PATHWAY TO POST-2015 NIGERIA'S DEVELOPMENT: SIDESTEPPING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND THEIR MAJOR CREATORS

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Abstract

This paper examined the centripetal and centrifugal forces surrounding the politics of MDGs and Nigeria's post-2015 development trajectory. The paper interrogated the development trajectory of African countries within the context of core-periphery relations and concludes that the MDGs cannot promote African development. Consequently, it posits that post-2015 development agenda for the poor nations of Africa must be guided by the jettisoning of the International Community and their policies such as the MDGs and the current SDGs.

Key Words: MDGs, Nigeria, development planning, dependency theory, Africa

Introduction

Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has been experimenting, guarding and judging herself with externally created and fostered development paradigms. The most recent in this series of externally designed paradigms is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On a face value, the MDGs are noble and laudable goals to meet. But concerns have been raised on the politics surrounding it. The primary aim of this study is to look at the centripetal and centrifugal forces surrounding the politics of MDGs and Nigeria's post-2015 development trajectory.

Generally, the relevance and usefulness of the MDGs to African development has been highlighted by the literature, but how and why nations in the global South can set aside the MDGs for their own internally inspired development alleyway is an area that is largely ignored. This study is, therefore, an attempt to cover this gap. In addition to the introduction, the study is divided into seven major parts. These parts are: (1) Theoretical Framework of the Study; (2) Development: An Overview; (3) Nigeria's Struggle for Development since Independence; (4) The Real Philosophy behind the Crafting of the MDGs; (5) Nigeria and the MDGs Targets; (6) Development without the MDGs; and (7) Conclusion and Recommendations.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is situated within the dependency theory praxis. Dependency theory is related to the theory of imperialism founded by Rosa Luxemburg and V. I. Lenin (James, 1997). Dependency theory is also related to Johan Galtung's structural theory of imperialism (James, 1997 and Galtung, 1971). Hans Singer (1949), Raul Prebisch (1949) and Paul A. Baran (1957) are the main exponents of this theory. Other advocates of dependence theories are Francois Perroux and Kurt Rothschild, Claude Ake, Samir Amin, and Walter Rodney.

Dependency theory argued in general that resources flow from the poor nations of the South to the developed countries of the North, enriching the latter at the detriment of the former. The seemingly unceasing flow of raw materials directly and indirectly to the richer countries according to dependency theorists was made possible through colonialism, and later, neo-colonialism. Neocolonialism is an extension of the dependency that was made and concretized during the period of colonialism (Ake, 1981 and Nwoko, 1988). The following are the major tenets of dependency theory: Rejection of modernization theory ;Poor nations provide natural resources, cheap labour, a destination for obsolete technology, and markets for developed nations, without which the developed nations could not have the standard of living they are enjoying; Wealthy nations are actively perpetuating the state and conditions of dependence by various means. These means include politics, education, mass media, culture, sports, banking, multinational organizations and policies like MDGs Poor countries over the years have been greatly exploited by the wealthy nations which actually cause their underdevelopment; poor nations are disadvantaged in the rich nations' created international division of labour; limitation of self-sustained growth in the periphery; and the only way for the poor nations to develop like the rich nations is to break away from the dependency that the rich nations have instituted for years.

Free-market economists have criticized dependency theorists. Free-market economist believe that the poor nations need more than breaking away from the rich nations to develop and therefore, the dependency theorists are advocating utopia. The end positive result of breaking dependency, which is the state control of resources, is a doom-end too, according to some free market activists (Sachs, 2003).

Despite the above criticism, dependency theory helps to explain the foundation and give direction to this study. The major variable, MDGs, and why it was formulated, I argue, is rooted in maintaining the age-old dependency (Samir, 2013 and Eastery, 2007). The MDGs were formed like so many other policies to keep the dependency structures and politics going. The MDGs were a product of the rich nations to actually make the poor nations depend on their structures such as the UN and the World Bank directly and indirectly in every respect (Samir, 2013).

Secondly, development, which is also a major variable of the study is always associated with the creators of the MDGs. Development is a mechanism that has really helped the rich nations to keep the dependency structure intact. Year in, year out, different types of development theories that are soaked in dependency are formulated to deceive the poor nations to remain on line.

Another reason that makes dependency theory a sort of a guardian angel for this study is the major objective of the study. It is the main aim of the study to critically evaluate how poor nations like Nigeria can develop without the help of the major formulators of the MDGs. To this end, therefore, how the study can help the poor nations to break out and away from the dependency-oriented structures such as the MDGs is crucial (Eastery, 2007 and Samir, 2013).

Development: An Overview

Development as both a practice (enterprise) and an academic (scholarly) discipline is as old as seven decades or so (Rapley, 2007). Immediately after the largely Europe-

centred but destructive World Wars, development was considered principally synonymous with industrialization. The ultimate goal of development then was quite clear: to raise incomes and in the process give poor people access to the range of goods and services then widespread in developed societies that were not affected severely by the wars. It was, in short, about getting richer or more prosperous; and prosperity was measured in monetary figures (Rapley, 2007). This thinking of development dominated both domains of practitioners and theorists alike for a long time. Actually, it was in the 1960s, when most of the African nations were granted flag independence that this theory of development attracted criticisms, particularly from Marxist scholars.

In his classic, *the Wealth of Nation*, Adam Smith, cited in James and James (2004:5) posits that “No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable”. Development, therefore, must address poverty in all its ramifications. This is the type of development that this study is interested in. Before the beginning of this century, development was only associated with economic growth measured with statistics that were not clear to majority of the people whom development is supposed to positively affect. According to Owen (2012):

The Nobel-prize winning economist, Amartya Sen has twice changed our thinking about what we mean by development. Traditional welfare economics had focused on incomes as the main measure of well-being until his ground-breaking work in the 1980s which showed that poverty involved a wider range of deprivations in health, education and living standards which were not captured by income alone. His ‘*capabilities approach*’ led to the introduction of the UN Human Development Index and subsequently the Multidimensional Poverty Index, both of which aim to measure development in this broader sense. Then in 1999 Sen moved the goal post again with his argument that *freedoms* constitute not only the means but the ends in development. Sen's view is now widely accepted: development must be judged by its impact on people, not only by changes in their income but more generally in terms of their choices, capabilities and freedoms; and we should be concerned about the distribution of these improvements, not just the simple average for a society (Owen, 2012:2).

One of the new ingredients of development that Sen added to his now commonly accepted definition of development is freedom. Freedom to choose the kind of economic development paths nations want to follow. Hence, the subtle imposition of the MDGs on the poor nations does not reflect the new thinking of development. Development, according to Sen's postulation, should be evenly distributed; this also called into question the concern the MDGs show to only the poor citizens of the underdeveloped nations as against the poor people in the developed nations.

Therefore, as mentioned earlier, this study is typically concerned with the kind of development that is far-reaching. Development in this study means continues qualitative and quantitative improvement of the cultural, economic, social, educational, political and spiritual

lives of a people in a particular nation. It also includes real freedom and real independence from external influences of all types.

Nigeria's Struggle for Development since Independence

Nigeria's struggle for development since her independence in 1960 has been wrapped around different development plans and initiatives that are mostly non-native orientation driven. Ozy (2014) aptly characterized most of the early Nigeria's development plans as, "Liberal/Open Door Policies". Like most countries that were mercilessly colonized, it was difficult for Nigeria in her early independence years to plan her development without directly or indirectly mimicking the idiosyncrasies and philosophies of the global North.

In the opinion of Obikeze and Obi (2004), according to Iheanacho (2014), "a review of the various development plans clearly shows that the country is still very far from where it was envisaged it would be today, in terms of material and non-material progress. This is simply as a result of either faulty implementation of the plan, distortions or even non-implementation." This summation is not far from the truth. However, the fact that most of the development plans also failed was because they were not home-grown and inward-looking. The crafters of the Nigeria's development plans either wholly mimicked the global North's development plans or they were coerced to adopt the foreign plans.

The above, to a large extent, explains why life for the generality of the Nigeria people is still short, brutish and nasty in all material details. The Table below adequately summarizes Nigeria's development plans and initiatives from independence to the last democratic dispensation.

Table 1:1 Nigeria's Development Plans and Initiatives

Nos	Name of Development Plan/Initiatives	Core goals of the Development Plans/Initiatives	Remarks
1	First National Development Plan (1962-68)	1) Aimed at high level or rate of development that will supersede the colonial governments'. (2) It aimed at avoiding any Balance of Payments (BOP) crises. (3) It also aimed at a target saving of about 15 per cent of the GDP by 1975.	Nothing special was achieved. The Nigerian Civil War also affected the plan.
2	Second National Plan (1970-74)	1) The reconstruction of facilities damaged by the war. (2) Creation of job opportunities. (3) The rapid improvement in the level and quality of social services provided for the welfare of the people.	The elite made nonsense of the plan. The lofty ideals of the 1972 Indigenization Decree were scuttled too.
3	Third National Development Plan (1975-80)	1) Active development of research in agriculture on both food and cash crops for domestic feeding and export, and	Most of the key projects that were anticipated as

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		raw materials for local industries. (2) Construction of 60,000 dwelling units in various locations in the country. (3) Universal free primary education.	foundation for self sustaining and dynamic growth were either not completed or could not take of.
4	Fourth (1981-85) National Development Plan	1) Increasing real income for all Nigerians; reduction in unemployment; power generation and supply. (2) promotion of export oriented industries; and acquisition of technological skills	The plan was characterized by huge debt servicing which resulted from various foreign loans; increased import bills amidst a drastic fall in crude oil export revenue.
5	“Fifth National Development Plan” SAP (1986-1990)	To restructure and diversify the productive base of the economy in order to reduce dependence on the oil sector and on imports.	Unemployment and poverty rates increased as a result of this policy option.
6	Rolling Plans (1990-1999) and Vision 2010	United Nigeria, industrious, caring and God-fearing democratic society, committed to making the basic needs of life affordable for everyone, and creating Africa’s leading economy	The Rolling Plans and Vision 2010 unfortunately were stillborn.
7	The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) (2004 to 2007)	Wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction and re-orientating values.	Was dislocated by corruption.
8	Vision 2020 As Development Planning Initiative	Aims at growing the size of Nigeria’s economy from its current position of the 41st to the 20th best economy in the world by the year 2020.	The future is bleak. Nothing on ground to show that the aims of the initiative would be achieved.

Source: Adapted from by Jide, and Oghator (2013); Iheanacho (2014); Oye (2014); Ozy (2014); Ejumudo (2013) and Tolu, and Abe (2011)

The contents of Table 1:1, indicate that the contents of the MDGs are not spectacularly novel to Nigeria’s development plans’ domain.

Philosophy of the MDGs

The official origin or history of the MDGs is still a subject of debate. According to the official line of history, the MDGs were formulated in a well-attended UN Summit in 2000. This has, however, attracted concise and cogent objection from Samir (2013). To Samir:

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Most of the Millennium Development Goals may seem at first sight unobjectionable. Nevertheless, they were not the result of an initiative from the South itself, but were pushed primarily by the triad (the United States, Europe, and Japan), and were cosponsored by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. All of this has raised the question of whether they are mainly ideological cover (or worse) for neoliberal initiatives.... In fact, Ted Gordon, well-known consultant for the CIA, drafted the millennium goals! (Samir, 2013)

The point that no country can help the materially poor nations to grow or develop has been made by several experts from both sides of the intellectual divide. (Ake (1981); Sachs (2005); Eastery (2007); Samir (2003); Andrea, et al (2006); Samir (2013) and Rodney (1981) have postulated that only the poor nations can help themselves to develop. This explains why, the crafting of the MDGs (and now the SDGs) for the poor nations by mostly the rich nations under the auspices of the United Nations were unacceptable to some discerning minds (Eastery, 2007).

The general belief is that the global North leaders or the World leaders put together the MDGs to help the poor nations or the developing nations to come out of the age-old artificially created poverty triangle (Egbewole, 2006; Demba, 2009; Macartan, & Ashutosh, 2004; Darrow, 2014; Ojo, Oladimeji & Popoola, 2013; Dada, 2013 and Oni & Bidemi, 2013). Eastery (2007) summarized the overt motives and politics of the MDGs thus:

These goals were first agreed at a summit of virtually all world leaders at the UN in 2000, and they have since occupied a great deal of the attention of the UN, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and bilateral aid agencies in their dealing with low-income countries. The MDGs were meant as a major motivational device to increase development efforts in and on behalf of poor countries, and the resulting publicity and aid increases suggest they can claim considerable achievement on that score. A less-discussed angle on the MDGs is that they are also measures of performance. A notable feature of the MDG campaign is that it has emphasized the failure of Sub-Saharan Africa compared to other regions (Eastery, 2007:26).

These features of the MDGs outwardly make them to be acts of benevolence from lovely and superior benefactors. However, a deeper analysis of the philosophy behind the MDGs shows that they are created to achieve the following objectives:

- 1) To exonerate the Global North from the acute underdevelopment of the poor countries, especially Africa, that was caused by slavery, colonialism and imperialism;
- 2) To redirect the blame of Africa's, etc inexplicable underdevelopment to the managers of the economies of these countries;
- 3) To show that the so-called poor nations have very weak institutions;
- 4) To project the crafters of the MDGs as benefactors that do not need the resources of the developing nations;

- 5) To formulate defence for the next generations of the inheritors of the Global North leadership positions; and
- 6) To create excuse for neo-colonialism: to make the underdeveloped nations' people to believe that the Global North has nothing to do with the post-independence appropriation of their natural resources (Eastery, 2007 and Samir, 2013).

The real philosophy behind the MDGs was what informed the crafters of the MDGs to make it a guardian angel of a sort and a nexus of relationship with the developing nations (United Nations, 2014 and Otive, 2013)). This also explains why millions of dollars has been spent and is still being spent to publicize and force the tenants of the MDGs (now in form of SDGs) down the poor throats of the poor countries.

Besides the summations that have been made above, Darrow (2014) also pointed out the underling hidden and drawback of the MDGs in his detailed study. According to Darrow (2014):

Derided by their most ardent detractors as "Major Distracting Gimmicks," critics of the MDGs have pointed to the secretive circumstances of their birth, their technocratic and reductionist nature, their lack of ambition, their failure to address root causes of poverty, their failure to factor in legal obligations pertaining to social rights, their gender-blindness, their failure to address poverty in rich countries, their weak accountability mechanisms, their limited uptake by social movements in the Global South, the potentially distorting character of target-driven policymaking, and the propensity of the MDGs to "crowd out" attention to important issues that didn't make it into the global list, for example, social security or social protection (Darrow, 2014:5).

The "major distracting gimmicks" nature of the MDGs (and now the SDGs) among others pointed out by Darrow tally with some of the findings made above about the real intentions behind the development of the MDGs by the crafters who are also some of the major under-developers of the poor countries. Other sets of "gimmicks" connected to the MDGs, pointed out by Darrow include:

- 1) Tensions between MDG progress and authoritarian governance;
- 2) Procedural and legitimacy concerns;
- 3) Problems relating to poor specifications;
- 4) Inappropriate scale of ambition based upon unreliable and arbitrary assumptions about feasibility;
- 5) Misinterpretation and misapplication of the MDGs at the national level; the failure to address growing inequalities;
- 6) Tensions with international human rights legal standards; and
- 7) Colonization of the MDGs by neoliberal economic growth activists and aid lobbyists.

Samir (2013) postulation about the emptiness of the MDGs politics designed by the masters of the global North is also germane to this discourse because it also buttressed our theses. To Samir:

A critical examination of the formulation of the goals as well as the definition of the means that would be required to implement them can only lead to the conclusion that the MDGs cannot be taken seriously. A litany of pious hopes commits no one. And when the expression of these pious hopes is accompanied by conditions that essentially eliminate the possibility of their becoming reality, the question must be asked: are not the authors of the document actually pursuing other priorities that have nothing to do with “poverty reduction” and all the rest? In this case, should the exercise not be described as pure hypocrisy, as pulling the wool over the eyes of those who are being forced to accept the dictates of liberalism in the service of the quite particular and exclusive interests of dominant globalized capital? (Samir, 2013:6)

It is, therefore, clear that the MDGs are actually double smokescreens created by those who are keeping down the poor countries in their present conditions.

Nigeria and the MDGs Targets

Far before 2015, the verdicts were clear and loud. Eastery (2007) and the United Nations (2014) graphically exposed these verdicts in their studies on Africa. The following are some of the major damning statements made about the fact that the African nations, including Nigeria, cannot meet the targets of the MDGs: “Africa . . . is the only continent not on track to meet any of the goals of the Millennium Declaration by 2015” (UN World Summit Declaration, 2005).

“In Africa . . . the world is furthest behind in progress to fulfill {the MDGs} . . . Africa is well behind target on reaching all the goals” (Blair Commission for Africa, 2005). “Sub-Saharan Africa, which at current trends will fall short of all the goals.” (p. xi, foreword by James Wolfensohn and Rodrigo de Rato, World Bank and IMF Global Monitoring Report, 2005).

“Sub-Saharan Africa, most dramatically, has been in a downward spiral of AIDS, resurgent Malaria, falling food output per person, deteriorating shelter conditions, and environmental degradation, so that most countries in the region are on a trajectory to miss most or all of the Goals. . . . The region is off-track to meet every MDG” (UN Millennium Project, Investing in Development, Main Report, 2005:9). “At the midway point between their adoption in 2000 and the 2015 target date for achieving the MDGs, Sub-Saharan Africa is not on track to achieve any of the Goals” (United Nations, Africa, & the Millennium Development Goals, 2007).

No doubt, all the verdicts made far before 2015 above have come to become facts. In the case of Nigeria, the situation is not only true, it is also very baffling. This perhaps made Otiye, (2013) to point out that:

Nigeria which was one of the richest 50 countries in the early 1970s, has retrogressed to become one of the 25 poorest countries at the threshold of the twenty first century. It is ironic that Nigeria is the sixth largest exporter of oil and at the same time host the third largest number of poor people after China and

India. Statistics show that the incidence of poverty using the rate of US \$1 per day increased from 28.1 per cent in 1980 to 46.3 per cent in 1985 and declined to 42.7 per cent in 1992 but increased again to 65.6 per cent in 1996. The incidence increased to 69.2 per cent in 1997. The 2004 report by the National Planning Commission indicates that poverty has decreased to 54.4 per cent. But by 2010, the poverty rate has increased again to 65.1 per cent. Nigeria fares very poorly in all development indices (Otiye, 2013:3).

A lot of reasons have been advanced to explain why Nigeria, like most underdeveloped or developing nations, could not meet the MDGs (United Nations, 2014; Oni and Bidemi, 2013 and Macartan and Ashutosh, 2004). Most of the reasons adduced in studies are the usual points which range from bad governance, corruption, weak institutions, primitive culture and illiteracy.

For instance, Kingdom and Alfred-Ockiya (2009) pointed out that Nigeria's weak institutions that occasioned the late formulation of policies made the achievement of the MDGs target impossible:

Nigeria was one of the 189 nations that endorsed the MDGs in 2000, but she did not initiate any concrete plans/policies towards achieving these goals until 2004 when she came out with National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the Local Government Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (LEEDS). NEEDS seeks to reorientate values, reduce poverty, create wealth and generate employment under the presidential initiative on fisheries management and development amongst other initiatives (Kingdom and Alfred-Ockiya, 2009:4).

However, the axiomatic truth is that Nigeria like most African nations and other Latin America and Asia countries could not meet the MDGs targets because they are not still free. Their flag independences had been cocooned inside an exploitative neo-colonialism that has been further aggravated by a one-sided globalization. And until Nigeria and all other poor countries are properly free or until they shun the neo-colonialists masquerading as the international community, they will not be able to achieve simple, life-saving and clear targets such as the MDGs (Madunagu, 2011).

Development without the MDGs

The real designers of the MDGs are making all and sundry to believe that no underdeveloped nation can develop without the MDGs. That is, they want everybody to internalize the philosophical foundation of the MDGs with all its limitations and divisive politics. For instance, the education component of the MDGs begins and stops in the primary school level. Most of the components of the MDGs are not measurable too.

It is a reality that former third world nations such as Singapore, Cuba and China had entered into the enviable threshold of the materially developed comity of nations without the aid of mechanisms such as MDGs. The fact is that modern architects of third world nations' development such as Lee Kuan Yew, Fidel Castro and Hu Jintao shunned the "international community" in its entirety in the process of pushing their nations out of the underdevelopment

abeyance that the creators of the MDGs helped to midwife (Yaw, 2011). However, the fact that Nigeria and so many poor nations could not meet the MDGs target has been made clear. For instance, Otive (2013) has pointed out that:

...reports on the status of Nigeria have consistently shown that Nigeria is unlikely to meet most of the goals. The prevalence of HIV fell from 5.8 per cent in 2001 to 4.2 per cent in 2008. Maternal mortality has fallen by 32 per cent in five years. Maternal mortality fell from 800 deaths in 2003 to 545 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2008. Infant mortality rate has fallen from 100 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2003 to 75 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2008. Similarly, in the same period, the mortality rate of children under five years reduced from 201 to 157 deaths per 1,000 live births. It must be noted that there are huge challenges to the achievement of MDGs in Nigeria (Otive, 2013:12).

These huge challenges alluded by Otive (2013) are not entirely new. They are not also insurmountable. This is because there are other former very poor nations that have developed recently materially and otherwise without anything near MDGs and their creators. For instance:

- 1) China developed herself by entirely looking inward for about half a century. China erected the “Iron Curtain” and used her cultural and religious tenets to develop before opening her doors to the creators of the MDGs (Roderick, 1997). Today, China is free and she is negotiating with other developed nations on equal basis in the international arena;
- 2) Singapore just recently developed without the help of the creators of the MDGs and their philosophies such as democracy and gender equality. In fact, for more than four decades the country, Singapore, murdered periodic election and democracy. No MDGs were used as means to evaluate themselves or any of their development programmes. The opposition politicians and politics, which were part of Western democracy that is being fostered on poor nations such as Nigeria, were utterly silenced in Singapore when they were developing (Yaw, 2011).
- 3) Cuba has done well in all development indicators without worrying itself with the “lofty” ideals of the MDGs and their creators. A Cuban has not seen a ballot paper for years but the country is developing by the day (Brian, 2005).
- 4) Until recently, the now war-torn Libya under Maummar Gaddafi was a materially well-developed African nation without dependence on the global North and the road-map called MDGs. Gaddafi developed Libya with his Socialist Arab *Jamahiriya* philosophy that was highly anti-western development paradigm (Gaddafi, 1983).
- 5) Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States are doing well materially and otherwise without the help and directions of the MDGs (Robert, 2007).

This shows that with or without MDGs targets to meet, any serious nation, which is inward-looking, can develop to an enviable level that will attract the accolades of the creators of the MDGs. The above also debunk and diminish the excessive importance attached to the MDGs in academic circle, as a major path to the development of the poor nations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The British colonialists intentionally created the geographical space called Nigeria, like the French colonialists did in the francophone nations, to serve their economic interests forever (Ekeh, 1983). Rodney (1982) supported this postulation. He opined that the causes of African nations' underdevelopment can be situated in answering:

The question as to who, and what, is responsible for African underdevelopment the answer is that the operation of the imperialist system bears major responsibility for African economic retardation by draining African wealth and by making it impossible to develop more rapidly the resources of the continent.... one has to deal with those who manipulated the system and those who are either agents or unwitting accomplices of the said system (Rodney, 1982: 27-28).

He concluded thus:

The capitalists of Western Europe were the ones who actively extended their exploitation from inside Europe to cover the whole of Africa. In recent times, they were joined, and to some extent replaced, by the capitalists from the United States; and for many years now even the workers of those metropolitan countries have benefited from the exploitation and underdevelopment of Africa (Rodney, 1982: 27-28).

Therefore, it will be unfair and imprudent for the African nations such as Nigeria to look into the International Community actively represented by the formulators of the MDGs for their development. In fact, over the years, the underdeveloped nations have trusted and entrusted their growth and development to the materially developed nations such as the UK, France, USA, etc but nothing special have come out of this alliances and reliance. The UN and the Britton Wood Institutions have "spent" in forms of aids and loans trillions of United States Dollars to develop Africa since the end of active colonialism in most parts of the continent without anything to show for the money.

Consequently, post-2015 development agenda for the poor nations of Africa must be guided by the jettisoning of the International Community and their policies such as the MDGs and the current SDGs. The following should be the simplest pathways countries such as Nigeria should follow to make the post-2015 future bright for themselves. These pathways are:

- 1) *Looking inward and resources control*: on this issue, Samir advised that Nigeria should patent natural resources and appropriate their folk wisdom and traditions for development (Samir, 2003:18). Yash-Tandon (2008) cited in Demba (2009:114) supported this assertion thus: in order for African countries to end external dependence and move to new development strategies, they need to adopt a national project, grounded in a self-reliant development strategy, which gives priority to the recovery of national dignity and

sovereignty over resources and policies. He also calls for solidarity and mutual support among countries of the South. It is a struggle that should mobilise leaders and citizens at all levels in order to meet the challenges of overcoming multiple forms of resistance from the dominant system. One of the critical factors in establishing a national project is to forge a new mindset by emancipating the minds of leaders and citizens from the dominant ideology that makes them believe and even accept that Africa's development 'depends on foreign aid' and foreign direct investments (Demba, 2009:114).

- 2) *Demanding for the repatriation of resources held abroad:* Even the Commission for Africa in the UN acknowledges that tens of billions of dollars have been stolen from Africa with the complicity of the Western banking and financial system. An old report of UNCTAD (1998) cited in Demba (2009:115) indicated that if the wealth illegally held abroad were repatriated, gross capital formation in Africa would have been three times higher than its current level. This means that the repatriation of that wealth would significantly limit or even eliminate African countries' need for foreign 'aid'. This is another major struggle that requires focus, determination, solidarity and unity in Africa and a strong support from abroad, especially from the people of the South living abroad.
- 3) *Halt to the payment of illegal or illegitimate debts:* Nigeria has paid so much to Western creditors. Most of the debts the country has paid were taken in suspicious circumstances. Therefore, henceforth, the country should put embargo on the payment and the taking of foreign loans from the major formulators and backers of the MDGs.
- 4) *The poor nations must raise their voices against oppressions:* Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., did not wait for the rich and powerful to come to their rescue. They asserted their call to justice and made their stand in the face of official arrogance and neglect. The poor cannot wait for the rich to issue the call to justice. The G8 will never champion the end of poverty if the poor themselves are silent (Sachs, 2005).
- 5) *Breaking up with the real formulators of the MDGs:* to Rodney (1982:7), Africans development is possible only on the basis of a radical break with the international capitalist system (champion by the UN, World Bank, etc that are translated in form of MDGs and now SDGs), which has been the principal agency of underdevelopment of Africa over the last centuries.

These conclusions are by no means the total answers to the complex underdevelopment challenges confronting countries such as Nigeria in the global South. However, they are a pathway that can help to situate the much needed development in these countries. The underdevelopment of countries like Nigeria is founded on very solid structures with pillars of supports and therefore, the analyses of the underdevelopment of these nations cannot be comprehensively covered in a single study like this.

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