

## **Sustainable Development Goal 1 and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria: The Implementation Challenges**

**ANIETI Nseowo Udofia, PhD**

Department of Political Science and Public Administration  
Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria

Email: [anietiudofia@uniuyo.edu.ng](mailto:anietiudofia@uniuyo.edu.ng)

Phone: +2348060853959

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2549-9026>

### **Abstract**

*Eradicating poverty in all its form has been the burden of governments and non-governmental organizations in the world. However, in order to end poverty. However, in order to end poverty, the United Nations through its Sustainable Development Goals has been proactive in implementing programmes towards ending poverty by 2030. Despite the effort of the SGD and that of the Nigerian government, instead of poverty reducing, there seems to be a geometrical increase in the number of poor people in the country and this has been attributed to a lot of factors but not limited to corruption in public offices. The objective of this paper is to examine the challenges militating against the effective implementation of SDG goal 1 in Nigeria. The paper adopted secondary methods of data collection and hence relied on content analysis as its analytical tool. The work is anchored on Human Development Theory by Amartya Sen. It was found out that, the United Nations through the SDG has initiated programmes that would have helped reduce poverty but poverty persists because of corruption and other vices associated in the implementation process. Based on the findings, it is recommended that awareness and proper identification of the poor at the village level should be the approach adopted by the government to select beneficiaries of poverty reduction programmes in the country.*

**Keywords:** SDGs, Development, MDGs, Poverty, Poverty reduction, Implementation Challenges

### **Introduction**

Eradicating poverty in all its forms is one of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs). Within the perspective of the SDGs giving people in every part of the world the needed support to lift themselves out of poverty is a goal that must be realized through the goals. To achieve this, the target outcome of all SDG poverty reduction programmes is always geared towards eradication of extreme poverty; reduction of all poverty by half; implementation of social protection systems; ensuring equal rights to ownership; basic services; technology and economic resources and the rebuilding of resilience to environmental, economic as well as social disasters (United Nations Annual Report, 2015).

From the standpoint of the UN strategies to achieving poverty reduction in the world, it therefore suggests that, what causes poverty are ineffective implementation of social protection schemes, inequality gap, absence of basic services and economic policies of government. Within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development endorsed by world leaders in September 2015 which was a follow up to the 2015-2021 Strategic Plan, it is hoped that by 2023 people living below the poverty line would have reduced by half through the implementation of nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures.

It should be emphasized that the SDG programmes have benefitted a lot of people across the globe and have lifted them out of poverty. However, as a result of the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the world economies; there is a risk of reversing decades of progress in the fight against poverty in the world. According to researches, this may be the first time that poverty has increased globally in thirty years since 1990.

It is important to note that, before the negative impact of the Covid-19, there was significant increase in the number of persons taken out of poverty e.g. China and India. However, in Sub-Sahara Africa which includes Nigeria where about 80 percent of the people live in extreme poverty, improvement has been slow (UNDP Nigeria's Annual Report, 2016). The above UNDP report of 2016 seems to be validated when the National Bureau of Statistics in Nigeria during its 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index Survey stated that 63 percent of persons living within Nigeria (133m) are multidimensional poor.

The ineffective implementation of the UNDP programmes as well as the home-grown poverty reduction programmes of the federal and state governments to reduce poverty and usher in development has been blamed on a lot of factors which this paper sets out to examine.

### **The Concept of Sustainable Development (SDG)**

The Sustainable Development Goals were given birth to at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012. The target goal was to produce a set of universal goals that meets the immediate environmental, political and economic challenges faced by the world.

These 17 goals replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which started a global effort in 2000 to tackle the indignity of poverty among the world population. For 15 years, the MDGs drove progress in several areas such as reducing poverty by providing much needed access to water and sanitation, driving down child mortality and drastically improving maternal health.

The gains and the failures of the MDGs provided the platform on which the SDG was built. Sustainable Development Goal is an effort to finish what could not be finished by the MDG and tackle some of the more pressing challenges facing the world today. All the 17 goals are interconnected with each other implying that the success in one affect success for others. The 17 goals of the SDG are listed below:

(1) No Poverty (2) Zero Hunger (3) Good health and wellbeing (4) Quality education (5) Gender equality (6) Clean water and sanitation (7) Affordable and clean energy (8) Decent work and economic growth (9) Industry, innovation and infrastructure (10) Reduced inequality (11) Sustainable cities and communities (12) Responsible consumption and production (13) Climate action (14) Life below water (15) Life on land (16) Peace, justice a strong institutions (17) Partnerships for the goals

### **The Concept of Poverty**

Poverty refers to a condition in which a person does not have enough money or other goods to meet his/her basic necessities. Poverty can also be political, economic, social, or even health-related, depending on the context. It could also signify the absence of any resources essential to satisfy even the most basic requirements, such as finding a place to live and buying food for the family. Because it affects people differently, it is difficult to come up with a widely agreed definition. Traditionally, poverty has been described as a state of being unable to meet basic material necessities due to a person's income falling below a certain threshold. Notwithstanding the definition brouhaha, efforts will be made to highlight a few definitions advanced by scholars.

According to Aderonmu (2010), poverty is the inability to meet one's fundamental necessities. Narayan et al. (2000), describe poverty as humiliation, dependency, and a condition where we are obliged to tolerate insults, rudeness, and indifference when we seek assistance. According to the authors' definition, poverty is characterised by a sense of helplessness and an absence of viable options. Poor people have little choices but to take whatever is offered to them because of their precarious status. In the rural areas where poverty prevails, it could be perceived as the absence of healthcare facility, educational facility, prevalence of hunger, lack of cloth and lack of shelter.

Inability to pay for medical bills and not being able to take part in leisure activities, such as going on a day trip with friends or attending a party, are all examples of poverty. It is not simply a lack of resources, such as cash and food, but also a lack of access to quality education and health care as well as feelings of safety, self-worth, and autonomy (Obayelu and Uffort 2007a).

Poverty may be widespread throughout a population, but the occurrence itself is limited to direction and distribution (widespread, concentrated individuals). It can also involve relatively permanent insufficiency of means of securing basic needs (Mohammed, Hassan & Zakari, 2021).

Poverty's broad features, as sketched above, fail to pinpoint the specific ways in which it impacts children, women, and other marginalised groups. Scholars believe that identifying poverty is extremely difficult because of this (Abonade, 1997). Disagreements abound when it comes to categorising the many locations where poverty may be found. An acceptable definition should be able to cover the many areas in which either gender is impoverished (Guideline on Poverty Reduction 2000). Despite this, the report failed to provide a definition of poverty, instead only listing the most important aspects that a conventional definition should have.

Poverty, according to Narayan et al. (2000), is a lack of power and voice, which means that one knows right from wrong but cannot do right. Taking it a step further, the writers agreed with others who have argued that poverty affects not only individuals but also families, communities, and even countries. When it comes to knowing one's materialistic limitations and potential, the World Bank reports that "the impoverished also recognise that they are poor.

In addition, the notion of poverty as it pertains to materialism reveals a different aspect. Poverty is defined by a person's material assets, such as food and shelter. A person's capacity to educate a kid, provide food, clothes, and housing as well as the ability to deal with crises such as a sudden illness or other unanticipated catastrophes are all examples of material possessions. As a result, economic capacity is defined as the ability to make money, accumulate assets, and take care of any other developing demands that may arise in the future. Poverty may be defined as a lack of any of these (OECD, 2000).

Poverty can also be defined as a man's inability to provide for his family. According to the World Bank (1999), a focus on men, women, boys, and girls is sometimes used to emphasize the gender elements of powerlessness. This means that the effects of poverty vary greatly depending on the sex of the person and the gender of the child. Women face poverty, unemployment, violence, and illiteracy, while males are unable to take care of the household duties. The treatment of female children, particularly in Africa, differs from that of their male counterparts

Poverty, according to Aliyu (2002), may be classified according to how long it lasts. When poverty affects a large portion of a population, it indicates that people are unable to meet their most basic requirements on a long-term basis. In spite of the fact that we have several definitions that can be a little confusing, the definition offered by the World Bank Organization is very relevant (2019:76). Thus:

Poverty is hunger, and hunger is poverty. Poverty is the absence of a place to live. Poverty is being unable to see a doctor when you're unwell. Poverty is a lack of education and the inability to read. Poverty is a lack of employment. It's a dread of the future, if you're just living in the here and now. While poverty has various faces, it has also been defined in a variety of ways. People desire to get out of poverty most of the time. A call to action for everyone, wealthy and poor alike—to ensure that more people have enough food, suitable shelter, access to education and health care, and safety from violence—is a call to action to improve the world so that many more people have these basic necessities.

### **Causes of Poverty**

Researchers have yet to agree on a universal definition, yet writers on its causes are in quantifiable agreement, but their profession, gender and other backgrounds impact their writings on the subject. Causes of poverty in industrialised countries are different from those in poorer ones, thus certain variables should be taken into account while discussing them. Deficiencies in governance structure and globalisation and their consequences on joblessness and inequality can contribute to poverty.

Taiwo and Agwu (2016) both argued that there are two perspectives: poor economic growth and market defects. The high unemployment rate is a major factor in the country's slow economic progress. People in this sort of setting are unable to sustain a decent quality of life because they lack employment options and are underemployed. Institutional distortions that deny productive resources equal opportunity are called market imperfection, on the other hand. Lack of access to employment opportunities, lack of physical assets like capital, inadequate means of support for rural development in less-developed regions, poor access to markets, inadequate access to assistance, and non-involvement of people in the initiation and implementation of programmes that concern them are major causes of poverty in Africa (Obadan 1997).

According to World Bank (2001), poverty causes can only be studied via multiple aspects and how they influence the poor. Some of them include: a lack of resources and money to meet basic needs like food or clothes; a sense of powerlessness and helplessness; and a vulnerability to unpleasant shocks because of inability to cope with them. Poor health and social values that have adverse effect on work ethic; drug and alcohol misuse; and specific family structures are among the reasons of poverty listed by (Enahoro & Ikpetan 2005).

Aliyu (2002), on the other hand, cited globalisation, governance, debt load, poor productivity, low income, and many other factors as contributing factors to poverty. World Bank (1999) has connected poverty to a number of pathological elements, including excessive spending and a disdain for farming; sloth; population density; bad government; and non-payment of land compensation.

In the words of Ijiaya (2000), urbanisation difficulties can also lead to poverty. Overcrowding in metropolitan areas puts a strain on infrastructure, which can lead to ruin, especially if the government lacks the funds to repair public facilities. In certain cases, the current infrastructure is not sufficient to meet the needs of the population. Because of the deteriorating public infrastructure, the government has to raise taxes on the poor, resulting in an even worsened poverty situation for those already in need of assistance.

One of the main causes of poverty in the world is globalisation, which has been hailed as the answer to progress. Shah (2001) argued that globalisation has led to a rise in inequality and uneven trading practises. As a result of rising inequality, he said, globalisation would rise. As for poverty and globalisation, Aliyu (2002) agreed that the latter has hurt emerging economies. Because of its political and socioeconomic inclination, "globalisation offers additional obstacles to the country as it lacks what it takes to be relevant to even adapt to or cope with the phenomenon," he said.

Some researchers believe that the policies and programmes of international financial organisations have also contributed to poverty in emerging nations. It is claimed by Shah (2001) that structural adjustment policies of the IMF and World Bank have led to a spiral race to the bottom for poorer nations, who must compete against one another to give lower standards, lower salaries, and cheaper resources to firms in richer countries. As a result, he claims, the likelihood of poverty rises and reliance grows.

In order to take a compromise stance on the causes of poverty, the following may be summarised:

1. Corruption
2. Low level of productivity
3. High population growth
4. Debt crisis

5. High level of unemployment
6. Inequality
7. Globalization
8. Reckless spending
9. Poor government policies

Poverty is a multifaceted problem that may be seen via attentive observation and study of the debates. Our prior assertion that there is no globally agreed definition of poverty, as well as a widely acknowledged cause or causes of poverty, has been reaffirmed. To a certain extent, the many poverty-cause factors are tenable based on the writer's own personal experiences and views.

### **Indicators of Poverty**

Over time, the term "poverty" has been defined in a variety of ways. As a result, researchers have come up with a variety of theories on what it is. So, the reasons why an individual, community, or nation is poor are just as many as the reasons why they're rich. It might be assessed in terms of the standard of life, income, and consumption rate, as well as access to education, health care, and general infrastructure. Poverty and its causes have been defined in a wide range of ways, making it difficult to establish a common ground for measuring poverty. Economic performance and the level of life of citizens were deemed to be poverty indicators by (CBN 1991) in an effort to avoid excluding significant indicators or not capturing enough of them. According to them, this metric combines the amount of income or purchasing power with the availability and access to fundamental necessities like healthcare, education, and so on.

With so many conflicting ideas about what constitutes poverty and how to measure it, it is critical that we come up with a clear definition that encompasses all of these different aspects. One of the reasons poverty-reduction programmes have failed may be due to a lack of clarity on the definition, causes, and indicators (Oyemomi, 2003).

It was claimed by Oyemomi (2003) that the requirement for standards for poverty led to categorisation of the following:

1. Poverty lines
2. National poverty rate
3. Urban poverty rates and
4. Rural poverty rates.

Poverty lines are the minimal levels of income that are considered sufficient in a certain country. It is computed by adding up the entire cost of all of an individual's necessary resources consumed in a given year. The worth of food and non-food goods is deemed crucial for attaining the minimum acceptable living standard within a particular culture, according to (CBN 2000). As a result, everyone whose income falls below the poverty threshold is considered poor.

According to the EOECD, the most frequent poverty standards for multinational corporations are \$1 per day for low-income nations, \$2 for middle-income countries, and \$4 for transition economies, according to EOECD (2000). The above might cause debate because most currencies, when translated to US \$1, have a considerable value that is often more than what is needed in that nation to escape poverty. One of the drawbacks of stating the poverty line in terms of US dollars is that, like any other currency, the value of the US dollar might rise or fall over time. As a result of the worsening economic condition brought on by the Corona Virus epidemic, the exchange rate for Naira versus US dollars in 2019 was ₦360, whereas it is currently ₦740 in 2020. The national poverty rate, on the other hand, is a monetary threshold below which a person is regarded to be poor. It's computed by adding up all of the country's criteria.

The official poverty rate in Nigeria is calculated using the monetary equivalent of food and non-food expenses necessary to reach a basic degree of well-being (NBS 2019). The "cost of basic necessities" strategy is what it's termed. As a result, the poverty line is divided into two tiers and is based on an individual's basic nutritional needs. For starters, it requires calculating

the cost of the bare minimum nutritious basket. This need is calculated using the Nigerian caloric allowances table. The daily calorie requirements are broken down by sex and age categories.

### **Poverty Situation in Nigeria**

A lot of reports by local and international organizations have indicated that Nigeria faces the serious challenge of poverty for millions of the country's population. Recent report by the World Bank, in its Macro Poverty Outlook for Nigeria: April 2023, projects that about 13 million Nigerians would fall below the national poverty line by 2025 as a result of the country's population growth surpassing efforts to reduce poverty among the countrymen. Also, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) had, in its 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index survey, stated that 63 per cent of persons living within Nigeria (133 million people) are multi-dimensionally poor. This implies that 13 million more Nigerians are likely to be consigned or drafted into poverty in addition to those already within this bracket in the next two years.

The World Bank viewed that "Macroeconomic stability has weakened considerably due to multiple FX rates, increasing inflation rate, increasing fiscal pressures, and the continuous decline in forex reserves. Nigeria's fiscal position has deteriorated since 2015 due to declining oil revenues and rising expenditures, resulting in persistently high fiscal deficits. To finance the growing deficit, the government has resorted increasingly to costly financing from the central bank, which in turn has increased interest costs, crowding out private sector credit, and contributing to inflation."

Food items have been on the rise since 2019, continually eroding the purchasing power of low-income earning Nigerians. Nigeria food insecurity has been aggravated by insecurity in farming communities in the country agrarian belts in the northern part of the country as a result of activities of killer herdsmen, economic bandits. As a result, millions of inhabitants of this region have been displaced from both their ancestral homes and livelihoods and are living in Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps where they are living rather economically unproductive lives.

In communities where some form of agriculture takes place, many of the farmers are forced to pay protection levies to criminal gangs in order to be allowed to till the land and harvest the yields. All these led to the huge cost of food items in the markets, which makes purchasing them to be beyond the reach of many Nigerians. The World Bank estimated that food inflation in 2022 alone pushed five million Nigerians into poverty. Also contributing to the problem was low private investment, low and inefficient public spending due to low revenue collection, and low social development outcomes leading to low productivity

In similar manner, the security challenges in the oil-producing Niger Delta region as result of oil theft and, ageing infrastructure and inadequate investments in the sector, all which have cut Nigeria's earnings from the sector and deteriorated the country's fiscal position. The result is that Nigeria is in a more fragile position than before the late 2021 global oil price boom. The Nigerian economy is projected to grow by an average of 2.9 percent per year between 2023 and 2025, only slightly above the population growth rate of 2.4 per cent, with growth driven by services, trade, and manufacturing while oil production is projected to remain subdued in part because of inefficiencies and insecurity.

Within the last one month which is the 30 days of the Tinubu's administration without statistical analysis, it is obvious that poverty level in the country has grown geometrically making lives very difficult for the Nigerian populace. The take home pay does not seem to take workers anywhere because of the cost of transportation which has doubled due to the fuel subsidy removal. People who have cars have resorted to parking them or in a worst-case scenario sale them off to meet daily necessities. The fuel subsidy removal has had negative effects on production and services as so many small-scale businesses have folded up due to the high cost of energy.

However, expert have suggested that before the subsidy would have been removed from Premium Motor Spirit (PMS) adequate arrangement would have been made by the government

firstly to increase salaries of workers as well as provide palliatives to the poor and vulnerable members of the society who do not receive salaries from government or private organizations.

### **Achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 in Nigeria**

The Poverty Strategy Initiative (PSI) which was launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1996 as a national effort to develop national proposals and support improvements in the analysis of poverty and the development of anti-poverty plans and advocacy for poverty alleviation programmes. To achieve the goal of eliminating poverty in the country, the Sustainable Development Goal 1 has been vicariously pursued through the activities of the UNDP and other partnering organizations in the country in the following ways:

1. ***Strengthening National Capacity to Respond to Disasters and Conflicts:*** United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has undertaken numerous national and sub-national projects in support of national efforts to avert violence and create peace. As a means of conflict avoidance and peaceful conflict resolution, their intervention tried to identify pro-poor approaches to enhancing livelihoods. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided peace building and conflict prevention training for traditional leaders in the region's south-east. As a result of this intervention, local leaders had a better understanding of the various methods available to them for resolving disputes within their kingdoms. Traditional institutions were also made aware of the significance of a calm election season as a result of this endeavour.
2. ***Early Recovery and Livelihood Support to Victims of Insurgency in Nigeria:*** despite more than a decade of conflict in Nigeria's North East, many people have been displaced, their livelihoods disrupted, and their homes destroyed. The Early Recovery and Livelihoods Sector Working Group (ER & LSWG) is co-chaired by the UNDP Nigeria Country Office and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). The Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCT) formed the ER & LSWG in 2015 under the supervision of the Humanitarian Coordinator as one of ten sector working groups (UNDP, 2015).
3. ***Stabilizing Income Generation and Emergency Employment:*** Food, health care, and security are provided to those affected by conflict as part of this strategy. Priorities of security and equity should be balanced by providing benefits to people still in the area and to communities that will be hosting refugees upon their return as soon as possible. The execution of peace agreements is directly influenced by this plan action. NGOs and other parties working in early employment programmes can create the groundwork for long-term peace and prosperity in the impacted areas by adhering to basic criteria. Using this method, community-based organisations in need of social services can get the help they need. People in high-risk war zones and those in dire need are the primary focus of this campaign. There are also those who have returned from war and those who have been displaced as a result of conflict (UN, 2009).
4. ***Cash-For-Work:*** Small, easily implemented schemes, such as Cash-For-Work, ensure that those who stand to gain most from the peace dividend do so as soon as possible. The unemployed, particularly women and young people, might be mobilised to clear debris, restore infrastructure, and perform other tasks during this time period to provide short-term revenue. It is possible to re-establish or expand agricultural productivity, rehabilitate natural resources, repair rural infrastructure, and strengthen market links through the cash-for-work programme.
5. ***Targeted Livelihood and Self-Employment Start-up Grants:*** This initiative, called "Start-up Grants," is geared for people who have been most directly impacted by armed conflict. When people are relocated for an extended length of time, they may lose their traditional skills as well as their assets (such as cattle and seeds). High-risk and urgently needed groups are the focus of these programmes, which attempt to help people re-

- establish or restore their livelihoods by taking advantage of newly available opportunities.
6. **Community Driven Recovery programme:** Community networks, social agricultural production, education, health facilities, and social physical infrastructure like roads and bridges are among the assets that can be rehabilitated and rebuilt through these activities. A wide range of current stakeholders, such as the government and community associations, must be included for this initiative to be sustainable and effective. Participatory and inclusive discourse helps to reduce tension in peace-building environments. In addition to the local economic recovery, there will be an increase in and complexity in the demand for infrastructure. Construction of feeder roads and small bridges is also an advantage of the programme. It can also be used for rural school construction as well as the restoration of natural resources and the establishment of rural hospitals and community centres (UN, 2009).
7. **Local Economic Recovery Measures:** With this approach, communities will be able to promptly begin their local economic activity by maximising inclusive job prospects stimulated by post-crisis investment, as stated by the United Nations. In addition, the initiative aids in the creation of a more diverse workforce as a remedy for effective reconciliation. To accomplish this, local stakeholders and service providers are able to locate and match people with employment possibilities through the use of platforms supplied.
8. **Reconstruction of Public Infrastructure and Housing:** Eleven institutions, including schools and healthcare infrastructure, were repaired in Kaga, Mata, Ngala, Damboa, and Hawul LGAs, all in Borno state, through a labour-intensive community-led process, while giving opportunities for emergency employment. Over 38,500 conflict-affected people benefited from the initiative.
9. **Livelihoods Diversification and Creation of Economic Opportunities** Over 1,300 farmers and 480 entrepreneurs were hired in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states to begin farming activities and companies, respectively. Moreso, 580 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and conflict victims from Adamawa, Borno, Gombe, and Yobe states received citizenship and vocational training as part of the programme. Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) and Cash for Work (CFW) to cover the most vulnerable and meet the immediate needs of IDPs in Michika, Adamawa State, Askira Uba, Borno State, Oku Iboku in Itu Local Government of Akwa Ibom State and Fika, Yobe State.
10. **Enhanced Social Cohesion and Reconciliation:** Four mediation networks in ten towns, aimed at 80 religious leaders, were developed as part of this effort. Peace messages have reached over one million individuals through community-focused radio and other sensitization programmes. Eighty security personnel have been educated in civilian protection, while 92 officials and 200 clerics, community leaders, women, and religious leaders have been schooled in counter-radical narratives throughout the region (UNDP, 2017).
11. **Unconditional Cash Transfer:** As part of the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) response to support communities deeply impacted by COVID-19, UNDP Nigeria in collaboration with the Ebonyi State Government, have launched an unconditional cash transfer project funded by UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA). With a total sum of N 190,844,500 million (equivalent to US \$495,000), the project will help to cushion the socio-economic impact caused by the pandemic and strengthen resilience among selected vulnerable communities in Ebonyi State.

#### Challenges Inhibiting Effective Implementation of SDG 1 in Nigeria

1. **Corruption:** Corruption in Nigeria poses serious challenge to the success of many poverty alleviation schemes. According to Chukwuemeka (2009), in every poverty alleviation programme since 2000, the government had always declared its intent to



correct the shortcomings of the previous policies, including the issue of corruption. As it relates to funding by International Development Agency (IDA) like the UNDP, those implementing the programmes input names of family members as beneficiaries to the disadvantage of the actual beneficiaries.

2. **Policy Inconsistency:** this arises as a result of change of government. Every administration in the country normally comes with a new poverty reduction programme e.g. during the administration of Goodluck Jonathan we had Sure-P while the immediate past administration introduced N-Power. All these programmes ended the day the administration comes to an end hence we are waiting for the introduction of a new poverty reduction scheme by the current administration.
3. **Mismanagement of Funds:** a lot of Nigerians in charge of government poverty reduction schemes use the position to settle their friends, family members and associates to the detriment of the intended targets. As observed by Umar, Mohammad and Ratnaria (2016), there has been wasteful spending of government funds on frivolous things. For example, during an assessment of the SURE-P programme by the National assembly, it was discovered the agency spent N2.2 billion on secretarial services and N75 million on tours within states in Nigeria (Babalola, 2015). Also, during the Covid-19 pandemic where schools and businesses were shut, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management in the country claimed to have spent money feeding school children while they were in the house.
4. **Lack of Proper Identification of the Poor:** Nigeria lacks adequate data on the number of people in the country hence, the name of intended beneficiaries of government programmes are formed in government offices without the necessary input from the various communities that are to benefit from it. As argued by Chukwuemeka (2009), most of the programmes implemented do not get to the people in the grassroots.
5. **Bad Governance:** one of the major problems Nigeria is faced today is poor leadership. In a report examining the impact of governance on poverty reduction in Nigeria, UNDP (2010) observed that the growth rate in poverty is relatively related to the aftermaths of bad governance such as political instability, violence, terrorism and government ineffectiveness in implementing poverty reduction schemes in the country.
6. **Lack of Awareness:** In several cases, citizens have little or no knowledge about poverty reduction programmes like the UNDP schemes. In a research carried out by Udofia (2023) on UNDP and Poverty Reduction in Akwa Ibom State, it was discovered that most people in the state are not aware of the existence of many UNDP programmes like Unconditional Cash Transfer in the state hence have not benefited from them.
7. **Poor Attitude of the Beneficiaries:** most of the beneficiaries of poverty reduction programmes of the government see the opportunity as their own time to have a share of the national cake. For instance, if the target is to provide soft loans for businesses, most of the beneficiaries do not refund the monies they collected; hence lead to the discontinuation of the programme or reduction in the number of beneficiaries.
8. **Short Tenure and Lack of Programme Continuity:** most of the SDG programmes are tenure based and hence it is expected that the Nigerian government invest in such programmes for it to continue even after the donor agencies have stopped funding them. On the contrary, immediately after the donor agency discontinues with the programme, the scheme dies a natural death because of poor funding and lack of interest by the government.

### Concluding Remarks and Way Forward

The efforts of the International Development Agencies in reducing poverty have been recognized globally by government and individuals. The intention to lift a good number of people out of poverty has been and still is the most important goal of the SDG hence the introduction of many programmes by development agencies of the United Nations like UNDP. Nigerians have

benefitted greatly from the various programmes of donor agencies aimed at reducing poverty but however, in the course of implementing these programmes, there have been a lot of challenges which act as a barrier to the realization of the SDG goal 1.

To remedy this situation and ensure effective implementation of SDG goals in Nigeria, the government must ensure the proper identification of actual poor people at the village level and also ensure that where the donor agencies stopped in terms of programme implementation, they should continue so that the proposed programme can run its full course and hence the effect felt by the beneficiaries. It is believed that the SDG 1 is achievable if the government of Nigeria is committed to fighting corruption and improving its partnership funding with the various UN development agencies.

## References

- Abonade, O. (1997). Altruism and economic development: The case of the igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria. *The Journal of Socio-Economic* 26(4), 407-420.
- Aderonmu, J. A. (2010). Local government and poverty eradication in rural Nigeria. *Canadian Social Science*, 6(5), 200-208
- Aliyu, A. (2002). *Re-structuring of the poverty alleviation activities of the Federal Government of Nigeria national poverty eradication Programme*. Bookpoint.
- Babalola, J. (2015). Nothing sure in Sure-P. *The Nation* [Online].  
[thenationonline.net/nothing-sure-in-sure-p/](http://thenationonline.net/nothing-sure-in-sure-p/) (Accessed November 30, 2016).
- Balogun O. (2023). Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Challenges of Poverty Reduction in Nigeria. *African Journal of Politic and Administrative Studies*, 16(2):682-693
- Chukwuemeka, E.O. (2009). Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals in Nigeria: The Nexus. *Educational Research and Review*. 4(9), pp. 405-410.
- Enahoro, J. A., & Ikpefan, O. A. (2005, June 6-7) *Challenges of poverty Reduction in the third world* [International conference on Human Development]. Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria.
- Ijaiya, G. T. (2000). Urban poverty indices in Nigeria. A case study of Ilorin Metropolis” *Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social studies*, 42 (3), 67-98.
- Mohammed, J., Hassan, T. & Zakari, M. (2021). Development Challenge in Nigeria: Assessment of Poverty Reduction Programmes. *Social Science Research Journal* 2(3), 420-453.
- National Bureau of Statistics (2019). 2019 Poverty and Inequality in Nigeria: Executive Summary.
- National Bureau of Statistics Multidimensional Poverty Index (2022)
- Obayelu, A., & Uffort, L. (2007). Comparative analysis of the relationship between poverty and underground economy in the highly developed, transition and developing countries. *The Economic Centre for the Study of Civil War*, Oslo, 165-178.
- Oyemomi, E. (2002). *An assessment of poverty reduction strategies in Nigeria, 1983-2002*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, St. Clements University.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Taiwo, J., & Agwu, E. (2016). Problems and prospects of poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria. *European Centre for Research Training and Development*, 4 (6), 18-30.
- Udofia, A. (2023). *United Nations Development Programme and Poverty Reduction in Akwa Ibom State, 2010-2020*. University of Nigeria, unpublished PhD Thesis.
- Umar, M. F., Abdullah, M. A., & Wahid, R. (2016). Politics of poverty alleviation programmes in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, Vol. 4(1), 81-103.
- UNDP (2010). *Human development report in Nigeria 2008-2009: Achieving growth with equity*. Nigeria. A publication of United Nations Development Programme.

- UNDP (2017). Strategy for inclusive and sustainable growth. United Nations Development Programmes 2017 Annual Report.
- United Nations Development Programme Issue Brief (2015). Ending poverty by 2020: UNDP's perspective and Role. [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org).
- Deepa, N., Robert, C., Meera, S. & Patti, P. (1999). Global Synthesis: Consultation with the Poor. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies*. 5(2), 45-72.