



National rolling plans and sustainable development in Nigeria, 1999- 2001

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Abstract

This paper is a critical evaluation of rolling plans in Nigeria as an instrument of achieving sustainable development. The conceptual explication of rolling plan, its objectives and sustainable development were discussed. The paper made use of secondary data and adopted the structural functionalist theory as its theoretical framework. The nexus between rolling plan and sustainable development explained and reasons why rolling plans failed were enumerated. The paper concluded that rolling plan was a complete failure; it added nothing new to pacify and placate the excruciating problems of Nigerian masses and the stagnated economy of the nation. Consequently, recommendations were made on how Nigeria can achieve sustainable development through economic reform programmes which include proper and sound administration, transparency and accountability, proper monitoring and periodic evaluation of policies and projects, People oriented project to be formulated. People should be consulted.

Keywords: rolling plans, sustainable and development

Introduction

Nigeria as a nation had conceived many dreams on how economic growth and sustainable development can be achieved right from pre-colonial era. Prior to attainment of political independence on 1st October, 1960 there was a development plan under the Colonial Development and Welfare fund (Obiajulu and Obia 2004:67).

After political independence Nigeria government came up with National Development plan, the first of its kind in the year 1962-1965. Nigeria had many development plans, rolling plans, development initiatives and other programmes and reforms on how to better the life of her citizenry and to achieve sustainable development. The various national development plans/ economic reform programmes had laudable aims and objectives central among all, is to achieve growth and sustainable development in Nigeria. It is sad to note that all those creditable aims and objectives ended in a mirage on papers, as Nigeria still wallows on the pedestal of deep under development characterized and plagued with high unemployment, poverty, lack of social and infrastructural facilities, low life expectancy, high infant mortality, illiteracy, insecurity and poor health sector to mention but few.

The question is why Nigeria has remained underdeveloped, despite all the mineral resources both human and material, economic reforms policies and programme? What are the constraints to development plans in Nigeria and how can those problems be solved for Nigeria to attain sustainable development? These questions will be answered in this study and recommendations made on way toward to achieve sustainable development in Nigeria.

Conceptual Explication

For proper conceptualization of the concept rolling plan it will be

proper to give a brief history of what led to national rolling plan. Nigeria since independence has embarked on many national development plans, economic reform policies and programmes of which national rolling plan was one of them.

National Development

Longman Dictionary (2016) defined national development as a phenomenon that embraces a whole nation; it is the collective of social-economic, political as well as religious advancement of a nation. Elugbe (1994) posited that National Development referred among other things to the growth of a nation in terms of utility, education, economic well-being and mass participation in government. Development: Gboyega (2003) postulated that development is an idea that embodies all attempt to improve the condition of human existence in all ramification. Todaro (1992) ^[12] gave a more embedded definition of development; he said development is a multi-dimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system of the mind in which the society has through some combination of social, economic and political process secured, the way of obtaining better life. He viewed development as gamut of changes as acceleration of economic growth reduction of inequalities, eradication of poverty, etc that leads to the transformation of unsatisfactory condition of life into materially and spiritually better condition of life.

Planning

On planning he posited that planning is a conscious governmental effort to influence , direct and in some cases , even control changes in the principle economic variable (such as consumption, investment ,saving, export import etc) of a certain country or region over the course of time in order to achieve a

predetermined set of objective. Jebbin and Osu (2012.3) ^[6] defined planning as a conscious and deliberate effort at setting targets and objectives, specifying the means to achieve the set targets and objectives within a given setting. United Nations (2013) defined national development as growth plus change, change in social, cultural, as well as economic qualitative and quantitative.

Webcan dictionary (2016) ^[32] posited that plan is a list of steps with timing and resource used to achieve an objective. It can be defined as an intended action through which experts use to achieve a goal. Plan can be viewed as detailed proposal for doing something. Dalton (1986) opined that plan is a process by which managers examine their internal environment, ask fundamental questions about their organization purpose and establish a mission, goals and objectives, it include all the activities that leads to the definition of objectives and to the determination of appropriate course a action to achieve those objectives. Cole (1993) ^[2] averred that planning is an activity which involves decision about ends as wells as means and about conducts as well as result.

Development Planning

UNDP (2008) ^[15] defined development planning as long term programme designed to effect some permanent structural changes in the economy; it is connected with the involvement of government in the economy whereby it sets out objectives about ways it wants the economy to develop in future and then intervenes to try to achieve those objectives. Data (2010) opined that development planning involves a process which ensure that national policies and strategy are realized and development concerns at all levels are fully integrated into the overall national development thrust

National development plan can be defined as a country's strategic programme and policy with clearly stated objectives and resource allocation on how those aims and objectives can be achieved within a specified period of time to attain sustainable development. National development plan can be categorized into four namely, short rang plans, medium rang plans, long rang plans and rolling plans, all geared toward growth and sustainable development.

Rolling Plan

Nigerian government in a quest to attain development after independence adapted many development plans; with creditable objectives but all ended in illusion and gave both leaders and followers a dash to their expectations. Rolling plan is an offshoot of national development plan. The failure of past National Development Plans and the Structural Adjustment Programme in Nigeria led to change in economic policy and development strategy from five –year- and above development plan to Rolling Plans that will be reviewed yearly and rolled back the next year for easy execution and completion of projects not executed previously. After the failure of Structural Adjustment Programme in 1986-1989 the Federal Government of Nigeria under the leadership of General. Ibrahim. B. Babangida as military head of state, came up with a term called “rolling plan”. Jebbin and Osu (2012:137) ^[6] defined rolling plan as a tripartite plan; every three year new plans are made and acted upon. The three plans include, A 15 to 20 years perspective plan, the three-year national rolling plan and one-year annual budget. Rolling plan is a three-tier

planning system adopted by Nigerian government to better the economy. Daggash (2008:35) viewed it as an economic management instrument. It is as an economic instrument, policy/programme aimed at achieving sustainable development and improving the standard of living of the people of Nigeria. Unlike development plan, rolling plan is renewed annually from the first year of its implementation and is rolled to the following year. That was how the name rolling plan was coined; it is difficult to determine the life span of rolling plan. For instance the rolling plan of 1990 spanned through 1990-1991-1992

Egonwan and Ibodje (2001:64) ^[4] posited that rolling plan was stillborn; they maintained that there was linkage between vision 2010 and rolling plan. It should be noted here ostensibly that rolling plan is not the same thing with annual budget. Annual budget is the operational plan meant to link with the rolling plan. Annual budget is the controlling plan which matches resource with possible achievement. Rolling plan takes into account new information, improved data analysis and incorporates period revision into its planning machinery. Rolling plan are plans that are reviewed periodically, errors on it are corrected easily and new ideas injected for sustainable development. It is flexible to meet the economic dynamics and realities. It was adopted in Nigeria in 1988 and the first national rolling plan launched in January 1990 for a period of 1990 —1992. (Jebbin and Osu 2012.138) ^[6]

Objectives of Rolling Plan

Rolling planning his the following objectives;

1. To make Nigeria became a developed nation in terms of economic prosperity, political stability and social harmony.
2. To achieve real economic growth and micro-economic stability.
3. To reduce poverty in the society.
4. To alleviate the problem of unemployment.
5. To lay a solid foundation for self- reliant, industrial development and promoting peace and harmony. (Ministry of Budget and Planning 1990)
6. To attain higher level of self –sufficiency in the production of foods and raw materials.
7. To reduce the burden of Structural Adjustment Programme on the most vulnerable social group.
8. To reduce inflation and exchange rate of the naira.
9. To maintain infrastructure.
10. To lay a solid foundation for self- reliant, industrial development as key to self –sustaining, dynamic and non-inflationary growth and promoting industrial peace and harmony.
11. Continued effort of mitigating the adverse impact of the economic down turn and the adjustment process on the most affected group. And the consolidation of the gain of Structural Adjustment Programme. (Federal Ministry of Budget and Planning 1990-1999)

Okah (2007) listed the following points as the reasons why Nigerian government adopted rolling plan

1. It is more down-to-earth as it avoids the pitfall of five years plans which tend to stay away from reality.
2. Rolling plans correct the inadequacies of one-year budget, which fails to capture projects with invariably more than one-year completion period.

3. It possesses the adopted effect of raising the level of consciousness for accurate data and regular supervision by project managers units.

Sustainable Development

There are many definitions of sustainable development depending on how authors looked at it, but the most comprehensive and widely accepted is the one given by World Commission on Environment and Development (UNO) in 1984 under the chairmanship Gro Harlem Brundtland which in October 1987 submitted a report which contained the definition of sustainable development. In that report, it defined Sustainable Development “as the development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs”.

The above definition centers on human beings and the environment as the cardinal point to be considered in measuring growth and development, that both must be considered in any developmental projects, programmes or policy aimed at improving the life of the people and have a better natural environment for the present with the future generation not put in jeopardy.

Methodology

This study made use of secondary data, which include textbooks, journals, periodic publications, newspapers, and other relevant documented literature to the topic were used analyzed and synthesized objectively.

Theoretical Framework

Structural functionalist theory was adopted for this study as the theoretical framework. Wikipedia (2017) ^[35] defined structural functionalism or simple functionalism as a framework that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. It views society through a macro-level adjustment based on social structure and social functions that works in harmony to shape the whole society. This theory centered on exploring and maintaining order, stability and cohesion based on independency, socialization and systemic change.

Spencer (1899) Durkheim, (1916) Mahnowski (1922) Powson (1939) Marton (1949) and Radcliff-Brown 1935, theorized on structural functionalism and other political scientists too numerous to mentioned. They introduced structural functionalism theory into political science and public administration in comparing and analyzing political system. Offiong (1997) ^[9] opined that structural functionalist theory is an offshoot of system theory.

The theory states that each organs/sector within a system must perform their respective functions effectively for the betterment of the general political/economic system.

The basic thrust of structural functionalism includes:

1. Society consists of both structure and functions that are interconnected and interdependent and ultimately, focused on maintaining or mediating society equilibrium (Red-Cliffe Brown 1935).
2. Social systems consist of both structures and functions that are necessary for the ongoing health or survival of that system, (Chilcolt 1998)

3. Structural exist to meet the functional needs of a society. (Merton,1949)^[7].
4. Systemic functionality across and within structural services to reinforce and maintain the stability of the system's structures in the content of an ever-changing complex and unpredictable system.

The practically application of the structural functionalist theory in Nigeria is that all system structures, sub-structures and super-structure must perform their respective functions efficiently and effectively for the betterment of the entire society. There must be cordial and mutual relationship, interaction and interdependence of all the structures and functions for the benefit at the society.

Rolling plan as an economic policy cannot work on its own without support from other sections/ sectors of the society. The Central Bank, Ministry of Budget and Planning, Government Agencies and Ministries, Private Companies and Enterprises, Non-Governmental Organizational (NGO's) and individual must perform their respective functions effectively for rolling plan to achieve its set goals.

The success / failure of any project depend on effective and efficient performance of functions by all parts in maintaining stability cohesion and systemic change.

The Nexus Between Rolling Plan & Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Omuta & Onokerhoraye (1995) ^[11] averred that different nations adopt varied strategies in achieving economic and social progress. Thus Nigeria as a nation is not exempted. Nigeria government has adopted some development measures sequel to the attainment of political independence, which include:

1. The post-colonial era (1946 – 1958).
2. The first National Development Plan 1962 – 1968.
3. The second national development plan 1970 – 1974.
4. The third national development plan 1975 – 1980.
5. The fourth national development plan 1981 – 1985.
6. The perspective plan and rolling plan 1990 – 1998.
7. National economic empowerment and development strategy 2003 – 2007
8. Vision 20 – 20 – 20. (Jebbin and Osu 2012) ^[6]

The above enumerated stages of national development plans had laudable objectives geared toward sustainable development of the nation. There were period not covered example is the era of Structural Adjustment Programme 1986. The rolling plan covered six phases according to Jebbin and Osu 2012.137-157)^[6] The six phases had their respective objectives; central among them is sustainable development of the nation.

The first National Rolling Plan commenced in January 1990-1992. Its objectives were to reduce the adverse effect of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) on the nation economy and to strengthen the programme of National Directorate of Employment (NDE). The rolling plan was to replace the five years plan while the annual budget were to be used as tools for its implementation, the rolling plan as tools for the perspective plans. That was the tripartite relationship in rolling plan.

The second National Rolling Plan (1991-1993) Just as the name implies the first national rolling plan was rolled over to the second rolling plan. The aim was to correct Nigerian's deficit balance of

trade and unemployment, to control devaluation and inflation and to tackle the problems that hindered the first national rolling plan. The third National Rolling Plan (1993-1995). This rolling plan was geared toward employment creation and generation as the nation was sinking deeply into the ocean of unprecedented unemployment and to better the life of Nigerians as inflation and other imbalances in the nation's financial transactions were on the negative.

The fourth National Rolling plan (1994-1996). The third national rolling plan had a lot of challenges as target objectives were not met so the fourth national rolling plan focused on the following; low level performance and reduction trend in the growth of production, deficit balance of trade and high level of inflation, high and instability in interest rate as it effects investment.(Jebbin and Osu2012: 149) ^[6] concluded that the fourth rolling plan was ridden with crisis and much success was not achieved. The fifth National Rolling Pan 1997-1999. This rolling plan was to correct all financial and momentary imbalances. To solve the problem of inflation, ailing government industries, low capital utilization and unemployment. Rural and social development including poverty alleviation (Jebbin& and Osu 2012:150)^[6].

The sixth National Rolling Plan (1999-2001). This rolling plan had as one of its cardinal objectives to make Nigeria to be grouped among the developed nations in the world. This objective was in line with the broad objectives of vision 2000. Prominent among them include, achieving macro-economic stability, positive real interest rate, and agricultural development programme to mention but few.

All the objectives of the national rolling plans in its various phases ended up in rhetoric and paper colorations without an iota of success. A cursory perusal on documented literatures, a clear retrospect of Nigerians condition since then till now shows that rolling plan was a mere shadow boxing exercise where few military personals and their civilian cronies enriched themselves with our patrimonial wealth, a leeway for the few military and civilian cronies to siphon our national wealth. what a conduit of financial flow.

Available data and research (Daggask (2008), Ukalu (2007) Marcellus (2009) Iheanacho (2014) and Anah (2014), showed that there is no correlation between all the development plans and economic reforms strategies adopted by Nigerian government and sustainable development. As Nigeria has nothing to show for development despite, her wealth in both human and national resources. The nation is enveloped with unemployment, illiteracy, poverty, insecurity, low life expectancy and other features of underdevelopment.

The rolling plan started from 1990 – 2001, Nigeria was not better in any area of human endeavour. These policies, programmes and economic instrument had no positive impact on the people and to the nation. We had recurrent rolling of plans from one year to another; it was seen as a leeway to siphon national wealth by the few military personnel in power aided by few civilian.

Why Rolling Plans Failed in Nigeria

These are the reasons why rolling plan failed to achieve its set objectives.

1. Poor administration and management by people in authority.
2. Lack of feasibility studies & project analysis before implementation.

3. Lack of consultation and involvement of all stakeholders in the country, mostly the direct beneficiaries of the projects.
4. Misplacement of priorities and unrealistic projects and plan imposition.
5. Shortage of specialist and skilled man power needed in projects formulation and implementation.
6. Corruption and embezzlement of fund meant for projects.
7. Lack of information / data for planning.
8. Balance of payment deficit, high inflation and depreciation of the value of naira, bad economy.
9. Change of government, unofficial bureaucracy and delay in release of fund.
10. Crisis within various institutions (public and private partnership)
11. Over dependency on oil revenue. Lack of self- reliance.
12. Over dependency on foreign aids, goods and technology.
13. Lack of fund and patriotism.
14. Over –invoicing, over valuation.

OKojie (2002:366) ^[10] concluded that at the end of the years of rolling plans from 1990 -2001 Nigerians are no better off than they were during the years of fixed medium-term planning. Yesufu (1996) ^[13] stated that the nation's rolling was only developed to package myriads of public uncompleted projects over the years into programmes of completion, that it lack any integrated and growth objectives and a such was non –scientific.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Ezirim, Okeke & Ebiriga (2010) ^[19] postulated that several economic reforms and strategic plan have been put in placate in Nigeria to diversify the revenue sources of the economy toward achieving the nation's vision 2020 and that many of these reforms and plans have lasted without substantial assurance on the country's target. It is sad to note that right from political independence Nigeria as a nation has been wallowing with all symptoms of underdevelopment.

National development plans, rolling plans and other economic reforms put in place in Nigeria has failed to produce the desired result. Development is man centered and must be environment friendly.

For Nigeria to move out from her stagnated level of underdevelopment, I make the following recommendations

1. There should be wide spread consultation of all those that will benefit from the projects, policies and reform right from the formation stage.
2. There should be harmonious and cordial relationship among government ministries, private companies and Non-Governmental Organizations for effective partnership to achieve goal.
3. Experts should be consulted in planning; those knowledgeable in any field needed should be consulted.
4. There should be accountability and transparency.
5. Anti - graft agencies should be proactive to checkmate corruption.
6. Change of government/administration should not lead to abandonment of projects or policies, government is all about continuity.
7. Proper administration, tight supervision and monitoring of policies, programmes and project.
8. There should be an evaluation mechanism in the system.

9. Those that failed to perform should be discipline according to law.
10. Immunity clause should be removed from the constitution.

If the above-mentioned points are taken seriously in Nigeria, economic programmes, policies and reforms will work and Nigeria will achieve development that will be sustainable.

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