

Escalating Poverty in Nigeria: Appraising Institutional Frameworks for Poverty Reduction in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The continuous increase in the incidence of poverty in Nigeria is not only a serious problem but also an indication of the failure and decay of the existing institutional framework for poverty reduction and therefore, requires a total overhauling. It is in the light of this failure of the existing frameworks for poverty reduction and the widespread scourging poverty that this paper appraises previous and current initiatives at poverty reduction in Nigeria. The study mainly utilizes secondary data through the analysis of books, journals, reports and electronic sources. Data collected were analysed using simple descriptive statistics. Results indicate that poverty reduction programmes are geared towards the delivery of social services. However, only very little impact has been made in terms of social services delivery by these institutions. Flawed policy, poor targeting of interventions programmes, lack of policy continuity and non-involvement of programme beneficiaries, corruption among others were identified as the major challenges facing poverty reduction programmes in the delivery of social services in Nigeria. Among other issues, the study calls for policy alignment, targeting of intervention projects to reach the poor and involvement of project beneficiaries in the design and implementation of projects.

Keywords: Poverty, Reduction, Appraising, Institution, Framework, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Tackling poverty which is endemic in most developing countries represents a major development challenge for national, sub-national and local government authorities. Events and official statistics have continued to confirm the rising incidence of poverty in many developing countries including Nigeria. Consequently, poverty reduction has received increased focus in development planning among policymakers and is now one of the yardsticks for the measurement of success of development policy. In Nigeria like most developing countries, poverty is pervasive. It is especially severe in rural areas, where up to 80 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line and social services and infrastructure are limited. Official statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics in 2007 indicates that the incidence of poverty increased sharply between 1980 and 2006 (from 28.1 per cent to 54.4 per cent). More worrisome, is the accompanying increase in the absolute number of the poor in Nigeria since the last decades. Successive governments in

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Nigeria have enunciated plethora of poverty reduction programmes aimed at checking the rising trends in poverty levels. Paradoxically, poverty growth rate in Nigeria seems to outpace the rate of governmental activities with respect to poverty reduction. Nigeria has a population of over 150 million, the largest in sub-Saharan African countries. Although not a large country in the general context of Africa, Nigeria's 923,769 km² is quite endowed with abundant natural and human resources. It has huge agricultural resource base. The agriculture sector employs about two-thirds of the country's total labour force and provides a livelihood for about 90 per cent of the rural population (IFAD, 2009). Nigeria is currently the world's largest producer of cassava, yam and cowpea – all staple foods in sub-Saharan Africa. It is also a major producer of fish (IFAD, 2007). The country is also blessed with large deposits of crude oil and gas. It also has a sizeable educated and skilled workforce.

Despite Nigeria's plethora of human, agricultural resources and oil wealth, poverty is still a challenge in the country. Nigeria is ranked among the 25 poorest countries in the world. At independence in 1960, the poverty level was barely 15% and is today struggling to bring it down from about 61% of its current teeming population of over 150 million (Oyemomi, 2003). Of the number of the poverty stricken people, about 73% is concentrated in the rural areas where social services such as potable water, health facilities, access road and electricity infrastructures are either unavailable or ill-managed (Oyemomi, 2003). Even in areas where these facilities are available, it constitutes a town of political settlement for what they (government in power) term "as a harvest of your support". But in a political system where everyone supports a particular candidate, such system is a failure. That candidate will not perform in accordance with the majority support. There has to be opposition which in Nigeria is a yardstick for fomenting the losing part at the detriment of the rural poor. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s 2002 Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.461 summarily demonstrate the intensity of poverty in Nigeria. Nigeria's poverty has been described as a paradox from two main perspectives.

Firstly, the poverty level appears as a contradiction considering the country's immense wealth. Secondly, poverty situation has worsened despite the huge human and material resources that have been devoted to poverty reduction by successive governments in Nigeria with no substantial success achieved from such efforts (Oyeranti and Olayiwola, 2005). Tackling poverty which is endemic in most developing countries including Nigeria represents a major development challenge for national, sub-national and local government authorities. Events and official statistics have continued to confirm the rising incidence of poverty. Consequently, poverty reduction has received increased focus in development planning among policymakers and is now one of the yardsticks for the measurement of success of development policy (Aigbokhan, 2008). In Nigeria like most developing countries, poverty is pervasive. Official statistics from the National Bureau of Statistics in 2008 indicates that the incidence of poverty increased sharply between 1980 and 2011 (from 28.1 per cent to 61.0% per cent). Poverty in Nigeria is not borne out of lack of resources but that of mismanagement of resources (Onwuemele, 2010). Nigerian poverty scenario is unique in the sense that it has geographic, socio-economic and demographic dimensions. Table 1 depicts some distinguishing characteristics and trends of poverty in

Nigeria. The incidence of poverty rose sharply from 1980-85 and declined from 1985-1992 and increased again sharply from 1992-1996 and decrease again in 2004. Geographically, over a 24-year period, the incidence of poverty was higher in the rural than urban areas. Similarly, the incidence of poverty was generally higher in the northern States than the southern part of the country over the period. Table 1 also indicates that in 1996, the northwest zone had the highest poverty incidence (77.2%), followed by northeast zone and north-central zone with poverty incidence of 70.1%, and 64.3% respectively (Eboh, 2003).

Table 1: Poverty Incidence (% Headcount) 1980-1996

Analytical Categories	1980	1985	1992	1996	2004
National	28.1	46.3	42.7	65.6	54.4
North East	35.6	54.9	54.0	70.1	72.2
North West	37.7	52.1	36.5	77.2	71.2
North Central	32.2	50.8	46.0	64.3	67.0
South East	12.9	30.4	41.0	53.5	26.7
South West	13.4	38.6	43.1	60.9	43.0
South –South	13.2	45.7	40.8	58.2	35.1
Urban	17.2	37.8	37.5	58.2	43.2
Rural	28.3	51.4	46.0	69.3	63.3
Gender of Household Head					
Male	27.0	47	45.1	66.4	-
Female	29.2	38.6	39.9	58.5	-
Household Size					
1 Person	2.0	7.0	29.0	13.1	7.0
2-4 persons	8.8	19.3	19.3	59.3	42.3
5-9 Persons	30.0	50.5	51.5	74.8	62.6
10.20 Persons	51.0	71.3	66.1	88.5	72.1
20+	80.9	74.9	93.3	93.6	88.7
Education of HH					
No Education	30.2	51.3	46.4	72.6	68.7
Primary	21.3	40.6	43.3	54.4	48.7
Secondary	7.6	27.2	30.3	52.0	44.3
Post-Secondary	24.3	24.4	25.8	49.2	26.3
Age of HH					
15-24 Years	16.2	25.3	28.7	37.4	36.8
25-34 Years	17.8	33.4	28.5	52.7	53.7
35-44 Years	26.7	46.0	42.1	64.6	59.6
45-54 Years	27.1	49.7	45.7	71.3	60.2
55-64 Years	39.7	55.7	48.2	69.9	59.1
64+	28.8	49.1	49.5	68.0	52.8

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Poverty Profile Analysis for Nigeria (1980-2004)

Poverty incidence in Nigeria is highly correlated with size of household. In other words, as the size of households increases, the level of poverty increases in similar direction. For instance, from table 1, poverty increased with the size of the household for the years 1980, 1985, 1992 and 1996. Poverty trends increased for all size groups between 1980 and 1996, and 1985 and 1996. Poverty incidence also increased consistently with the age of the head of the household, reaching a peak and then dropping slightly for the higher ages. The peak was 55-64 age bracket for the years 1980, 1985 and 1992 but 45-54 years age group for 1996 (NBS, 2009). Table 1 also indicates that with the exception of 1980 where poverty was higher among the female folks, the male folks experienced more poverty incidence from 1985 to 1996 with poverty incidence of 47.0%, 45.1% and 66.4% as against 38.6%, 39.9% and 58.5% respectively for female. In the light of this scenario,

successive governments in Nigeria have enunciated plethora of poverty reduction programmes aimed at checking the rising trends in poverty levels. According to Oyeyomi (2003), no Nigerian Government, be it military or civilian, has come without introducing and leaving behind one form of poverty alleviation or reduction programme meant to reduce the level of poverty, give hope and succour to the poor and, or move towards some sort of wealth creation. Paradoxically, poverty growth rate in Nigeria seems to outpace the rate of governmental activities with respect to poverty reduction. The continuous increase in the incidence of poverty in Nigeria is not a serious problem but also only an indication of the failure and decay of the existing framework for poverty reduction and therefore, requires a total overhauling.

Poverty in Nigeria is manifested by poor access to social services such as good roads, potable water supply, stable electricity, quality healthcare, education, among other social services. The absence of these basic social services debilitates the productive capacity and potential of the people plunging them into deeper abject poverty. The core function of governments' at all levels (Federal, State, Local government) is to provide social services. Effective access to functioning and well-equipped social services is a prerequisite to improving the quality of life and for poverty reduction. According to Narayan (2000), poor people maintained that water, education, healthcare and personal security are among their highest priorities and expanding inclusive social service delivery in these areas is critical to poverty reduction. The delivery of basic social services has the potential to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty and increase economic opportunity.

Therefore, social service delivery interventions can provide an entry point and trigger for longer-term pro-poor social, political and economic change in Nigeria. Education, for instance can be a powerful intergenerational change agent by giving those who are exposed to it a greater understanding of issues, as well as confidence to participate in political discussion, policy formulation and implementation. Women's literacy also has the potential to be a powerful tool for social and political change if approached in the right way. Similarly, healthier and better-educated individuals are more likely to be able to build their livelihood opportunities, contribute to long-term economic growth, and protect themselves from economic shocks (Berry, Forder, Sultan and Moreno-Torres, 2004).

It is in the light of this failure of the existing frameworks for poverty reduction and the emerging importance of social service delivery in poverty reduction that this study appraises previous and current initiatives at poverty reduction in Nigeria. The critical questions are: What are the previous and current initiatives at poverty reduction in Nigeria? What are their challenges? Are poverty reduction institutions and policies geared towards social service delivery? If yes, what services have been provided or are being delivered? What is the content and how has the service related to employment service and what impact has the service had over the years?

METHOD

The study mainly utilizes secondary data through the analysis of books, journals, reports and electronic sources (published and unpublished). Documents from government, international development agencies and various poverty reduction institutions were explored.

In particular, National Bureau of Statistics social economic data on incidence of poverty were utilized covering the period 1985-2009. Data collected were analysed using simple descriptive statistics.

Theoretical Framework

Poverty is broad and multidimensional. Poverty is cut across hunger, is lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to see a doctor and is not having access to school and not knowing how to read. Poverty is not having a job, is fear for the future, living one day at a time. Poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water. Poverty is powerlessness, lack of (effective) representation and lack of freedom (Narayan, 2000). Poverty is also measured in economic terms. In this respect, individuals living on less than one US\$ a day are classified as being poor. Of course, income is not the only factor that influences quality of life. In some cases, societies have achieved better general standards of living than might have been expected given their income levels. In others, high incomes have translated into less improvement in welfare than might have been expected. For this reason, other indicators such as life expectancy and literacy are sometimes used when quantifying poverty (UNDP, Human Development Report, 1990). However, statistical measures alone do not take account of the myriad social, cultural and political aspects of the poverty. The UN provides a broader definition of poverty:

‘a human condition characterized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.’ (UN, 2001).

Poverty in contemporary sense includes a state of greediness that places a person in an insatiable position causing him to be wealth crazy. This is to say a rich man can equally be poor as a result of greed. Institutions on the other hand are humanly created formal and informal mechanisms that shape social and individual expectations, interactions, and behaviours. They can be classified as falling into public (bureaucratic administrative units, and elected local governments), civic (membership and cooperative organizations), and private sectors (service and business organizations) (Uphoff and Buck 2006). Institutions provide the regulatory framework for effective social service delivery and poverty reduction. Poverty reduction strategies on the other hand refers to a deliberate, planned, systematic and integrated set of governmental and other measures whose purpose or aim is to minimize or eliminate the incidence of poverty and its effects in a society or among a group of people over a period of time (Agbonifoh and Asein, 2005). Thus, it includes all government policies targeted at reducing poverty whether directly or indirectly in any given country. Ogwumike (2001) identifies four main poverty reduction strategies to include:

- (a) ***Economic Growth Approach:*** This approach focuses on capital formation as it relates to capital stock, and human capital.
- (b) ***Basic Needs Approach:*** This approach calls for the provision of basic needs such as food, shelter, water, sanitation, health care, basic education, transportation and many others.

- (c) **Rural development Approach:** This approach sees the rural sector as a unique sector in terms of poverty reduction. This is because majority of the poor in developing countries live in this sector.
- (d) **Target Approach:** This approach favours the directing of poverty alleviation programme to specific groups within the country. This approach includes such programmes as Social Safety Nets, Micro Credits, and School Meal programme. One thing that is common to these strategies is employment generation. These various strategies have been adopted in Nigeria over the years in the fight against poverty. Their contribution towards social service delivery is a core focus of this study. A social service in this context is an organized activity to improve the conditions of the disadvantaged people in society. Social services are benefits and facilities such as housing, education, food subsidies, healthcare, and subsidised housing provided by government to improve the life and living conditions of the children, disabled, the elderly and the poor in the national community (Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 2011). Indeed, IFAD (2001) notes that increasing access to social services is crucial for broad-based growth and poverty reduction. Social services in the form of assets may take many varieties or forms namely: human capital, social capital, physical capital, financial capital and natural capital.

According to Gordon and Craig (2001), human capital comprises the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health. Access to human capital is believed to play crucial roles in poverty reduction. For instance, Reardon (1997), Gordon and Craig (2001) identify several processes that reinforce the effect of education on income:

- i Education increases skill levels, which are required for employment opportunities;
- ii Education can set in train processes that increase confidence, establish useful networks or contribute to productive investment;
- iii Education tends to be closely correlated with other variables that also improve access to higher income employment;
- iv Non-educated family members may benefit from advice given by more educated relatives.

Physical capital includes hard infrastructure (e.g. roads, telecommunications, power, and water), as well as production equipment and buildings that are more likely to be individually owned (Gordon and Craig, 2001). There is a consensus in the literature on the critical role of infrastructure in poverty reduction. Local physical infrastructure including density of the road and telephone networks and household services is an important aspect of poverty reduction (Lanjouw and Feder, 2001). Lanjouw (1999) notes "...innumerable studies that document the constrained access of rural enterprise to power and telecommunication, and the high transaction costs caused by inadequate roads. Moreover, there is ample evidence to show that banks, marketing and service centres, training centres and other support activities which are essential for poverty reduction tend to locate where infrastructure is adequate (Binswanger, Khandker and Rosenzweig, 1989). Financial Capital comprises of credits or cash. One of the principal problems for rural households and individuals

wishing to start a business is access to capital or credit. Bagachwa and Stewart's, (1992) results of a four-country study in Africa state that 30 – 74 per cent of rural industries complained of poor access to credit – next in importance is lack of infrastructure inputs and markets. Social capital comprises the social resources (for example, networks, membership of groups, relationship of trust, access to wider institutions of society) upon which people draw in pursuit of livelihoods (Gordon and Craig, 2001). There is ample anecdotal evidence of the influence of social capital on access to different types of employment, and an increasing amount of empirical research that supports this also. The various assets categories tend to reinforce and complement each other in improving the living condition of the poor. For example, building human capital by strengthening people's skills can enhance their access to paid employment. This will provide income which can be invested in children education, social networks, natural capital leading to higher productivity and incomes (Onwuebele, 2009). Viewed from this perspective, poverty reduction programmes must focus on the delivery of these assets most essentially the human, financial and social assets which are essential social services for poverty reduction.

Two critical models have been advanced for social service delivery for the purpose of poverty reduction and they are the World Development Report Pro-Poor Service Delivery Model (PSDM) and the Cooperative Service Delivery Model (CSDM). The World Development Report PSDM (2004) sees the delivery of social services more as a relationship of accountability between users, providers and policy-makers. It examines the relationships of accountability between the policy makers; the provider and the citizen (Figure 1).

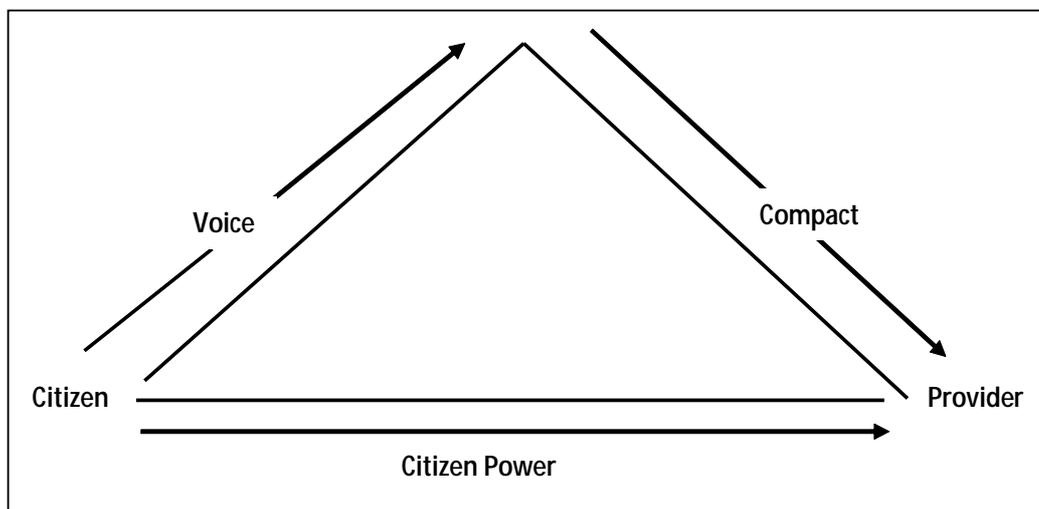


Figure 1: Frameworks of Service Delivery Relationships

Source: World Development Report, 2004

It highlights the central role of the state in guaranteeing the provision of pro-poor services and the role of politics in this process. In this model, the international community is expected to partner predominantly with policy makers at the state level to strengthen the state's ability to monitor and build the capacity of providers to work with poor citizens to

give them more voice to demand their right to health, education and other services from the state through ‘voice initiatives’, and to build the responsiveness of providers to citizens by finding mechanisms for citizens to directly hold providers accountable (World Development Report, 2004). This model has been criticised for being too narrowly focused on accountability as the primary mechanism for improving the responsiveness of frontline providers (Goetz, Joshi and Moore, 2004). Other important contributing factors include human resource capability, the role of civil society organisations in advocating for the rights of the poor to basic services, and the role of trade unions and other professional organisations in working with their members to improve the quality of service provision. While recognising these weaknesses, the PSDM framework is one useful tool for examining service delivery interventions as it draws attention to the need to consider the three actors in efforts to improve the quality of services.

On the other hand, Njunwa (2007) defines CSDM as the utilization by the public sector of civil society and or the private sector for the delivery of public goods and services. He argues that throughout the past quarter century, this model has increasingly been in use and it continues to assume wider application. CSDM implies a shift in which the development process is no longer the exclusive monopoly of the government. Prior to the late 1980s, public administration maintained an exclusive monopoly over policy formulation and implementation. Under CSDM, public administration is compelled to work with other partners such as non-governmental organisations, private enterprises, trade and cooperative unions as well as community groups to deliver public goods (Njunwa, 2007). The CSDM is an improvement over the PSDM framework and will therefore be adopted in this study in the appraisal of poverty reduction institutions.

Overview of Initiatives of Poverty Reduction in Nigeria

Poverty reduction was never the direct focus of development planning and management especially during the pre-independent and independent era in Nigeria. This scenario may be attributed to the low level of poverty which stood at 15% during the period. Government only showed concern for poverty reduction indirectly during the period. This is evidenced in the objectives of the various National Development Plans in Nigeria. These objectives, if achieved could no doubt lead to poverty alleviation (Ogwumike, 2001). Many other indirect poverty reduction programmes such as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Free and Compulsory Primary Education (FCPE), Green Revolution, Low Cost Housing, River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA), Agricultural Development Programmes (ADP), Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS), Strategic Grains Reserves Program (SGRP), Rural Electrification Scheme (RES), and Rural Banking Programme (RBP) were implemented during this period. The first deliberate and direct policy effort of government geared towards poverty alleviation in Nigeria started with the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). However, this further worsened the living conditions of many Nigerians especially the poor who were the most vulnerable group (Ugoh and Ukpere, 2009). This made the government to design and implement many poverty alleviation programmes from 1986 till date.

National Directorate of Employment (NDE)

The NDE established on October 19, 1986 was meant to combat mass-unemployment and articulate policies aimed at promoting skill acquisition, self employment and labour intensive potentials. It also has the mandate to provide a data bank on unemployment and vacancies in the country as well as designing of employment programmes such as school leaver apprentice scheme, entrepreneurs training programmes for graduates, labour-based work programmes, and resettlement of trained beneficiaries. In other words, the core mandate of the NDE is job creation. In this context, job creation can be taken as a social service since it has impact on poverty reduction. Available data from the NDE shows that it generated a total of 1, 898, 638 jobs between 1987-1996 (Table 2). The Table shows that a total of 1, 898, 638 jobs were created in a period of ten years through its various programmes amounting to an average of 189, 863 jobs per annum. Using this period to measure the performance of NDE, it is quite obvious that the organization has not done much in terms of achieving its core mandate. The annual job creation by NDE is quite small considering the rate of growth of labour force in Nigeria.

Table 2: Distribution of NDE Programme Beneficiaries (1987-1996)

S/N	Programme/Scheme	Year Launched	Number of Beneficiaries
Vocational Skill Development Programme			
1	National Open Apprenticeship Scheme	1987	555,575
2	School on Wheels Programme	1990	19,672
3	Waste-to-Wealth Programme	1987	8047
4	Resettlement Scheme	1991	6024
Small Scale Enterprises Programme			
1	Entrepreneurship Development Programme	1987	574,000
2	Graduate Job Creation Scheme	1987	2507
3	Mature People Scheme	1987	133
4	Motor Cycle Transportation Scheme	1994	450
Rural Employment Promotion Programme			
1	Graduate Farmers' Scheme	1987	11,335
2	School Leavers' Farming Scheme	1989	13,220
3	Crop Processing Scheme	1996	611
4	Dry Season Irrigation Farming Scheme	1995/1996	930
Special Public Works Programme			
1	Graduates and School Leavers	1987	149,081
2	National Sanitation Employment Scheme	1994	478
Special Programmes			
1	One Million Jobs Creation Programme	1992	547,374
2	Mass Agricultural Programme	1993	8000
3	Job Placement and Vocational Guidance	1993	1,200
	Total		1,898,638

Source: NDE 1987-1996

Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)

DFRRI was established in 1986 as an enabling facility management organization to coordinate and streamline all rural development activities in the country and accelerate the pace of integrated rural development. It was designed to act as a policy catalyst for the development of the rural areas. Its main focuses were on the provision of water and the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of an effective rural feeder road network. Between 1986 when the programme started and 1993, DFRRI had completed over

278,526 km of roads and over 5,000 rural communities benefited from its rural electrification programme (CBN, 1998). During the period, it provided the necessary basic infrastructures that can stimulate the growth of agro – allied small – scale enterprises in rural areas. Furthermore, DFRRI impacted positively on food production as there was a steady and significant rise in agricultural output as shown by the index of agricultural production between 1986 and 1993 (CBN, 1998). Though now defunct, the actual performance of DFRRI based on available data indicates very poor performance. The 278, 526km roads built within a period of seven years only translate to about 40km per annum nationally. This is quite infinitesimal considering the deplorable state of most urban and rural roads in different regions in Nigeria.

Better Life Programme (BLP)

The Better Life Programme was developed by the then First Lady, Mrs. Maryam Babangida in 1987. Its main focus was the rural areas and the programmes covered health, agriculture, education, social welfare and cooperatives. The cooperatives were supported in terms of access to credit facilities from People’s Bank. However, during the Abacha regime, the programme was re-named Family Support Programme (FSP) with greater emphasis on the health component. Also in an attempt to create a more embracing socio-economic poverty alleviation programme by the regime, a new agency called Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP) was established. The FEAP was established to stimulate economic activities by providing loans directly to Nigerians through cooperative societies and informal associations. Before it was wound up in 2000, FEAP financed 20,382 projects with a total credit of N3.33 billion; trained about 2000 loan beneficiaries in cooperative laws, principles and practice and financial management and basic marketing skills (Oyemomi, 2003). The change of focus from BLP to FSP and then to FEAP was the major albatross of poverty reduction efforts during this era.

National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)

NALDA was established to address the problems of low utilization of farmlands, increase farm sizes with the sole purpose of poverty reduction. It was established by Decree No.92 of 1992. It was set up to provide strategic public support for land development; promote and support optimum utilization of rural land resources; encourage and support economic-sized farm holdings and promote consolidation of scattered fragment holdings; and encourage the evolution of economic-size rural settlements. NALDA was empowered to develop between 30,000 and 50,000 hectares of land in each state of the federation during the 1992-94 National Rolling Plan periods and to engage at least 7,500-12,500 farmers within the area such that each participating farmer member lives within 3km-5km radius of his farmland (Oyemomi, 2003).. It was also to facilitate appropriate cost effective mechanization of agriculture; and institute strategic land use planning schemes to deal with major allocation problems, the creation and location of forest and grazing reserves and other areas with restricted use, and the relocation of population. Before it was terminated, it was able to acquire suitable tracks of land in various parts of Nigeria for the purpose of

development. It parceled out land into economic size farm plots and distributed them to farmers. It also provided extension support services and technical information on soil types and land capability or suitability to farmers. It advised farmers on all aspects of land conservation and land degradation control; assisted them to form cooperatives; provided them with inputs, agricultural processing technologies, and product marketing (Oyemomi, 2003).

Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP)

PAP was set up in the year 2000 during the commencement of the new democratic dispensation. It was designed to provide employment opportunities for the unemployed youths in the country. The immediate objective was to mop up from the labour market, in the shortest time, some 200,000 unemployed persons in the face of increasing restiveness. The participants were engaged in direct labour activities such as patching of potholes, vegetation control along high-ways, maintenance of public building and environmental sanitation (Oyemomi, 2003). The implementation of PAP programme was fraught with problems such as over centralization, unsustainable design, uncoordinated management, over-politicisation, irregular payment, lack of monitoring logistics and high-level and low-level corruption among other issues. In view of the afore-mentioned problems, the government had to set up a committee to review the programme. The committee later came up with the blueprint recommending National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP).

National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)

The National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) was established in Nigeria in the year 2001 to help eradicate extreme poverty in the country by the year 2010. The move is also in line with the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDG) bringing to half the proportion of people living in poverty by the year 2015. The program is seen as an improvement over the previous Nigerian government poverty-reduction programmes (Obadan, 2001). This belief stems from the fact that the new programme has adequate policy framework, full involvement of stakeholders, proper implementation arrangements and co-ordination. With a take-off grant of N6 billion approved for it in 2001, NAPEP has established structures at all levels nationwide. NAPEP is organized around four thematic focuses, namely: Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Rural Infrastructure Development (RIDS), Social Welfare Schemes (SOWESS) and the National Resource Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS).

1. Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES): Is concerned with providing unemployed youth opportunities in skills acquisition, employment, and wealth creation. To achieve this, the scheme was further subdivided into Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP), Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP), and Credit Delivery Programme (CDP).
2. Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS): Is concern with the provision and development of infrastructure needs in the areas of transport, energy, water, and communication, especially in rural areas;

3. Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWESS): Aims at ensuring the provision of basic social services, including quality primary and special education, strengthening the economic power of farmers, providing primary health care, and so on;
4. Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS). This deals with the harnessing of agriculture, water, solid minerals resources, conservation of land and space particularly for the convenient and effective utilization by small-scale operators and the immediate community (Okoye and Onyukwu, 2007). Under its Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP), it trained 100,000 unemployed youths just as 5,000 others who received training as tailors and fashion designers, were resettled. A total of 50,000 unemployed graduates have also benefited from NAPEP's Mandatory Attachment Programme, which is also an aspect of CAP. According to a 2008 analysis, the program has been able to train 130,000 youths and engaged 216,000 persons, but most of the beneficiaries were non-poor (Olaniyan, Yusuf and Oni, 2005; Wohlmuth, Alabi and Burger, 2009).

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)

At the beginning of the new democratic dispensation in 1999, a new economic policy direction was initiated christened Economic Policy Directions for Nigeria, 1999-2003. The programme aims at promoting market-oriented private sector-led economy with government serving as a catalyst and providing the enabling environment for the private sector to thrive and flourish. However, this policy was truncated before implementation when Nigeria started the process of developing an Interim Paper on Poverty Reduction Strategy (IPPRS), in February 2001. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) evolved as one of the conditionality of debt relief under the Enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC2). This was aimed at ensuring the judicious utilization of money released through debt relief for poor countries. What is new about PRSPs is that it sets the fight against poverty at the heart of development policies and emphasise the importance of dialogue on development strategies. The approach and emphasis in the PRSPs is about the process through which development policies are developed, implemented, and monitored. The underlying assumption is that for policies to be meaningful and realisable, the process through which they were formulated must be inclusive with popular participation in them. The origins of the PRSPs proposal according to Booth (2003) is anchored on four issues:

- I. The disappointing poverty reduction performance of most highly indebted and aid dependent countries throughout the last 20 years despite substantial changes in policies and institutions.
- II. Growing recognition of the importance of the national policy context for aid effectiveness;
- III. Increased awareness of the limitations of the conventional conditionalities for leveraging some of the critical changes;
- IV. A search for new instruments with which to justify a major new debt-reduction initiative.

The core elements that undergird the PRSPs are:

- I. Policy-making for poverty reduction should take a *country-led* strategy process, in which governments engage in dialogue with the constituents of the national society, resulting in greater national ownership of decisions taken.
- II. It should be results- or outcome oriented, starting from an analysis of poverty and its causes and working backwards to the design of appropriate policies.
- III. The thinking should be comprehensive and its coverage of different macro, sectoral and cross-sectoral issues that affect poverty reduction processes and prospects.
- IV. The basis for international support should be a form of partnership, in which all funding sources are drawn together in a co-ordinated way around a strategy developed under the leadership of the recipient government.
- V. This is visualised as a medium- to long-term process, implying a need for medium-term commitments as well as careful consideration of appropriate timing, performance criteria and monitoring arrangements (Booth, 2003).

By March 2003, Nigeria had completed the Draft Interim Paper on PRSP. However, the process of developing the Interim Paper was critiqued as being consultative rather than participatory, ad hoc and not mainstreamed (Eboh, 2010). Again, before implementation started in 2003, the same government embarked upon what it termed a home-grown equivalent of the PRSP, known as the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS-1), 2004-2007. Table 3 shows the indicators and achievements of NEEDS-1 between 2004 to 2008. During this period, significant progress was recorded with respect to the selected macroeconomic targets of NEEDS-1 as can be gleaned from Table 3.

Table 3: Selected Macroeconomic Indicators: NEEDS-1 Targets and Achievements', 2004-2008

Indicators	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Domestic Output Prices	-	-	-	-	-
GDP at current Market Prices (N billion)	11, 673.6	14, 735.3	18, 709.6	20, 853.6	24, 048.5
GDP at current Market Prices(US\$ billions)	76.17	88.37	144.49	148.69	175.36
GDP Per capita (N)	87, 845.3	109, 155.1	132, 604.3	142, 957.1	159, 906.8
GDP Per capita (US\$)	658.02	826.31	1, 030.34	1, 136.11	1, 349.08
Real GDP Growth (%)	6.6(5.0)	6.5(6.0)	6.0(6.0)	6.5(7.0)	6.4
Oil Sector	3.3(0.0)	0.5(0.0)	-4.2(0.0)	-4.5(0.0)	-4.5
Non-Oil Sector	7.8(7.3)	8.6(8.5)	9.4(8.3)	9.5(9.5)	9.1
GDP Deflator Growth (%)	-0.2	22.0	18.1	3.3	12.5
Inflation rate (%) (Dec. Over-Dec)	10.0(10.0)	11.6(9.5)	8.5(9.5)	6.6(9.0)	15.1
Gross National Savings (%of GDP)	19.27(14.1)	18.03(17.2)	32.80(23.0)	33.16(29.0)	35.31
Federal Government Finance (% of GDP)	-	-	-	-	-
Retained Revenue	11.4(9.7)	11.9(7.8)	10.4(7.6)	11.2(7.3)	13.3
Total Expenditure	12.9(23.5)	13.0(23.4)	10.9(22.9)	11.8(22.3)	13.5

NOTE: Figures in parenthesis are targets set under NEEDS-1, 2004-2008.

Source: Central Bank of Nigeria Annual Report, 2008

Towards sustaining the reforms and consolidating upon the achievements under NEEDS-1, the federal government initiated the NEEDS-2 process to cover the period 2008-2011. Again, but not surprising, NEEDS-2 was never adopted formally by the new government. This is because the new government rather enunciated its own policy directions anchored on the 7-Point Agenda under the Late Presidents Umaru Musa Yaradua. The 7-Point Agenda outlines the policy thrusts, priority sectors and agenda for social and economic development in Nigeria (Eboh, 2010).

At the same time, the government commenced the process of fixed-term development planning for the articulation of the Vision 2020 Economic Transformation Blueprint and the Vision 2020 1st Implementation Plan 2010-2013. Nigeria Vision 2020 encapsulates the key principles and thrusts of NEEDS-2 and the 7 Point Agenda, situating both within a long-range planning perspective to year 2020. NEEDS provides a framework for a nationally coordinated programme of action by the federal, state, and local governments. NEEDS identified the sectors that are key to poverty reduction to include health, education, electricity, roads, and water. Nigeria's progress report on the implementation of NEEDS demonstrates the major accomplishments that have already been realized (NPC, 2007). Implementation of the macroeconomic aspects of the NEEDS in 2005 and 2006 has continued to be good (IDA and IMF, 2007). However, many of the challenges for generating growth and reducing poverty have remained unaddressed.

Apart from the various poverty reduction institutions and policies, the three tiers of government in Nigeria (Local Governments, States and Federal) are also involved in the delivery of social services geared towards poverty reduction. The constitution assigns service delivery responsibilities to the three tiers of government with the states and local governments playing the most significant role in the delivery of basic services such as education, health, water and waste disposal services, among others. An examination of available data on education, health and water also indicates very poor performance among the three tiers of government in terms of service delivery in these sectors.

Water Supply and Sanitation:

The availability of safe water and adequate sanitation is critical not merely for health reasons, but also for economic development (WHO and UNICEF, 2006). The importance of water and adequate sanitation is recognized at both local and global levels. Between 2000 and 2005, the government completed 1,519 motorized boreholes and 3,552 hand-pump boreholes to address the water needs of 24.5 million people. New ongoing projects include 482 primary hydrological stations, 50 groundwater monitoring boreholes, hydrological mapping for effective water-resource administration, and 42 small and medium-scale dams (African Development Bank, 2007).

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Dwelling Units by Type of Water Supply, 2004 - 2008

Type of Water	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Pipe-borne Water	14.5	16.2	15.4	10.4	8.8
Bore-hole Water	17.6	24.0	20.8	26.8	28.4
Well Water	36.0	25.1	30.6	33.3	31.5
Streams/Ponds	31.5	33.5	32.5	24.4	27.6
Tanker/Truck/Van	0.4	1.2	0.8	4.1	3.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2009)

Despite these efforts, in 2008, about 62.3% of Nigerians do not have access to safe water supply or adequate sanitation (Table 4). Safe drinking water in Nigeria includes households' connections, public stand pipes, boreholes, protected wells and springs.

Health Care Services: Health care provision is a shared responsibility of all the three tiers of government. Available data reveals that Nigeria has very poor population health as measured by several health indicators. In 2009, maternal mortality rate was estimated to be 800 per 100,000 live births and was rated as one of the highest in the world, infant and under-five mortality rates were estimated to be 100 and 201 per 1,000 live births respectively. Infant mortality differs across location (81 for urban and 121 for rural) while under five mortality rate was 243 for rural and 153 for urban with a life expectancy of 54 years in 2007 (NBS, 2009).

Table 5: Nigerian Health Indicators, 2009

Indicators	North-East	North - West	North - Central	South-East	South-West	South-South	National	Rural	Urban
Infant mortality Rate (Per 1, 0000 live birth)	125.0	114.0	103.0	66.0	69.0	120.0	100.0	121.0	81.0
Under 5 Mortality Rate (per 1, 000 live birth)	260.0	269.0	165.0	103.0	114.0	176.0	201.0	243.0	153.0
Neo-Natal Mortality Rate (%)	53.0	61.0	55.0	34.0	53.0	39.0	48.0	60.0	37.0
Received 2+ Doses of Tetanus Toxoid (%)	46.0	31.0	21.0	78.0	62.0	74.0	41.0	32.0	61.0
Received Vitamin A Postpartum (%)	19.0	12.0	7.0	52.0	34.0	48.0	20.0	14.0	33.0
Acute Respiratory Infection or fever (%)	50.0	20.0	33.0	37.0	25.0	53.0	31.0	28.0	40.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, 2009

Education: Primary education is a vital components in the nation's education system. For one thing, it is the first stage and all beneficiaries of other levels of education must first pass through primary schools. Despite this importance of primary education, available data on primary education attainments in Nigeria indicates declining trends in various indicators. Also, data from the National Bureau of Statistics justifies this fact. In primary schools in Nigeria for instance, Figure 2 shows that there were gradual rise in total number of schools, total enrolment, total male enrolment, total female enrolment and total number of teachers from 2004-2006. However, this trend has changed as there was a gradual decrease from 2006 to 2008 in all the indicators at the primary schools level (Figure 2).

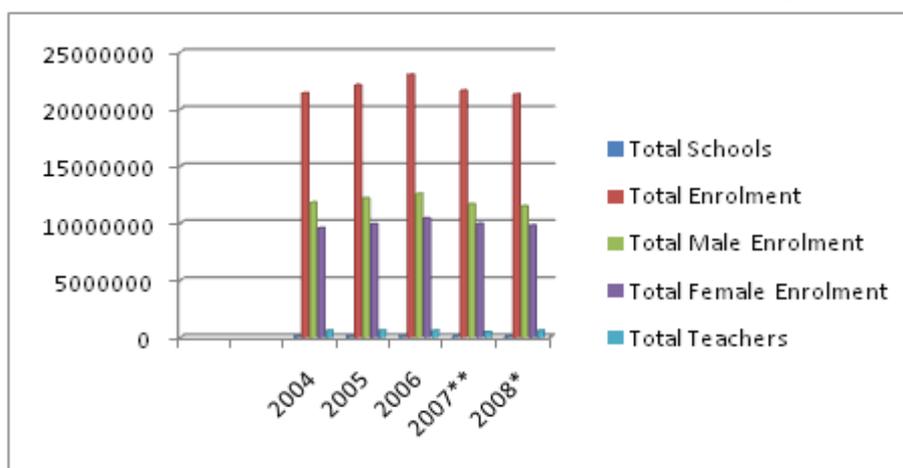


Figure 2: National Summary of Primary School Statistics, 2004 - 2008

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, 2009

A review of the various poverty reduction programmes of the federal government of Nigeria shows that they are all anchored on the delivery of social services. However, the performance of the various institutions in social service delivery for the purpose of poverty reduction is not too encouraging. According to Garba (2006), all the poverty alleviation initiatives in Nigeria since independence have yielded very little fruit.. Little wonder why the level of poverty in Nigeria has remained unabated. In this context, the study further seeks to identify the main challenges stymieing the various poverty reduction institutions in social service delivery for the purpose of poverty reduction in Nigeria.

From various studies, it is clearly revealed that poverty reduction programmes is fraught with multifarious challenges which hinder their effectiveness in the drive towards poverty reduction in Nigeria. The major reasons for the failure of poverty reduction related programmes in Nigeria are itemized below:

Programme inconsistency: Poverty reduction institutions in Nigeria is characterised by inconsistency occasioned by change of governments and self interest. This fact is demonstrated severally in the annals of poverty reduction strategies in Nigeria. For instance, the Economic Policy Directions for Nigeria, 1999-2003 which was initiated at the onset of the new democratic dispensation in 1999 was truncated before its implementation as Nigeria began the process of developing its Interim Paper on Poverty Reduction Strategy (IPRSPs) in February 2001. Due to the public criticisms associated with the process of the development of the IPRSP, before implementation started in 2003, the same government embarked upon what it termed a home-grown equivalent of the PRSP, known as the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS-1), 2004-2007. Further inconsistency was demonstrated when the federal government initiated the NEEDS-2 process to cover the period 2008-2011. However, NEEDS-2 was never adopted formally by the new government in 2008. Instead, it enunciated its policy directions anchored on 7-Point Agenda under the Late Presidents Umaru Musa Yaradua. The administration of Goodluck Jonathan has since abandoned the 7-point agenda of the previous administration.

Poor Implementation: The implementation problem is often identified as the bane of development problem in Nigeria. Implementation problem begins with poor programme design due to poor participation by programme beneficiaries. In addition, at the programme design stage, there is no adequate framework for programme monitoring and evaluation. The corollary of this is that programme implementation process often goes off track and the desired impacts of the programme are never met. Many poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria suffers from this problem. For instance, one of the major problems that bedevilled the FSP and FEAP was the non supervision and monitoring of loans and projects by the participating banks as well as inflation cost of equipment and provision of substandard equipment as well as poor loan recovery (Ugoh and Ukpere, 2009).

Corruption of government officials and public servants: Corruption poses one of the major challenges to development in Nigeria. It is deeply ingrained in all sectors of the economy including poverty reduction institutions. It impacts heavily on public investment,

lower government revenues, and lower quality of public Infrastructure. For instance, poverty reduction efforts associated with payment of stipends such as NDE, PAP , NAPEP and the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) have been criticized on the ground that the stipend hardly gets to the intended beneficiaries as the schemes have been hijacked by corrupt “privileged members of the society (Anakpej, 2001).

Poor targeting mechanisms: The ultimate goal of programme targeting is to ensure that programmes and projects meet the actual beneficiaries for which the projects were designed. The poor in Nigeria have benefitted very little from poverty alleviation programmes due to this fact. As stated earlier, poverty in Nigeria is a rural phenomena. However, poverty reduction institutions in Nigeria are urban based in scope and focus. This has deprived the mass of the poor in Nigeria, access to the few social services provided by these institutions for the purpose of poverty reduction. As explained by the World Bank (1996) “the safety nets in the country are ineffectively managed and do not reach the intended beneficiaries. They have not been successful as they have failed to include intended beneficiary communities in the design and execution of the safety net programs. These constraints and challenges explain why poverty is still pervasive in Nigeria despite the huge sums of money appropriated over the years through relevant antipoverty agencies to fight the menace.”

Poor Design: Poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria have suffered from poor design due to the top-bottom approach that has been adopted in the design of the programmes. Programme designers feel that the social service needs of the poor are known to them and hence no need to consult them. The result of this approach is that in most cases, delivered social services are at variance with the priority needs of the people. In addition, the programme lacks ownership by the people and often results to gross under-utilization of such services. Finally, the impact of such project on poverty reduction which is the ultimate objective is usually minimal.

Poor Funding of programmes: Despite the plethora of poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria, the provision of funds to support the various activities of the programmes is often limited. In addition, funds for the delivery of social services are often not released on time due to the delay in the passing of annual budget among the three tiers of government. This scenario has limited the quantity and quality of social services provided for the people for the purpose of poverty reduction.

Poor Monitoring and Evaluation of Poverty reduction programmes: In addition, the various poverty reduction programmes of the federal government lacks appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework. Right from the design stage, monitoring and evaluation framework are not mainstreamed into the entire process of implementation. The implication of this is that the programmes lack relevant indicators to track process of implementation. Consequently, programmes often go off track during implementation and impacts of programme are never felt by expected beneficiaries.

Multiplicity of Poverty Reduction Institutions: Institutions of poverty reduction in Nigeria are numerous ranging from government to non-governmental organizations. Even

within the government spheres, the three tiers of government and their multifarious Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) engage in one form of poverty reduction programmes and the other. A close examination of the activities of National Directorate of Employment and National Poverty Eradication Programme reveal that they are doing virtually the same thing. The absence of a central programme coordination unit among the various institutions results in duplication of services and sometimes conflicts of interest among the institutions. The corollary of this is that funds are sometime wasted on irrelevant services and the impact of such programmes on poverty is thereby reduced to the barest minimum compared to the amount of resources invested. In other situation, there are conflicts of interest and rivalry among programme implementing agencies which often reduces the overall impacts programmes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Globally, improving the living conditions of the poor is always a core concern of government, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders. This concern has been demonstrated in several international treaties and agreements such as the housing for all by the year 2000, education for all, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) among others. Nigerian government have also responded positively in this effort towards improving the living condition of the poor. Poverty reduction effort in Nigeria involves both government and non-government organizations. Thus, it could be argued that poverty reduction effort in Nigeria is anchored on the CSDM. However, the challenges identified above have weakened the efficacy of the model in social services delivered in Nigeria. Thus, despite the various efforts at both international and local levels, the poverty level has remained unabated. In the light of these challenges, the paper makes the following recommendations.

One of the countries in the world that have successfully achieved the MDG goals is Vietnam. It has achieved 5 out of 8 MDGs ahead of schedule and can basically complete all goals by 2015. Reduced the poverty rate from 58.1 percent in 1990 to 14.5 percent in 2008 and the number of hungry households dropped by two thirds (24.9% in 1993 to 6.9% in 2008) (Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, 2011). One of the key strategies adopted by the Vietnam authority was programme consistency. They developed and executed a ten-year Strategy for Socio-Economic Development from 2001-2010. This plan was closely implemented to the later by successive administration from 2001 to 2010. To reduce poverty in Nigeria, it is important that frequent changes in poverty reduction programmes by successive government be stopped.

Poverty reduction programmes right from conception should adopt a participatory and bottom top approach in the design and implementation process. Relevant indicators should be identified for the purpose of programme monitoring during implementation phase and the evaluation stages of the programmes. It is also important that implementing institutions and agencies developed appropriate frameworks to check the corruptions that have bedevilled the implementation of various poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria. There should be inter-agency interaction especially between programme implementers and

corruption checking agencies such as the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to ensure that funds earmarked for delivery of social services are utilized judiciously. Government must rise to the challenge to provide appropriate legal framework to check corruption among public office holders in Nigeria. The contemporary legal framework for checking corrupt tendencies among public office holders have failed in addressing the problem of corruption in Nigeria. China and Vietnam have made tremendous effort in reducing corruption in their country through the provision of suitable legal environment by the government. The impact of this on poverty level in these two countries is quite encouraging. According to Ravallion and Walle (2008), it has caused a reduction in poverty from 53% in 1981 to 5% in 2005 for China and 50% in 1993 to 20% in 2004 for Vietnam respectively. The spatial, socio-economic and demographic attributes of poverty in Nigeria demands that poverty reduction programmes should adopt a targeting approach. The rural poor and women must specifically be targeted by all poverty reduction programmes in Nigeria. This is vitally important if these programmes are to have any desired impacts on poverty in Nigeria.

Government must show strong commitment and determination to realize the goals of poverty reduction in Nigeria. This commitment and determination must come from adequate funding from government. Funds meant for the delivery of social services should be released at the right time to serve their purpose. Finally, the poverty reduction institutions should be streamlined to eliminate duplication of duties and responsibilities and reduce rivalry among institutions. Some of the institutions such as NDE and NAPEP should be collapsed into one institution. This will help to reduce waste of resources and ensure the delivery of right quality and quantity of social services for the poor in Nigeria.

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