

THE CHALLENGE OF NIGERIA@ 50: CIVIL SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE

By

Otive Igbuzor, PhD

African Centre for Leadership, Strategy & Development
(Centre LSD), Suite 27, Second Floor, Tolse Plaza,
4, Franca Afegbua Crescent, Off Mariere Road,
Near Apo Legislative Quarters, Zone E, Apo,
P. O. Box 9661, Garki, Abuja, Nigeria.

**A PAPER PRESENTED AT THE INSTITUTE OF
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING HELD AT MONTY SUITES, CALABAR
FROM 6TH -8TH MAY, 2010.**

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is fifty years old having gained independence in 1960. Fifty years is a significant year in the life of any organisation or nation. It is the year of jubilee and it has symbolic and spiritual significance. It is therefore a good year to reflect on the challenges facing the nation.

Scholars are in agreement that every society has the capacity to develop and all societies strive for development. But the concept of development is a very controversial one. We have argued elsewhere that the definitions and interpretations of development are influenced by history, discipline, ideological orientation and training.ⁱ In this paper, we examine the challenges of development in Nigeria. But first, we explicate the concept of development.

WHAT IS DEVELOPMENT?

Although different scholars have different perspectives on development, most students and practitioners of development accept that it must mean progress of some kind.ⁱⁱ It is seen as a multi-dimensional process, one that changes the economy, polity and society of the countries in which it occurs. Amartya Sen sees development as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. According to her, development requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or overactivity of repressive states.ⁱⁱⁱ In this conceptualization, freedom is central to the process of development and the achievement of development is dependent on the free agency of the people. For the people to be agents of their own development require advancement in five distinct types of freedom namely political freedoms; economic facilities; social opportunities; transparency guarantees and protective security. In a similar vein, the Human Development report 2007/2008 stated that:

Human development is about people. It is about expanding people's real choices and the substantive freedoms-the capabilities- that enable them to lead lives that they value. Choice and freedom in human development mean something more than the absence of constraints. People whose lives are blighted by poverty, ill health or illiteracy are not in any meaningful sense free to lead the lives that they value. Neither are people who are denied the civil and political rights they need to influence decisions that affect their lives.^{iv}

According to Pat Utomi, development simply put is discipline. It is about how discipline drives the human spirit to triumph over odds of poverty trap, physical geography, fiscal trap, governance, cultural barriers, geopolitics, lack of innovation and demographic trap.^v

Kambhampati argues that development requires growth and structural change, some measure of distributive equity, modernization in social and cultural attitudes, a degree of political transformation and stability, an improvement in health and education so that population growth stabilizes, and an increase in urban living and employment.^{vi}

From the above, it is clear to us that even though there are different perspectives to development, there is a general consensus that development will lead to good change

manifested in increased capacity of people to have control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideology; and obtain physical necessities of life (food, clothing & shelter), employment, equality, participation in government, political and economic independence, adequate education, gender equality, sustainable development and peace.^{vii} However, the reality of the world today is that many countries are very poor and cannot meet their development needs. It has been documented that more than 1.2 billion people, one in every five on earth survive on less than US \$1 per day.^{viii} Wealth is concentrated in the hand of a few people while the majority wallows in abject poverty. The UNDP in its 1998 report documented that the three richest people in the world have assets that exceed the combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the 48 least developed countries. Similarly, the 1000 richest people in the world have personal wealth greater than 500 million people in the least developed countries.^{ix} Every minute of every day, somewhere in the developing world, a woman dies needlessly in childbirth or pregnancy, and 20 children are killed by avoidable diseases such as diarrhoea or malaria.^x Robert Chambers aptly captured it when he wrote:

I am so angry at what has been done, and continues to be done, in our world. It is hard to believe that the nightmare is real. We seem trapped in grotesquely unjust systems, more and more dominated by power, greed, delusion, denial, ignorance and stupidity, fuelled by symmetries of terrorism and fundamentalisms.^{xi}

In a similar vein, Amartya Sen pointed out that:

We live in a world of unprecedented opulence, of a kind that would have been hard even to imagine a century or two ago...And yet we also live in a world with remarkable deprivation, destitution and oppression. There are many new problems as well as old ones, including persistence of poverty and unfulfilled elementary needs, occurrence of famines and widespread hunger, violation of elementary political freedoms as well as of basic liberties, extensive neglect of the interests and agency of women, and worsening threats to our environment and to the sustainability of our economic and social lives.^{xii}

There is no doubt that the challenges of development are enormous. But in the last two decades, there has been a lot of discourse on what needs to be done to deal with the challenges. The UNDP has consistently argued that the Millennium Development Goals can be met if there is political will combined with good policy ideas which are then translated into nationally owned, nationally driven development strategies guided by good science, good economics and transparent accountable governance.^{xiii}

In our view, poverty which is the major challenge of development can be eradicated through three means. The first is to raise income through employment and support to citizens to engage in small scale business. Income poverty is probably the most crucial because it has impact on other forms of poverty. The second approach is to enhance the economic, social and political opportunities available to people to make them come out of poverty. This will involve knowledge improvement, entrepreneurial development, organisation of co-operatives and associations and movements of the poor and excluded. Finally is the conceptualisation and implementation of pro-poor policies and mitigation of effects of policy on the poor. Part of this will involve priority to education, health,

infrastructure and provision of social services, subsidies to the poor and excluded and implementation of comprehensive social protection measures.

CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

The development of Nigeria has posed a lot of challenges to development theorists, development practitioners, development partners, government officials and civil society organisations. **There has been a lot of argument that for progress to occur in Nigeria, there has to be a lot of changes especially in the economic, social and political spheres.**

Nigeria's economy is highly dependent on earnings from the sale of petroleum, which accounts for about 77 percent of government revenue and 85 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings. In 1960, agriculture accounted for 71 percent of the total export earnings in Nigeria. In the 1970s, there was astronomical increase from earnings from petroleum oil sources. But in the early 1980s, there was collapse of oil prices leading to macroeconomic imbalances, mounting external debt and adoption of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as prescribed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. The SAP led to increase in the gap between the rich and the poor and intensification of poverty. The incidence of poverty measured with the international standard of income of one US dollar per day increased from 28.1 percent in 1980 to 46.3 percent in 1986 and to 65.6 percent in 1996. Though disputable, recent survey suggests that the poverty rate has decreased to 54.4 percent in 2004. In any case, even with the reported decrease in the poverty incidence from 65.6 percent in 1996 to 54.4 percent in 2004, the absolute number of poor people increased from 67 million to 69 million people. It has been argued that what is required is structural change of the economy. The economy can be looked at as passing through three stages of production: primary production concerned with the extraction of raw materials; secondary production concerned with industrial production and tertiary production concerned with provision of services.

Right from the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigeria in 1914 up till the 1960s, Nigeria was primarily engaged in primary production of agricultural products. The 1970s saw the ascendancy of oil as a major source of revenue with a decline in agricultural production leading to a monocultural economy. As a result of oil, Nigeria became a resource rich country. It is important to note that across the world, resource-rich countries have performed worse than those with smaller endowments leading to phenomenon that scholars now refer to as resource curse.

It has been documented across the world that resource-rich countries have performed worse than those with smaller endowments leading to phenomenon that scholars now refer to as resource curse:

Countries that depend on oil for their livelihood are among the most economically troubled, the most authoritarian, and the most conflict-ridden in the world. The consequences of development based on the export

of petroleum have tended to be negative during the past 40 years. Detrimental effects include slower-than-expected economic growth, poor economic diversification, dismal social welfare indicators, high levels of poverty and inequality, devastating environmental impacts at the local level, rampant corruption, exceptionally poor governance, and high incidences of conflict and war.

When compared to countries dependent on the export of agricultural commodities, mineral and oil exporting countries suffer from unusually high poverty, poor health care, widespread malnutrition, high rates of child mortality, low life expectancy, and poor educational performance—all of which are surprising findings given the revenue streams of resource-rich countries.

Due to the highly volatile nature of oil markets, oil exporting nations often fall victim to sudden declines in their per capita income and growth collapses of huge proportions. The statistics are startling: In Saudi Arabia, whose proven crude oil reserves are the greatest in the world, per capita income has plunged from \$28,600 in 1981 to \$6,800 in 2001. In Nigeria and Venezuela, real per capita income has decreased to the levels of 1960s, while many other countries—Algeria, Angola, Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, and Trinidad and Tobago—are back to the levels of the 1970s and 1980s. The surprisingly negative outcomes in oil- and mineral-dependent countries are referred to as the “resource-curse.”^{xiv}

Scholars have shown clearly the linkage between overdependence on oil exports and the production of weak public institutions, authoritarianism, corruption, conflict and primitive accumulation of wealth through collection of bribes and contract inflation:

Overdependence on oil exports is strongly associated with weak public institutions that generally lack the capacity to handle the challenges of petroleum-led development ...the influx of rents from petroleum tends to produce a rentier state—one that lives from the profits of oil. In rentier states, economic influence and political power are especially concentrated, the lines between public and private are very blurred, and rent seeking as a strategy for creating wealth is rampant. Rulers tend to stay in power by diverting revenues to themselves and their supporters...authoritarian rulers use petrodollars to keep themselves in power, prevent the formation of opposition groups and create vast militaries and repressive apparatuses...As a group, oil exporting countries are significantly more corrupt than the world average (even if Canada and Norway are included). Nigeria, Angola, Azerbaijan, Congo, Cameroon, and Indonesia compete for the position of the “most corrupt” in the annual ratings of Transparency International...policy makers in oil-exporting countries tend to favour mega-projects in which payoffs can be more easily hidden and the collection of bribes facilitated, while eschewing productive long term

investments that are more transparent...petroleum is more associated with civil war and conflict than any other commodity. Countries dependent on oil are more likely than resource poor countries to have civil wars; these wars are more likely to be secessionist, and they are more likely to be of even greater duration and intensity compared to wars where oil is not present. Oil may be the catalyst to start a war; petrodollars and pipeline may serve to finance either side and prolong conflict.^{xv}

TURNING RESOURCE CURSE INTO BLESSING

Despite this negative proposition, **it is necessary to point out that over the past decade, there is an increased understanding of the problem and what needs to be done to turn resource curse into resource blessing.** Interestingly, there are some resource-rich countries with stories of success. For instance, in the 1970s, Indonesia and Nigeria had comparable per capita incomes and both countries were heavily dependent on oil revenues. In the early 2000s, Indonesia's per capita income was four times that of Nigeria and Nigeria's per capita had actually fallen from US \$302.75 in 1973 to US \$254.26 in 2002. Similarly, Botswana is rich in Diamonds and had an average growth rate of 5.2 percent between 1974 and 2002. But in Nigeria, annual per capita GDP remained stagnant in the 1990s and grew by only 2.2 percent from 1999-2003.^{xvi} Furthermore, the United States, Canada, Australia, Chile and Norway are resource rich countries that have made significant progress in human development. The challenge therefore is how to turn the resource curse into resource blessing by bringing about the necessary structural changes.

Nigeria has been promoted as the most populous black nation in the world with enormous human and natural resources. Nigeria gained independence in 1960 after 99 years of British colonial rule. The political history of the country shows that there has been a lot of political instability with about 8 military coup de tats and 29 years of military rule out of the 50 years of Nigeria's existence. There is lack of transparency and accountability in governance and increasing state of insecurity occasioned by armed banditry and ethno-religious conflicts. Most infrastructures are in a state of decay. Although we seemed to have succeeded in a civilian to civilian transition, the 2007 elections have been adjudged by local and international observers to be lacking in credibility. There is a great need to **build institutions, systems and processes for a just and accountable governance** and a complete overhaul of the electoral process that will mean a fundamental reform of the 1999 constitution with adequate provisions for gender equity, independence of INEC and regulation of party financing and campaign finance.

Furthermore, over the years the social fabric of the Nigerian society has been destroyed. A lot of people become wealthy overnight without questions about the sources of the wealth. People who embezzle public funds are rewarded by their communities with chieftaincy titles. There is brazen display of wealth in the midst of widespread poverty. The extended family system is being destroyed. The get rich quick syndrome has caught up with a great number of the population. There is the need for concrete programming on

re-orientation on social values, promotion of good work ethics and values and social corporate responsibility

THE PLACE OF STRATEGY

For Nigeria to move forward there must be recognition of the drawbacks of previous efforts at development and **the mapping out of appropriate strategies** to deal with the challenges. In our view, previous development efforts have been bedevilled by four main problems. First, they are all elitist, top down approaches without input from the people. The ordinary people did not participate in the conceptualisation, formulation, implementation and evaluation of the policies. Secondly, the policies are not pro-poor and normally lead to increase in the gap between the rich and the poor. Thirdly, women are not involved and the policies are not gender sensitive. Meanwhile, it has been documented that participation of women and gender sensitive and redistributive policies accelerate development. Finally, there is poor implementation of the policies characterized by lack of transparency, openness and accountability.

URGENT PRIORITIES

Finally, there are some urgent priorities that are begging the attention of the regime. **First and foremost, there is the need to formulate a strategy that will bring about fundamental changes in the economic, political and social spheres.** In this respect, a review of the vision 2020 is appropriate. The vision 20:2020 policy was articulated during the Olusegun Obasanjo administration (1999-2007) to make Nigeria one of the twenty largest economies in the world by the year 2020. We argued then that Nigeria vision 20-2020 agenda is an attempt by the Nigerian ruling class to hoodwink and deceive the people into believing that the state is striving to make Nigeria to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020.^{xvii} We argued that the Nigerian government had no intention, strategy and execution capacity to make Nigeria one of the largest economies by 2020. On assumption of office in May, 2009, the Yar'Adua administration set up the National Council on Vision 2020 to develop a blueprint for the vision 20:2020 in collaboration with the National Planning Commission. In November, 2009, the Nigeria Vision 20:2020-Economic Transformation Blueprint for Nigeria was released to the public. In our view, the preparation of the strategy is a sign of progress and a necessary step for any organisation or nation to achieve its goal. In this write up, we examine the content of the blueprint, the unique features, deficiencies and the way forward. The Nigeria Vision 2020 economic transformation blueprint is a ten year plan for stimulating Nigeria's economic growth and launching the country onto a path of sustained and rapid economic growth to become one of the top twenty economies by 2020. The vision is anchored on the Nigerian Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS II) and the seven point agenda of President Umar Yar'Adua. The process of developing the vision included the formation of the National Council on Vision 2020; inputs from ministries, agencies, state and local governments as well as the private sector with the National Planning Commission playing a co-ordinating role. It also involved the analysis of 29 thematic areas and the participation of 12 special interest groups including the legislature, judiciary, media, women, youth, traditional rulers, religious groups, security, Nigerians in Diaspora, persons with disability, labour and the

civil service. The vision has a social dimension of a peaceful, equitable, harmonious and just society; an economic dimension of a resilient, diversified and industrialised economy; an institutional dimension of a stable and functional democracy in a market friendly and globally competitive business environment and an environment dimension of environmental consciousness and sustainable management. The realisation of the vision is hinged on creating the platform for success by urgently and immediately addressing the most debilitating constraints to Nigeria's growth and competitiveness; forging ahead with diligence and focus in developing the fabric of the envisioned economy and developing and deepening the capability of government to consistently translate national strategic intent into action and results by instituting evidence based decision making in Nigeria's policy space. The launch of the Nigeria Vision 20:2020 is a step in the right direction. Even though it took more than two years for the strategy to be produced; the production of a strategy is the first step towards the realisation of any vision. There are certain unique features of this strategy especially when compared with previous strategies. First and foremost, the strategy is less neo-liberal than its predecessor the Nigerian Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS). The Nigeria Vision 20:2020 strategy acknowledges that "attention will be given to equity concerns about privatisation, the need to safeguard worker's interests and to ensure that the process does not aggravate the already precarious unemployment problem in the country." (p.25). Secondly, the strategy advocates integrated sectoral planning to enhance linkage and synergy. This will ensure that agriculture, oil and gas and mineral and metal sectors serve as sources of inputs into the nation's local manufacturing industry. Thirdly, the vision advocates a cluster based approach to industrialisation which will turn the six geopolitical zones into economically viable industrial clusters built around different sectors based on the economic geography of the different zones. Fourthly, the strategy will introduce performance management and accountability system for public service institutions. Finally, the strategy plans to institutionalise monitoring and evaluation across all levels of government to improve their capacity to translate all strategic plans and programmes into outcomes and impacts. However, despite the positive aspects of the vision, there are serious defects that could make the attainment of the goal of the vision impossible. First and foremost, the strategy glosses over or underestimates the political conditions or dimensions of the vision. While there are clear social, economic, institutional and environmental dimensions, there is a clear absence of political dimension or how to create the political conditions for the vision to be actualised. Meanwhile, some scholars have argued that political conditions in Africa are the greatest impediment to development.^{xviii} Secondly, there are inconsistencies in the vision document in terms of what is possible and what the vision hopes to achieve. While the vision articulates the need for evidence based decision making in the policy space, the vision is anchored on unrealistic assumptions. Achievement of the goal of the vision is anchored on "achieving broad based and double digit real growth rate annually." (p.14). Meanwhile, the policy itself acknowledges that "the IMF predicts that Nigeria's average economic growth rate will slow to 4.8 % between 2009 and 2014." (p.15). There is no alternative prediction by the vision. Thirdly, although efforts were made to involve different sectors in the formulation of the blueprint, the level of participation is not widespread and deep. It was more or less restricted to experts. The development of any country requires public ownership of the process of development of the strategy which cannot be said for the

blueprint. In addition, the strategy does not take into account some proven strategies that can help bring out people from poverty such as social protection measures and provision of housing and other social services for the poor. Indeed, the strategy states clearly that “providing new housing stock is not the only way to meet the demand for affordable housing.” (p.29).

Furthermore, one of the greatest obstacles to development in Nigeria is corruption. What needs to be done to bring about economic growth and development in known but corruptible transactions makes it impossible for objectives of policies and strategies to be realised. Although the vision recognises that “economic growth and poverty reduction cannot be achieved in an environment of corruption and pervasive rent seeking”(p.14), there is no anti-corruption strategy either in the vision or in the country that is systematic, comprehensive, consistent, focused, publicized, non-selective and non-partisan. Finally and perhaps most importantly, it has been documented that implementation is the graveyard of public policies in Nigeria.^{xix} Although the strategy outlined what will be done differently, there is no concrete strategy on how the challenges of implementation of previous strategies will be overcome. The importance of strategy in the development of a nation cannot be over emphasized. Strategy occupies a central position in the focus and proper functioning of any nation. This is because it is a plan that integrates a country’s major goals, policies and action into a cohesive whole. A well formulated strategy should therefore help to marshal and allocate a country’s resources into a unique and viable posture based on its relative internal competencies and shortcomings, anticipated changes in the environment, and contingent moves by others. Strategies help to create a sense of politics, purpose and priorities for a country. The formulation of the Nigerian Vision 20:2020 strategy is a step in the right direction. There are some positive aspects of the strategy including the introduction of integrated sectoral planning, cluster based approach to industrialisation, performance management and accountability system for the public service and institutionalisation of monitoring and evaluation. But there are deficiencies in the strategy which need to be corrected if the goals of the strategy are to be achieved. These include the necessity to create the political conditions for the vision to be realised; realistic predictions; promotion of citizen participation; social protection; dealing with corruption and addressing the challenge of implementation. If the deficiencies identified above are corrected and the vision is executed efficiently, effectively and professionally, then Nigeria will be on the path of growth and development that will be beneficial to the citizens. It is clear to us that given current situation and realistic predictions, Nigeria is unlikely to join the league of the top twenty countries in the world by 2020 but implementation of the strategy will move Nigeria in the right direction.

Secondly, there is the challenge is the bureaucracy. The focus of the last regime’s reform was essentially on ‘right-sizing’, a euphemism for retrenchment of staff. The challenge of the bureaucracy goes beyond the size of workers. There is challenge of capacity, knowledge of modern day development issues and management techniques and tools for effective programme and project implementation in addition to the institutionalised corruption which is beyond the purview of EFCC and ICPC.

Thirdly, there is the challenge of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Governments across the world, including Nigeria have committed themselves to achieving the MDGs. As a result of the challenges above, official reports from the Nigerian government in 2004, 2005 and 2006 indicates that Nigeria is not likely to attain the MDGs particularly those relating to achieving gender equality and women empowerment, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health; and combating HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases unless there are changes especially in political will. We have always argued that the changes required in Nigeria to attain the MDGs are in the areas of transparency and accountability, overcoming institutional constraints, pro-poor programming, distributive equity, human capital development and employment generation.^{xx}

Furthermore, there is the challenge of legislation and rule of law. There is the need to bring about order in Nigeria. There must be a system where everyone obeys the laws and follow procedures in all facets of life. There is a great need for effective implementation of laws that can assist in enthroning the right type of environment such as the NEITI law. Pending laws like the Freedom of Information bill should be passed and effectively implemented. Government at all levels, ministries, department and agencies must obey the rule of law.

THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY

CSOs and development partners have great roles to play to address the challenges identified above. The role of CSOs is to create awareness, educate in rights and obligations, build capacity of rights holders, organize and mobilize rights holders, advocate for pro-poor policies and provide alternatives. It is not the main responsibilities of CSOs and development partners to provide services to the people. It is the duty and responsibility of government to provide services to her people. Whenever services are provided by CSOs, it should be to serve as entry points for the CSOs to perform the roles mentioned above more effectively. In any case, all the fund available to CSOs and development partners in Nigeria is less than 2 percent of the revenue accruing to the nation. The challenge is to ensure that the resources of the country are utilised efficiently and effectively.

THE WAY FORWARD

First and foremost, there are challenges with vision 2020, the comprehensive long term strategy to integrate the nation's major goals, policies and actions into a cohesive whole. In order for Nigeria to move forward, we must address the draw backs of vision 2020. Secondly, there is a clear lack of capable or effective state to lead and manage the development process. **It has been established from history that no country has prospered without a state that can actively manage the development process.**^{xxi} The extraordinary transformation of countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Botswana or Mauritius have been led by states that ensure health and education for all, and which actively promote and manage the process of economic growth. **Thirdly, there is a lack of focus on sectors that will improve the condition of living of the people such as Education, Health, agriculture and the building of infrastructure.** Our analysis of budget in Nigeria shows that about 60-80 percent is devoted to what we have called

management including salary of public officials, vehicles, running of offices (Presidency, Secretary to Government, Governors Office, Chairman's office) etc which will have very little impact on the development outcome. **Another major development challenge is corruption**, one of the greatest obstacles to development in Nigeria undermining service delivery and exacerbating poverty. In addition, there is the huge **challenge of poor governance** which manifests among other things in lack of political will to pursue a development agenda. Furthermore, there is a lack of vibrant civil society that can hold government to account. Duncan Green call it active citizenship which means the combination of rights and obligations that link individuals to the state, including paying taxes, obeying laws, and exercising the full range of political, civil, and social rights.^{xxii} Bentley calls it everyday politics. In this book, we have argued that the absence of organizations of drivers of change or a coalition of forces to drive a people centred development agenda is a major challenge. Finally, **there is a lack of good ideas for change**. The dominant ideas are not focused on dealing with the challenges of inequality and injustice. Closely linked with this is the huge capacity gap in conceiving, formulating, implementing and evaluating a people centred development agenda.

The role of civil society organizations in overcoming the challenges of development in Nigeria is crucial. This role is amplified by the ascendancy of neo-liberalism which has rolled back the Nigerian state and the inability of the government to deliver services especially to the poor and excluded. But we argue that civil society is not meant to take over the role of the state but to promote active citizen involvement or everyday democracy and the effectiveness of the state. The World Alliance for Citizen Participation, CIVICUS aptly captures the role of civil society in its three major objectives of promoting civic existence, civic expression and civic engagement, CIVICUS popular three E's.^{xxiii} Promoting civic existence involves defending people's fundamental rights to organize and act collectively towards the public good. Promoting civic expression entails strengthening the capacities of civil society organizations to freely amplify the voices of ordinary people and promoting civic engagement requires fostering interaction between citizens, their associations and other institutions to ensure that public institutions reflect the will of the people and are accountable to them.

In our study of civil society in Nigeria under the auspices of the Civil Society Index (CSI) developed by CIVICUS, we discovered that the structure and environment dimensions of civil society in Nigeria are less developed than the values and impact dimensions.^{xxiv}

Despite the enormity of the challenges of development in Nigeria, it is clear from our analysis that what needs to be done to address the challenges are clear. **First and foremost, there is the need to generate good policy ideas that will focus on the challenges confronting Nigeria as identified above.** In this respect, focus on redistribution strategies is of paramount importance. **Secondly, there is the need for a nationally owned, nationally driven development strategy that is formulated with high level of citizen participation.** It is well established that citizen participation and ownership is a sure way of ensuring rapid and sustainable development. Nigeria has enormous human and material resources. There is also a large population and a large

market. There is a great need to mobilize the potentials of the people for development. Thirdly, there is the need to ensure **transparent and accountable governance**. Mobilisation for a new political orientation and transformation of the political system is therefore imperative. Furthermore, the country needs to formulate a strategy to deal with the **challenges of capacity**. There is a clear need for an overhaul of the public service. Moreover, there is the need for a comprehensive and strategic all out war on corruption. Finally, all the suggestions will not come into fruition unless there is a movement of people committed and organized to ensure that a people centered development agenda is implemented in Nigeria. The transformists in civil society, labour, patriotic and nationalistic private sector, progressive religious leaders, the radical section of the media and other catalysts of change in Nigeria must organize to overcome the development challenges in Nigeria.

ENDNOTES

-
- ⁱ Igbuzor, O (2005), Perspectives on Democracy and Development. Lagos, Joe-Tolalu Associates.
- ⁱⁱ Kambhmpati, U. S. (), Development and the Developing World. Uk, Polity Press
- ⁱⁱⁱ Sen, A. (2008), Development as Freedom. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- ^{iv} UNDP (2007), Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a divided World. Human Development Report 2007/2008. New York, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- ^v Utomi, P. (2006), Why Nations are Poor. Lagos, Centre for Applied Economics, Lagos Business School.
- ^{vi} Kambhampati, U. S.(2004), Development and Developing World. Uk, Polity Press.
- ^{vii} Igbuzor, O (2005), Op cit
- ^{viii} United Nations Development Report (UNDP) (2003), Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to end Human Poverty. Oxford University Press.
- ^{ix} Shetty, Salil (2005), Millennium Declaration and Development Goals: Opportunities for Human Rights in International Journal on Human Rights, Year 2, Number 2.
- ^x Green, D.(2008), From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States can Change the World. Oxford, Oxfam International.
- ^{xi} Chambers, R. (2005), Ideas for Development. London, Institute for Development Studies.
- ^{xii} Sen, A. (2008), Op cit
- ^{xiii} UNDP 2003 Op cit
- ^{xiv} Karl, T. L. (2005), “Understanding the Resource Curse” in Tsalik, S. and Schiffrin, A. (Ed) (2005), **Covering Oil: A Reporter’s Guide to Energy and Development**. New York, Open Society Institute. Pp 21-22
- ^{xv} Karl, T. L. (2005), “Understanding the Resource Curse” in Tsalik, S. and Schiffrin, A. (Ed) Ibid
- ^{xvii} Igbuzor, O. (2009) Challenges of Development in Nigeria. Lagos, Robitos Alliance Publishers.
- ^{xviii} Ake, C. (2001), Democracy and Development in Africa. Ibadan, Spectrum Books Ltd
- ^{xix} Igbuzor, O (2004), Implementation of Policy of Provision of Quality Drugs in Northeastern Nigeria. An unpublished PhD thesis.
- ^{xx} Ibrahim, J. and Igbuzor, O (2009), Can Nigeria achieve the MDGs in 2015? Abuja, Centre for Democracy and Development.
- ^{xxi} Green, D. (2008) Op cit
- ^{xxii} Green, D. (2008) ibid
- ^{xxiii} www.CIVICUS.org
- ^{xxiv} ActionAid Nigeria, DevNet, CIVICUS and UNDP (2007), Civil Society in Nigeria: Contributing to Positive Social Change. In the study, civil society was examined in four dimensions: Structure, Environment, Values and Impact. The structure of civil society describes and analyses the overall size, strength and vibrancy of CSOs in Nigeria. It examines the extent of citizen participation, depth of citizen

participation, diversity of citizen participation, level of organisation, inter-relations and civil society resources. The external environment in which civil society exists and functions include legislative, political, cultural and economic context, relationship between civil society and the state as well as the private sector. The values practiced and promoted within the civil society arena include democracy, tolerance or protection of the environment. Impact examines how active and successful civil society organisations have been in fulfilling several essential functions including public policy influence, holding state and private corporations accountable, responding to social interests, empowering citizens, empowering marginalised people and meeting societal needs.