
NILDS
Journal of
Democratic
Studies

Copyright 2024

Published by

National Institute for

Legislative & Democratic Studies,

National Assembly,

Abuja.

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording or otherwise) without prior written permission of both the copyright holder and the publisher.

This journal is published subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition being imposed on the subsequent user.

Contents

Information Communication Technology (ICT) As a Tool
in Deepening Electoral Process in Nigeria's Fourth Republic:
Reflections on Tangential Cases

Abubakar Olanrewaju Sulaiman

Assessing Nigeria's Foreign Policy:
An In-depth Exploration of Buhari's Administration, 2015-2023

Abdulrasheed Abdulyakeen

An Appraisal of Economic Development
and Nation Building in Nigeria

Taiwo Abimbola Olaniyan

Implications of Kidnapping on National Security
in Nigeria's North Central Region

Isiaka Dele

Improved Accountability and Transparency for
Public Parastatals in Nigeria through Enhanced Legislative Oversight

Anthony Emmanuel Edet, Ovey Gilla Achuku, Olajide Olufunsho Ayobolu, Queen Eveshonya Onyekeson

Assessment of Skit Making as an Advocacy Tool
Against the Lawlessness of Nigerian Policemen

Desmond Onyemechi Okocha, Ugonne Orimili Atu-Obinabo, Abigail Abioye & Jemimah Shuna Dogo

Assessment of the Effect of Information Communication Technology
on Africa's Political and Economic Advancement

Ekpe Bennet Essien

Syrian Crisis and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P):
Between Sovereignty and Humanitarian Intervention

Osadebamwen Francis Osayi

An Appraisal of Economic Development and Nation Building in Nigeria

Taiwo Abimbola Olaniyan¹

Abstract

Nigeria attained independence in 1960, and since then, economic development in the country has undergone several phases. Beginning with an agrarian economy that helped in sustaining and supporting the immediate family, and by the commencement and close of colonial rule, up to the early decades of independence, provided avenues for regional and national development. Agricultural exports further deepened Nigeria's economic development in the First Republic but witnessed a steady decline following the discovery and gradual dependence on oil shortly after the country attained a major oil-producing status in the world. As revenues from oil increased and were relied on for the nation's development, the prospects for agriculture declined. The consequence of declining agricultural production heightened, resulting in greater imports of much-needed food for the teeming population. Also, the incident of oil glut decreased the prospects for economic development, creating a dangerous trend for the country. This paper examines the trajectory of Nigeria's economic development and its impact on nation-building. It takes a look at the beginning of Nigeria's developmental profile through the different phases of development plans and the factors that truncated its effective implementation across the board.

Keywords: Nation Building, Economic Development, Nigeria

¹ National Institute for Legislative and Democratic Studies, Abuja

Introduction

Over time, scholars and economists argue that the yardstick for measuring development is the national wealth of a country, which is associated with the gross domestic product (GDP) of the country. This argument hinged on what is called the *growth first* approach to development suggests that “if economic activity grows faster than the population, then there are more goods and services in circulation per person” (Blake, 2005). This, in other words, indicates that the country, as a whole, has become more prosperous. However, the use of GDP per individual to measure development confronts the reader with several shortcomings. For example, Blake (2005) observes that the *basic needs* approach to development places emphasis on growth only without also considering “progress in human survival and fulfilment across national populations.” This approach suggests that not only does growth determine development, but also equitable distribution of resources, which enables people to earn a desirable income and live a fulfilling life. Based on the importance of balancing growth with equitable distribution of resources, a World Bank study observed that despite the increasing rate of growth in many developing countries, poverty and inequality had aggravated (cited in Kambhampati, 2004). The World Bank, rather than employ a top-down approach to spreading wealth, therefore, focused on a policy shift that would tackle poverty in these countries beyond the *basic needs* approach.

An attempt to further understand the concept of development draws the reader’s attention to Walter Rodney’s thesis, where he argues that development can best be discussed under economic growth, which signifies the improvement in society where available resources are experienced by the people. This is regarded as an achievement of personal development, which is linked to the state of society in general. In Rodney’s view, development is an enhancement in the capacity to direct both internal and external relationships (Rodney, 1976). Therefore, it can be deduced that there is no development in a society where personal development is absent, as development should significantly impact or change people’s lives positively. As Rodney rightly points out, development is situated within an exclusive economic framework justified by the type of economy, which is itself an indicator of other social attributes. Hence, economic

development rests on the notion that a society economically develops when its resources benefit virtually all members of that society. Beyond Rodney, several parameters can be utilised to gauge economic development, viewed through the lens of Gross Domestic Product, literacy rate, Foreign Direct Investment, Human Development Index, access to healthcare, life expectancy, among others. The presence of these parameters, alongside others, offers a comprehensive representation of a country's economic development trajectory and also aids in identifying areas for improvement, such as educational enrolment and trade balance, among others. It is on this premise that this paper appraises economic development in Nigeria, the challenges it poses, and its effects on nation-building.

Colonial Antecedents

European expansion into Nigeria commenced in the middle of the 19th century, beginning with the arrival of Christian Missionaries. Less than fifty years earlier, the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade had been abolished and replaced with what is popularly referred to as the Legitimate Trade. The economic interests of European powers, particularly Britain, were the driving force that led to this transformation. Africa became the source of raw materials required by European merchants, and the constant demand for agricultural products, which was the mainstay of the local economy, prompted these foreign merchants to occupy the continent. The division of the continent among the European powers led Britain to Nigeria, which fell under its conquest, control and later colonisation by 1855.

Trading activities were carried out by British-owned companies and foreign firms. oil palm, which was the primary source of trade goods in the delta areas, attracted the interests of the British and so encouraged the exportation of palm oil, palm kernels and other palm products to their country's factories. Plant products formed close to 89 per cent of all exports from colonial Nigeria by the 20th century, when it was replaced by other cash crops. Following economic pressures from other countries, the British colonial government developed Nigeria's agricultural sector by directing farmers to produce crops in line with market demands.

Conscious planning for development in Nigeria has a history dating back to colonial times. In specific terms, this commenced in 1946 when the British colonial administration introduced what is called the Ten-Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria with an expenditure equivalent of ₦110 million appropriated for a ten-year timeline, starting from 1946 to 1956 (Nathan & Uche, 2023). The Development Plan concentrated on the construction of a transport and communication system but made limited provisions for industrial advancement (Orji, 2013). Also, the plan's focus on agriculture was highly selective, with attention given more to a defined scope of cash crops, such as cocoa, timber, among others. From the above analysis, it is apparent that the Development Plan was conceived primarily to meet the overall interests of the British government as against the people.

Although the development plan made significant headway in its first three years, but experienced a setback by 1950, failing to complete its ten-year cycle. One reason that explains this stemmed from the rapid structural changes that Nigeria was encountering during this period. As a result, the colonial authorities made a few changes to the plan by breaking it into two periods, with the second period to lapse in six years from 1950-1956. Again, the new plan failed to reach its full term following the introduction of the Macpherson Constitution in 1951, which granted autonomy to the three regions in the country, each subsequently adopting its different economic policies. From the analysis above, it becomes clear how Nigeria's economic development started before independence, based on the ideas and principles laid down by the British colonial authorities. It also illustrates the commencement of the application of development planning in the country, which focused on specific areas and placed limitations on others.

Economic Experiments: Development Plans (1960-1985)

At independence, the country's new political leaders launched their development plans that were more comprehensive than those formulated by the British colonial authorities. By comprehensive, this suggests that these plans were conceptualised based on the improved resources and, unlike the previous era that was limited in scope, addressed how the running of the public and private sectors could be conducted. Also, the economic development

plan at independence was focused on well-defined general economic targets. Nigeria operated four development plans between 1960 and 1985, each with its respective focus and defined objectives, with key implications on the country's developmental ambitions.

The Tafawa Balewa government (1960-1966) launched the First National Development Plan in 1962, planned to cover the years 1962-1968 with a proposed total investment expenditure amounting to about ₦2.132 billion. Investment in the public sector was expected to gulp around ₦1.352 billion, and the balance of ₦780 million was to be drawn by the private sector. This plan, however, met a brick wall before its full implementation materialised after two military coups in January and April 1966 and a bloody civil war in 1967, which ended in 1970. The new military administration, however, extended the plan to the first quarter of 1970. Despite these major disruptions, the country both at the federal and regional government levels recorded some important achievements such as the construction of an oil refinery, a paper and sugar mill, two dams, the Niger Bridge, a ports extension and a few trunks a road.

The crisis period notwithstanding, universities were opened in Lagos by the Federal Government, while the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, and the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) were similarly founded by the Eastern, Northern and Western Nigerian governments, respectively. This feat, Ukelina (2021) notes, was achieved both by the federal and regional governments because the annual capital budgets functioned within the development plan model and since they served as the primary instrument of authority and also the allocation of development resources. It could, therefore, be said that the availability of a well-articulated development plan, which provided a detailed road map for a purposeful and integrated development during the period, made this feat achievable despite the raging political crises that emerged at the time.

In the aftermath of the civil war in 1970, the Second National Development Plan was launched by Yakubu Gowon for the Federal Military Government and the twelve newly created federating states. Being a post-war development plan, the emphasis was on the rebuilding of a worn-out economy arising from the civil war, as well as the pursuit of socio-economic development in post-war Nigeria.

The abiding principle of the Second Development Plan was consequently directed by the deplorable impact of the war, and, thus, the construction of a cohesive and self-reliant country as well as a vibrant economy became a priority for the government (Buba et al., 2023). The Second National Development Plan, like its predecessor, recorded some major projects at both levels of government some of which include the construction of a number of federal roads and the institution of government scholarship and loan schemes for students at the tertiary level and also the commencement of the National Youth Service Corps exercise which was primarily conceived as part of the government's post-war reconciliation efforts.

The Third National Development Plan was launched by the Gowon-led military government, and this covered the period between 1975 and 1980. Scholars note that this plan was pivotal in the development of economic planning in Nigeria, given its unique attributes and cardinal objectives. Apart from its vast initial investment of close to ₦30 billion (subsequently revised upward to ₦43.3 billion), the government, in the process of preparing the plan, carried out extensive consultations with the organised private sector. For instance, the plan period of five years mandated an increase in per capita income, increased even distribution of income, economic diversification, balanced development, easing of unemployment levels, and localisation of economic activities, among other objectives.

Commendable as the objectives of this plan were, its major challenge was in its implementation adversely impacted by the military coup that effected a change of government in 1975. This change emerged a mere three months after the plan was launched by the ousted military regime. As was usually the case, the new government carried out a reappraisal of some of the central objectives highlighted in the plan. Emphasis was, therefore, hinged on those projects considered to have a direct impact on the living standard of the citizens. Agriculture, water supply, housing and health sectors were, as a result, given top priority (Joseph, 2014).

President Shehu Shagari launched the Fourth National Development Plan in 1981. By this time, the federal government had created even more states, increasing them to nineteen. This was the first plan, which covered the years

1981-1985, to be developed by a civilian government under a new national constitution firmly grounded on the presidential system of government. The plan was proposed to kickstart the process of putting a solid foundation for the long-term socio-economic development of the country (Emmanuel, 2019). Departing from the modus operandi of preceding development plans, the Fourth Development Plan was, indeed, the first to consider the participation of local governments at two levels. On the first level, they were inclined to participate in the area of preparation, and on the second, were made to include their separate programmes under the plan. The capital investment target was benchmarked at ₦82.2 billion, which was to be shared by both the public and private sectors. While the public sector was required to put in about ₦70.5 billion, the private sector was expected to do the same with the balance of ₦11.7 billion.

Despite the gains that the Fourth Development Plan was to make for the country and its population, it was once again truncated by yet another change of government in 1983 and another one in 1985. Not only did both changes impact negatively and disrupt the effective execution of the programmes enumerated in the plan, but the performance of the economy, as a consequence, was generally poor throughout the plan period. It is vital to note that, notwithstanding the success or failure of the different national development plans, particularly from 1945 to 1986, the idea of development planning was a common feature pursued by different administrators of the country, and this could be seen from the framework of planning for socio-economic development in Nigeria. By the end of 1986, the concept of development planning had gradually declined and has since then never been considered by successive generations of leaders in the country as an important tool for economic progress. This will form a major exercise in this paper shortly.

Revenue Allocation Formula: A Brief View

The unpredictable nature of oil production and revenue collection triggered by conflict in the Niger Delta area as well as the devastating impact of the global depression with a drop in commodity prices (including oil prices), necessitates the need for an introspection on how to rejig Nigeria's economy. It is generally

known that in the past few decades, Nigeria's source of public revenue is the proceeds gotten from crude oil sales, levies, tolls, taxes, fines, among others.

The subject of revenue allocation in virtually all polities, the federal government in particular, is a major challenge that is often associated with or rooted in politics. In Nigeria's case, as a focus of this paper, its experience with revenue allocation presents an interesting subject of discussion. One of the central reasons why revenue allocation was developed in Nigeria is based generally on factors that often reflect and gravitate towards the reinforcement of the balance of political and economic power between the central government and the sub-national government. If Nigeria is constituted of strong, essentially self-governing federating states and a relatively weak centre, revenue allocation agreements which seek to reflect this constitutional reality by handing fiscal self-governance to the states are most likely to reinforce such states, although this comes at the detriment of the federal government. However, should the objective be that it is to promote the development of collaborative federalism, revenue allocation is contrived to engender the synchronisation and reconciliation of fiscal policies in the interest of a unified federating polity.

The anchor of the finances of both the federating units and local governments in Nigeria is centred on collected revenue by the federal government, which accounts for about 90 per cent of their aggregate revenue. This revenue, when shared, is used by the state governments in maintaining services and servicing debts. Some of these include the payment of workers' salaries, payment for essential supplies, execution of capital projects and repayment of debts. As sub-national governments in a federating unit like ours, their financial viability rests on this revenue. The behaviour of the persons or actors involved in the allocation of this revenue constitutes very deep concerns and also elicits strong emotions. This is in direct contrast to the rationale for revenue sharing in federations that are more settled and where the earnings meant to be distributed constitute only a minor component of the state's aggregate earnings and are, thus, simply a secondary rather than a key fraction of state resources.

Scholars have argued that there are some regions in Nigeria which rely more on federal government allocation than others (Ituma et al, 2023). The 1962 to 1966 plan, for instance, saw a massive transfer of federal resources to the North,

totalling N58.2 million, unlike in the West and East, which collected federal resources amounting to N39.8 million and N24 million, respectively. For much of its history, Nigeria has witnessed some of the most significant and relentless struggles for resources among the different ethnic groups over revenue allocation. Despite this, the central government remains the principal revenue earner in the country and continues to control far more resources than the sub-national units. While it is known that the central governments often have some surplus funds to cater to their divergent needs, the same cannot be said of the federating units, which usually manage to balance their budgets. In some cases, these federating units cannot grapple with the functions allotted to them, particularly in the payment of salaries. There, despite the allocation of funds to the federating units from the central government based on a constitutional framework or the recommendations made by the constituting bodies, the latter still requires supplementary financial support to enable them to perform their functions adequately.

When the subject of revenue sharing across the federating units is raised, two key challenges often arise. The first is linked to how the challenges arising from inequality in size and wealth among the different federating units should be treated while the second is how to guarantee that the growth of any federating unit is not impacted negatively since there are some other federating units which demonstrate the lack of capacity to catch up with the more progressive units.

From Development Plans to Structural Adjustment Programme

By the late 1980s, the tradition of development planning in Nigeria was slowly phased out under the military regime of Ibrahim Babangida. Responding to the challenges encountered in the country during the Fourth Development Plan period, the military government set aside the notion of a five-year development plan, which was originally a well-established tradition. By the time the Fourth Development Plan reached its peak in 1985, an economic emergency programme that would last for a year was initiated in 1986, which was, perhaps, designed to mitigate against the leftover economic challenges of the Shagari administration. As it would later appear, this economic emergency programme would later

be absorbed by an economic intervention programme subsequently named the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP).

Under the Babangida military regime, he came up with a somewhat aspirational scheme of concurrent political and economic liberalisation. This emerged as a result of how his predecessor handled the nation's economy, which he qualified as austerity without adjustment, to which he was highly critical. The SAP was a World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) economic initiative of the 1970s and 1980s, which most African nations keyed into as an economic remedy. Babangida introduced SAP as the third period of austerity since 1982 (Biersteker & Lewis, 1996), with its stated objectives hinged on the restructuring and diversification of the productive sector of the country's economy and pursuing fiscal stability and positive balance of payments. Others include choosing the foundation for sustained non-inflationary or minimal inflationary growth and cutting down on the monopoly of unproductive investments in the public sector (Isiani, 2021).

To effectively facilitate the implementation of SAP, Babangida held talks with the IMF similar to how his predecessor had done, although later abandoning the idea, and also accelerated public discussion and garnered support from a broad section of Nigerians on its merit. Several national debates on the IMF's economic fund intervention were initiated. Despite the government's efforts to mobilise support, a broad-based opposition both from the public and private sectors to SAP and the IMF-sponsored fund was triggered. According to Biersteker and Lewis (1996), not only did the organised labour union consider the IMF programme anti-worker and only beneficial to the wealthy class at the expense of poor citizens, but academics, students and others opposed it. Notwithstanding the massive citizen opposition to the SAP, prominent Indigenous entrepreneurs, economic experts and a major association of business firms of trade in Lagos, all supported the fund and even agreed to its implementation (Biersteker & Lewis, 1996). Several reasons have been named for the broad opposition to the IMF fund. Shafiu et al (2023), for instance, argued that decades of corruption linked to the country's successive leadership created a sense of apprehension and suspicion among the people, igniting the belief that the Babangida regime would not be able to manage the economy properly with such funds.

The main features of the SAP include the idea to reinforce demand management policies, liberalise the trade and foreign exchange regimes, rationalise and restructure the tariff system and minimise administrative controls to foster an expansive role for market mechanisms (Nhlapo, 2020). Others are to adopt frameworks that would help accelerate domestic production, establish market-determined pricing policies and promote privatisation (Danladi & Peter, 2016). Based on the form of communication adopted in presenting the SAP to the general public and drawing on the idea that the programme had a two-year window, that is, from 1986 to 1988, most Nigerians assumed that measures would be temporary (Biersteker & Lewis, 1996). The first evidence that proved that Babangida was eager to implement the SAP emerged in his budget speech in 1988. Here, he implied that the worst was already behind the people who could expect an expansionary, reflationary budget year in and out (*West Africa*, 1988). However, between 1988 and the first few months of 1989, there were no visible signs that SAP was having the desired impact on certain aspects of the economy.

Nigeria's creditworthiness with global financial institutions had been re-established from its poor bearings both in 1984 and 1985, while its economic transaction standing had been positive since the military takeover in 1984. Also, Nigeria witnessed an increase in its foreign exchange with exports of substantial growth in the domestic production of some cash crops. There was a general increase in agricultural production, a revival of the palm oil industry in the East and an impressive increase in non-oil exports (Biersteker & Lewis, 1996). The IMF-induced economic programmes pursued by the Babangida regime soon lost the legitimacy they had garnered in their early years because they became increasingly inconsistent with local realities. The insincerity of purpose and the sit-tight mentality of the regime did not allow it to settle the hindrances accompanying the SAP. As Nigeria entered the 1990s with much expectation, citizens were confronted with a failed political transition hatched by the Babangida regime, which led to a hurried transfer of political power to an interim government, further weakening an already fragile economy.

Economic Development and the Implications for Nation-Building

As exemplified earlier, development can be viewed from the angle of fairness, social justice, and the sustenance of basic human rights. This idea acknowledges that democracy has a moral obligation towards the health and wellness of society, which is dependent upon not only the proper application and implementation of government policies or programmes but also on citizen confidence. Methods, functions and rules of politics and government are important frameworks that ensure that these will not be breached or arbitrarily modified by those in control but duly preserved at all times (Mboh & Udoh, 2023).

A government is considered to be good if it presents itself as responsive and provides both a governmental and state administrative framework that encourages good governance. Although good governance and economic development serve longer-term goals, the former can be attained without the latter. Good government, in other words, would suggest the following:

- A legitimate and representative government following democratic elections.
- An accountable administration and a responsive government characterised by free-flowing information, separation of powers, effective internal and external auditing, low levels of corruption and nepotism, competent officials, realistic policies and low defence expenditure.
- Governmental respect for human rights, as indicated by freedom of religion and movement, the impartial and accessible criminal justice system, and the absence of arbitrary government power (Oshionebo, 2004).

The substance of democracy, therefore, is to provide an enabling environment where the potential or natural talents of society can be drawn such that possibilities will be yielded for comprehensive development (Oshuonebo, 2001). Based on the above analysis, development plans are, no doubt, critical to good governance. It is, therefore, logical to contend that the withdrawal of

development plans in Nigeria, owing to years of military coups, accounts for the diverse developmental challenges encountered in the country in the past decades. Nigeria's development standing since gaining independence in 1960 articulately points out the connection between good governance and societal development. Given this standing, Nigeria is richly endowed with both human and natural resources that, in various ways, should ordinarily translate to a prosperous society, yet the country's poor economic performance in virtually all sectors remains prevalent. Apart from the real sector, such as manufacturing and agriculture, which perform rather poorly, Nigeria is still import-dependent on several agricultural products to meet its consumption demands. The country's per capita income, which amounted to about \$1,281.4 in 1980, increasingly declined to as low as \$240.0 in 1992 and then stood at around \$250.0 in 1995 and at \$270.0 in 1997, respectively, which is roughly the same figure as 1972 (Obadah et al., 2002). That figure, according to *Trading Economics*, stands at between \$2,160 and \$2,499 as of 2022, although the figure reached an all-time high of \$2679 in 2015. What this demonstrates is that Nigeria has not fared well compared to non-oil-producing states such as Morocco, whose per capita income stood at \$3,301 within the same year.

While it may appear that the economy is experiencing some gains, a critical look suggests that these gains are minimal, considering, in particular, the resource distribution of the country's development efforts. As earlier illustrated, Nigeria's development indices depict a declining economic growth rate, low-capacity utilisation in the industrial sector, inadequate performing utilities/infrastructure and a resultant increase in operating costs. The country's economy is, thus, troubled in every sector with crises of diverse proportions. This crisis could be seen in energy, education, unemployment and food to transportation, debt, as well as a crisis of economic mismanagement (Onyekpe, 2022). The general implication of the above macro-economic challenges is the wanton poverty profile of the majority of the citizens, which continues to exacerbate by the day.

According to the Human Development Report by the UNDP for the year 2001, Nigeria stood at 148 out of the 173 countries surveyed. When compared with the report for 2003, Nigeria stood at 152 out of the 175 countries the survey

covered. Drawing on official statistics, the national incidence of poverty was said to have increased from a modest level of 15 per cent to 28 per cent in 1960 and 1980, respectively. The statistics, as Obadah (2002) argues, show a further increase to 46 per cent and 66 per cent in 1985 and 1996 as respectively, and are estimated at over 70 per cent in 2001. The quandary is, no doubt, a manifestation of the failure to practice or follow the trajectory of development plans, which continues to deny the country the requisite blueprints for development.

Following the emergence of the Olusegun Obasanjo civilian administration in 1999, concerted efforts were made to address the various crises that had impacted negatively on the economy as well as pursue avenues of reviving the economy. By the following year, the economy did not show any sign of improvement or significant deterioration, but rather was static and encountering low-income and abysmal growth with strains in several areas. What this illustrates is that Nigeria's level of development in recent times is not commensurate with the level of resources spread across the country. One major reason for this lies in the increasing levels of corruption, which the lack of adequate resource utilisation for development has made achievable. Societies cannot successfully attain their full potential if corruption is allowed to fester, particularly in Nigeria.

By abandoning the development plans, which in recent times remain one of the common travesties occasioned by long years of military intervention, corruption festered. The rules and standards that regulate the conduct of official business, which development plans originally enunciate, have withered. Consequently, the lack of integrity which pervades virtually all levels of the country's bureaucracy, and which once served as the medium for the execution of development plans in previous decades, remains.

Budgets, which are not oriented towards any critical development, often find their way to the legislature with minimal scrutiny and follow-up on proper execution. This has created avenues for personal enrichment through the stealing of public funds by persons in positions of political authority. By implication, the practice whereby the country's budget is passed purposely to finance the lifestyle of a few with little or no compensation for the teeming population has since eroded citizen trust in public officeholders and, as a result, triggered the subversion of the rule of law. Also, governance at all levels has

been left weakened and, more importantly, impeded economic growth across all sectors of the economy. The nation's resources intended for development purposes are freely dissipated by a few.

Conclusion

Before the military coup of 1966, the three regions operational since the 1950s were autonomous, and one could see this is based on the fact that each one generated most of its revenues from independent sources such as agriculture (Edet, 2021). More than five decades since independence, the state government has become dependent on revenues collected by the federal government. This has led to the distribution of goods and services, with people paying appropriately. When the revenue sharing formulae are reviewed, weight must be given to each sub-national based on the function they perform. This will help to strengthen the economy of each tier of government as they grow, and also foster the need for economic development in the country. The result of this is that it will help in building a sustainable nation where conflict or war is minimised.

Nigeria needs to focus more than ever before on its agricultural potential. With a country blessed with vast wasteland and a very rich soil for planting, the government needs to encourage its citizens, who are farmers and those who are not, to return to the farmland. This should be carried out across the states of the federation, with special farm cooperatives formed that would cater for all kinds of crops. Nations that strive and invest in agriculture have a well-structured economy that develops from the bottom to the top. Once this can be achieved, the idea of building a nation is nurtured. For a country with enormous faults, agriculture can be used to address Nigeria's cracked foundation and help build it to enviable heights.

The government needs to show a deeper level of commitment to technical training and capacity building of citizens while aiding to increase public enlightenment that will boost income by the three tiers of government. In other words, Nigeria's declining economy, with one of the highest inflationary trends, will be impacted positively. More so, a growing number of the population

will be able to pursue the government's objective of building a nation without rancour.

As the paper demonstrates, the standing of economic development in Nigeria before and since independence has been a mixed bag. Despite the bright prospects that most of these economic programmes show, they are often undermined by several factors which have contributed to the decline in the development of the state. Despite its status as an oil-producing state, Nigeria has witnessed a terrible slide in economic fortunes, actuated by leadership challenges. Based on this stark reality, the process of nation-building continues to elude the people. For development plans to effectively translate to good governance, it is first important to develop a culture of transparency. The bureaucratic processes in Nigeria require a critical overhaul, which would help to facilitate effective governance by eliminating the creation of artificial bottlenecks that often undermine policy implementation, as embedded in all development plans. This paper closes with the view that the Nigerian state cannot build a viable nation with a sense of social justice and equity unless the political leadership develop indigenous economic frameworks that have strong resonance with the citizens. This will not only aid in transforming the country in every area of life but also accelerate Nigeria's economy to become one of the top five in the world.

References

- Babangida's budget of hope, *West Africa*, January 11, 1988, 7.
- Biersteker, T. & Lewis, P. (1996). The Rise and Fall of Structural Adjustment in Nigeria. In Diamond, L., Kirk-Greene, A. H. M., & Oyediran, O. (Eds.), *Transition without end: Nigerian politics and civil society under Babangida*, (p. 337), Ibadan: Vantage Publishers.
- Blake, C. H. (2005). *Politics in Latin America: The Quest for Development, Liberty, and Governance*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 81.
- Buba, A., Hussaini, H. A. & Garba, K. A. (2023). A Critical Review of Nigeria's Second National Development Plan (1970-1974). *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research*, 5(4), 13-20.
- Danladi, A. & Peter, N. (2016). Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria and its implications on socio-economic development 1980-1995. *The Calabar Historical Journal*, 6(2), 1-7.
- Edet, J. T. (2021). Revenue Allocation in Nigeria: Issues, Challenges and Prospects. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 11(2), 229-245.
- Emmanuel, U. (2019). Development Plans and Policies in Nigeria: Observed Impediments and Practical Best Alternative. *International Journal of Research in Science Innovation*, 6(7), 2321-2705.
- Ikeji, C. C. (2011). Politics of Revenue Allocation in Nigeria: A Re-visitation. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(3), 300.
- Isiani, M. C., Anthonia Obi-Ani, N., Obi-Ani, P., Chidume, C. G., & Okoye-Ugwu, S. (2021). Interrogating the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Policies in Nigeria, 1986-2018. *Cogent Arts & Humanities* 8(1), 1-14.
- Joseph, O. A. (2014). National Development Strategies: Challenges and Options, *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention* 3(4), 51-58.
- Kambhampati, U. S. (2004). *Development and the Developing World*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing Inc. 20.
- Nathan, E. & Uche, W. J. (2023). An Assessment of Nigeria's Economic Development Plans 1946-2020. *Wilberforce Journal of the Social Sciences*, 8(1), 88-109.
- Nhlapo, N. (2020). The Role of International Financial Institutions in Africa's Development: How the Failures of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund Led to the Creation of the African Development Bank. Masters thesis. University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- Ituma, C. E., Uguru, I. C., & Awa, F. N. (2023). Federation Account Allocation and Economic Growth in Nigeria. *African Journal of Social Issues* 6(1), 90-105.
- Mboh, K. S., & Udoh, E. R. (2023). Poverty Alleviation Programmes in Nigeria: A Study of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Micro-Credit Scheme in Uyo LGA of Akwa Ibom State. *AKSU Journal of Management Sciences*, 3(1), 71-79.
- Obadah, M. I., (2002). Poverty Reduction in Nigeria: The Way Forward. In Obadah, M. I., Adubi, A. A., & Uga, E. O. (Eds.), *Integration of Poverty Alleviation Strategies into Plans and Programmes in Nigeria*. Ibadan: NCEMA/World Bank.
- Obadah, M. I., Oshinebo, B. O., & Uga, E. O. (2002). Democratic Governance and the Imperatives of Effective Planning and Budgeting. In Obadah, M. I., et al (Eds.), *Effective Planning and Budgeting in a Democratic Setting*, Proceedings of the English Annual DPRS Directors' Conference, 25-29 June, NCEMA, Ibadan.

Onyekpe, J. G. N. (2022). Anatomy of Nigeria's Economic Crisis, *African Journal of Applied Research*, 8(2), 170-185.

Orji, K. E. (2013). Historical Materialism and the National Development Question in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(3), 195-202.

Oshionebo, B. O. (2004). Capacity Building in a Democratic Era. In B. Imam & M. I. Obadan (Eds.), *Democratic Government and Development Management in Nigeria's Fourth Republic, 1999-2003*. Ibadan: Centre for Local Government and Rural Development Studies (CLGARDS).

Rodney, W. (1976). *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania Publishing House, 10.

Shafiu, R. M., Salleh, M. A., Bala, H., Shafiu, A. M. & Abdullah, U. (2023). Analysis on IMF Loan Conditions with More Detrimental Impact on the Economy: A Case Study of Nigeria. *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 1185, 1-8.

Trading Economics, <http://tradingeconomics.com/nigeria/gdp-per-capita>.

Ukelina, B. U. (2021). Making a Nation Modern: CIS and Nigeria's First National Development Plan. *Journal of West African History*, 7(2), 25-48.