NBS in 2014 revealed that access to improved sources of potable water stood at 62.2% which is 14.8% less than MDG bench mark of 77%. On access to improved sanitation currently the level is 33.70%, this is significantly challenging against the 2015 target of 70.0%. This reveals that target has not been totally achieved though there is appreciable development.

**4.8** To Develop Global Partnership and Development-Debt relief negotiated in 2005 provided new opportunities for investment in the social sector. Official Development Assistance (ODA) per capital has doubled since early 2000s. However, the benefit of the debt relief has not been matched by increase in poverty rate because people saddled with the responsibility are not accountable to the masses.

## **V. Nigeria MDGS Achievement At A Glance**

There is no doubt that the world has made a remarkable achievement towards MDGs targets in 2015. Likewise, Nigeria has witness improved performance in some aspect of Millennium Development Goals though not as much as Southern Asia and Africa (excluding North Africa which was reported having the fastest progress in MDGs.<sup>10</sup>

Generally, the nation has made a remarkable achievement in goals relating to MDGS 2,3,5 and 6 while a double effort is required to achieve the target of other goals lagging behind achievement, this may not be visible by MDGs deadline this year.. Hence, it has been proposed to be in corporate to Post 2015 Development Agenda and Nigeria Vision 2020.

MDG S GOALS	HIGH	AVERAGE	LOW
1.Eradicateextremepovertyand hunger Target 1-Halve proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day	•	•	✓
Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	•	•	✓
2.Achieve Universal Basic Education Target 3: Ensure that, by2015, child everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary school	✓	•	•
3 Promote Gender equality Target 4- Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015	✓	•	•
4. Reduce Child Mortality Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	•	✓	•
5. To improve maternal health. Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	✓	•	•
Target 7-Reduce by three quarters the proportion of women dying in childbirth	✓	•	•
6.Combat AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	✓	•	•
Target 9: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and Other major diseases	✓	•	•
7. Ensure environmental sustainability Target 10: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programs and reverse the loss of environmental resources	•	•	✓
Target 11: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safedrinking water	•	•	✓
8. Develop a Global Partnership for Development	•	✓	•

## VI. Challenges Facing MDGS

The global financial crisis has had effect on Nigeria, mainly on the majorsource of revenue(Oil), the drying –up of credit and the weaker flow of private capital<sup>14</sup>. The crisis has underlined the need to accelerate diversification of the economy and strengthening fiscal management in contributing to the full reality of the MDG goals <sup>14</sup>. Also, the ongoing challenges on data availability, comparison and quality have made producing coherent story impossible.

Lack of skill and capacity to implement initiative and poor co-ordination between different tiers and arms of government with weak governance and accountability all contributed to slow or lack of progress in some aspects of the MDGs. Environment and data availability are not reliable or consistent.

## VII. The Plans Ahead

### 7.1 Post 2015 Agenda

Post 2015 Development Agenda is slated to carry out the work of the MDGs and integrate the social, Economic and environmental dimension of sustainable development <sup>10</sup>. United Nations Secretary General, who held a briefing on the synthesis report on Thursday 4 Dec 2014 at 10a.m that the United Nations is in the process of defining a post 2015 development agenda with the goal to drive five big transformation shift. Which are;

1. Level of no one Behind- After 2015, we should move from reducing to ending extreme poverty in all its form.We should ensure that no person regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, race or other status is denied basic economic opportunity and human right.
2. Put sustainable development at the core- We have to integrate the social, economic and environment dimension of sustainability, we must act now toslow the alarming pace of climate changes and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threat to humanity.
3. Transform Economic for Jobs and inclusive Growth-A profound economic transformation, extreme poverty and improve livelihood by harnessing innovation, technology and the potential of business.More diversified economies and equal opportunity for all.
4. Forge a New Global partnership- A new spirit of solidarity,co-operation and mutual accountability must underpin the post 2015 agenda. It should be centered on people including those affected by poverty and including women, youth, the aged, disabled person and indigenous people. It should include civil societies

organizations, multilateral institutions, local and national governments, the scientific and academic community business and private philanthropy<sup>15</sup>

## 7.2 Nigeria Vision 2020

This vision is intended to position Nigeria to become one of the top 20 economies in the world by 2020 with the following objective

- Stimulate Nigeria's economic growth and launch the country on to path of sustained and rapid socio-economic
- Place Nigeria in the bracket to top 20 largest economic of the world by the year 2020 able to achieve a GDP of not less than \$900 billion and per capital income of not less than \$4000/annum by the year 2020
- Development of sectoral strategies for the vision some ministries, Departments and Agencies
- Constitution and inauguration of the Business Support group intended to engender private sector support vision 2020, process by the National Steering Committees.

The success of the programme must be such that leads to the realization of the following key parameters set by the government.

**1. Macro: Economy:** A sound, stable and globally competitive economy with GDP of not less than \$900 billion and a per capital income of not less than \$4000 per annum.

**2. Agriculture:** A modern technologically enabled agricultural sector that fully exploits those vast agricultural resources of the country ensures national food security and contributes to foreign exchange earnings.

**3. Health:** A health sector that supports and sustains life expectancy of not less than 70 years and reduces to the barest minimum the burden of infectious and other debilitating diseases.

**4. Manufacturing:** A vibrant and globally competitive manufacturing sector that contributes significantly to GDP with a manufacturing value added of not less than 40%

**5. Infrastructure:** Adequate infrastructure services that support the full mobilization of all economic sectors.

**6. Education:** Modern and vibrant education system which provides the opportunity for maximum potential, adequate and competent manpower.

**7. Politics:** Peaceful, harmonious and a stable democracy

## VIII. Recommendation

Several of the indicators, has modest improvement from baseline while the Nation is still lagging behind in achievement of MDG 1 and 7. However, there is room for more improvement, mainstreaming achievement of MDG into Nigeria vision 2020 will ensure sustainability of success recorded in these areas. Likewise, budget should be post-2015 development agenda compliance through adequate government commitment and accountability. Economic growth needs to be one of the nation priority in order to create an enabling environment for creation of jobs both in public and private sectors.

Regarding health, access to primary health care need to be improved in conjunction with functional two-ways referral system. Strengthening the capacity of all government data gathering agencies at National and sub national levels is highly essential for proper monitoring of programmes set to achieve a set goal.

## IX. Conclusion

The MDGs has served as framework globally accepted by world leaders for delivering of government dividends, progress and development that cut across all sectors of life. Globally, there are challenges that prevent the full realization of these goals; therefore, Nigeria situation is not an exception. The reality of other MDGs that are lagging behind can be achieved through post 2015 Development Agenda and the Nigeria vision 2020 if policies that will promote governance transparency and accountability are formulated and implemented with equitable allocation of resources across all regions of the country. Nigeria has made a remarkable achievement in some parts of the MDGs goals, this is a pointer of our government ability/capacity to actualize a set goal, therefore if proper governance and accountability is given a priority, Nigeria will leave to show case the strength of African.

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