

Statistics and Implementation of 7-point Agenda of Federal Government of Nigeria

Introduction:

I feel highly honoured and happy to welcome you all particularly **His Excellency the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, GCON** to the 33rd Annual Conference of the Nigerian Statistical Association (NSA), holding in Gasau the State Capital of Zamfara State. The theme is such a syntillating one that can be regarded as a rallying point for all well meaning and loving people that care for the thriving denotation of the Nigerian nation and her role in the emerging Global order. It is therefore expected that the attendance to this conference should cut across all sectors and not restricted to Statisticians. Statistics is simply the bridging factor binding all other disciplines and interests. I sincerely believe that the peaceful environment of this great city should afford us all the congenial atmosphere to unravail all that we need to know and do within these few days to forge the way forward for this country.

As you are all aware the theme of this year's conference is "Statistics and Implementation of the 7-point Agenda of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

The current Federal Government Administration is quite determined to put back the economy on track, It was against this background that His Excellence, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Umaru Musa Ya'dua unveiled a seven-point agenda on assumption of office on 29th May, 2007. The agenda was to be the platform on which his administration would take off.

The President enumerated the seven point agenda as power and energy; food security and agriculture; wealth creation and employment, mass transportation, land reforms; security; qualitative and functional education and pursuance of the rule of law.

He added that his administration would focus "on accelerating economic and other reforms in a way that makes a concrete and visible difference to ordinary people."

The various states' development plans are taking cue from the Federal governments' plan leaving us with a wholesome desire to see the nation well and evenly developed in the nearest future. For example the Anambra Integrated Development Strategies (ANIDS) has common interest with the 7-point agenda in addition to Anambra State peculiar interests which cumulated to simultaneous development of all sectors.

In the same vein all other state governments have inaugurated their development plans to reflect in part the Federal Government interest in addition to the major interests and needs of such states.

It is important to observe that the need to develop every nook and corner of the country is the underlying cause of political agitations. There is much disparity in development across the federation and this is why there are agitations for more states and local government councils. Development, of essence, cannot only mean indiscriminate sitting of industries, hospitals, roads and bridges. Adequate planning is the key to effective and integrated development.

However, the question many are asking is whether the famed seven-point agenda is capable of lifting the economy from the doldrums.

Previous Development Initiatives

It is important at this point in time to state that Nigeria has tested other development plans before now.

Nigeria has seen such economic packages before that gave hope to many, only to dash such hope eventually.

President Shehu Shagari had his Green Revolution and the austerity measures. President Ibrahim Babangida came with Structural Adjustment Programme,(SAP).

President Olusegun Obasanjo's economic policy included privatization, monetization, consolidation, among others, just to mention but a few. Beside these were other National Development Plans all with varying degrees of success.

In the same vein we have witnessed the Operation Feed the Nation meant to encourage mass food production and resuscitating of alternative source of revenue outside oil through Agricultural Development.

Most recently is the National Economic Empowerment Development (NEEDS) with its States (SEEDS) and Local Government (LEEDS) Components

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was set to

All the development plans are in essence geared towards

- a. Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger
- b. Achieving universal education
- c. Promoting gender equality
- d. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- e. Ensuring environmental sustainability
- f. Developing global partnership for economic development.
- g. Employment generation
- h. Enhancing Agricultural production

among other goals.

In most cases the plans were adequately well packaged, launched, targets set but at the end of the day the achievements do not march the expected targets in some cases it becomes difficult to access what has been done. So in spite of all these development plans the country is still be deviled with numerous challenges among which are

- Ø Large proportion of the population still living in abject poverty
- Ø Education and school enrolment consistently declining in many states, with even fear of total exclusion.
- Ø High level corruption.
- Ø Insecurity all over the places
- Ø High unemployment rate
- Ø Health care delivery is still below international standard

- ∅ Weak industrial base and low investment
- ∅ Inadequate entrepreneur skill and weak private sector economy.
- ∅ Low per capita income

Just to mention but a few.

In all one basic problem of these strategies is the lack of Quality, Adequate, Regular, and Timely Statistics to pursue these laudable programmes because of inadequate funding of the Statistical Agencies. Where the data exist at all they are not consistent and not comparable across the states (hence no uniformity) and not comparable with other external economies. Some past Administrations efforts were made with a view to provide enabling environment and institutional framework to encourage the much needed data base but ended up not properly pursued.

For example, right from 1988 all MDAs were mandatorily made to operate the Planning, Research and Statistics Department (PRSD) by decree 40 of 1988. This was with a view that every sector should be able to produce at least its official statistics requirements. This was a very beautiful policy nevertheless the policy is being unduly killed because of the following:

- ∅ Non appointment of duly qualified officers to man the departments, in some cases people who do not have bearings with the subject matter are made to head the departments for political reasons
- ∅ Generally poor funding
- ∅ Non – provision of State of the art methods and procedures of achieving the set goals
- ∅ No Data Production programmes.
- ∅ Poor Statistics culture, with even some levels of government not believing in the Statistics they issue.
- ∅ The third tier level of government has nothing at all to boast of, with statistics placed under Finance, Administration or Secretary's office depending on the interest of such Government.
- ∅ Various governments, organisations and individuals issue convenient statistics to support their claim at any point in time.

The need to correct some of the anomalies form the basis upon which the past Obasanjo Administration signed into law the Statistical Act on 28th May 2007 designed to strengthen the capabilities of government to generate reliable statistics. By this singular effort a lot has been achieved at the Federal level at standardizing the practice of Statistics production. The reorganization of the National Bureau of Statistics(NBS) has shown a clear departure from what it used to be, especially when it was called the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS).

Seven Point (7-point) Agenda and Vision 20 - 20

On his inauguration day, President Yar'Adua said, "Our goal now is to build the greatest accomplishments of the past few years. Relying on the 7-point agenda that formed the basis of our contact with voters during the recent campaigns, we will concentrate on rebuilding our physical infrastructure and human capital in order to take our country forward. We will focus on accelerating economic and other reforms in a way that makes a concrete and visible difference to ordinary people".

According to the President By 2020 Nigeria will be one of the 20 largest economies in the world, able to consolidate its leadership role in Africa and establish itself as a significant player in the global economic and political arena.

However, some were busy asking What is the framework for the 7-Point Agenda-Vision 2020? Whether the planning/implementation going to be based on the states or local governments? They were of the opinion that there must be such framework. To them one can't plan for Nigeria as a whole but should bring together the plans of the composite units to make a national plan. **Hence to make the Agenda-Vision workable every state and every Local Government should have its on plan on which to implement the national thinking. In other words it must sum up to an integrated development plan from the Federal to State, then to Local Government Areas, and communities.**

A 405-man panel on the implementation of Vision 2020 and the seven-point agenda of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua was named by the Federal Government. The committee, made up of a steering body and business support group, was inaugurated by Yar'Adua on Monday, February 16, 2009.

The panel was broken into several working groups, with 57 thematic areas, thereby comprising of about 235 members of the business support groups and 70 members of the Steering Committee. Also there is the plan to consult with other Nigerians. The arrangement was for the policy to ensure that the agenda was effectively delivered under a strict monitoring system by the citizens.

The Minister of National Planning, was once quoted in a national Daily as having said that we **need to translate the seven – point agenda into deliverable and robust framework.** In other words spelling out in details **what would be done, say in a year, and people will be able to monitor it. This will fall under a National Development Plan, short, medium or long term planning. This definitely will involve the private sector.**

The Vision on the other hand should serve as the target of the 7-Point Agenda. That is about Nigeria's potential, to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. By this it can be said that the Vision is the target while the Agenda is the substance for achieving the target. The Agenda is where the decisions and actions for achieving the Vision lie. The Vision is a long-term project but the 7-Point Agenda is there to address basic immediate development need afflicting the nation. Hence the seven point agenda are capitalized in the following slogans;

1. Critical Infrastructure

Adequate power supply to facilitate industrialization, Development of rail, road, air and water transportation to facilitate movement of persons.

2. **Niger Delta**
Complete overhaul of the region to ensure provision of physical infrastructure and empowerment of the people.
3. **Food Security**
Agriculture and water resources to ensure adequate food supply for local consumption and export.
4. **Human capital Development**
Reform of the education sector to improve skills and enhance standards.
5. **Land Tenure and Home Ownership**
Review of the land use laws to facilitate proper use of the nation's land assets for socio-economic development; and citizens' access to mortgage facilities.
6. **National Security and Intelligence**
Adequate attention to the provision of security to lives and property.
- 7.

Let me present here the summary of the concept, development process, methodologies and milestones, thematic areas, Institutional arrangement, etc. as outlined by the Steering Committee on Vision 2020.

Accordingly, the Vision document was arranged to be developed in the following stages:

Concept

Nigeria's economic potential is well recognized. It is the biggest economy in West Africa sub region. Given the country's considerable resource endowment and coastal location there is potential for strong growth. Yet Nigeria has realized very little of this potential. Previous efforts at planning and visioning were not sustained. The history of economic stagnation, declining welfare and social instability, has undermined development for most of the past 30 years.

But in recent years, Nigeria has been experiencing a growth turnaround and conditions seem right from launching onto a path of sustained and rapid growth, justifying its ranking amongst the N 11 countries. These are the countries identified by Goldman Sachs to have the potential for attaining global competitiveness based on their economic and demographic settings and the foundation for reforms already laid.

The previous administration had declared the intention to pursue the vision of placing Nigeria among the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020 and the current administration is committed to the attainment of this vision.

The Summary of the 7-Point Agenda

The focus of this administration is therefore to

Development Process, Methodology & Milestones of 7 – point Agenda and Vision 20 – 20

Permit me to represent here the summary of the development processes, methodology and milestones as outlined by the Steering committee on Vision 2020.

Accordingly, the Vision document is to be developed in the following stages:

· STAGE I: BUILDING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR V2020 (2008–2010)

In this stage the first two components of the framework- the NCV2020 and the NSCV2020, should be established by the end of April 2007. The NSCV2020 should undertake an immediate review of all current strategy and related documents including the President's Seven Point Agenda, the NEEDS 2 and other relevant documents and prepare a Statement of National Priorities that will form the core elements of the country's development plans and budgets during the period 2008 to 2010 and constitute the foundation for V2020. The Statement of National Priorities should set specific targets to be achieved by 2010. The NSCV2020 will also refine the V2020 framework and develop guidelines for the V2020 development process.

· STAGE II: ACHIEVING THE MDGs ENROUTE TO V2020 (2011 – 2015)

By end of January 2008 the NSCV2020 will set up the National Technical Working Groups, one in each of the key areas of national priority and all stakeholder groups will establish their Vision 2020 Committees.

Under the overall direction of the NSC, the NTWGs will work closely with the Stakeholder Visioning Committees to develop detailed action plans and implementation strategies and commence implementation of Stage I of the Vision. At the same time Stakeholder Committees will begin the development of the next two stages of their Vision document.

Stage II should focus on achieving all the MDGs by 2015 as a general guide. Stakeholder Committees will determine their areas of focus in accordance with their progress on the MDGs.

· STAGE III: BECOMING A TOP 20 ECONOMY BY 2020 (2015 – 2020)

In stage III, the National Steering Committee will develop detailed key goals and targets that must be met in order to achieve convergence with the projected positions of the top 20 economies. These goals and targets will be cascaded into sectors and sub-national levels.

The NTWGs will provide support in the form of data and methodologies as well as capacity building in their areas of specialty. They will also collate and harmonize the various stakeholder action plans and strategies into the National action plan and strategy for NV2020.

Thematic Areas

The proposed thematic areas for the National Technical Working Groups (NTWGs) were as follows:

- Ø Agriculture and Food Security
- Ø Business Environment and Competitiveness
- Ø Corporate Governance
- Ø Culture, Tourism and National Re-Orientaion
- Ø Education
- Ø Employment
- Ø Energy
- Ø Environment and Sustainable Development
- Ø Finance
- Ø Foreign Policy
- Ø Governance
- Ø Health
- Ø Housing
- Ø Human Development
- Ø Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
- Ø Judiciary and Rule of Law
- Ø Manufacturing
- Ø Mining and Steel Development
- Ø Political system
- Ø Science, Technology and Innovation
- Ø Security
- Ø Small and Medium Scale Enterprise
- Ø Sports Development
- Ø Trade and Commerce
- Ø Transport
- Ø Urban and Rural Development
- Ø Water and Sanitation

Each of the thematic areas is composed of about 20 -25 technical experts who are renowned in their fields.

Special Interest Groups

In order to ensure that all stakeholders across the sectors participate in the Nigeria Vision 2020 process, thereby guaranteeing peoples' ownership, which is a precondition for any successful development planning, ten Special Interest groups were formed and tasked with the responsibility of developing Vision documents which cater to and focus on each group.

The Special Interest Groups include:

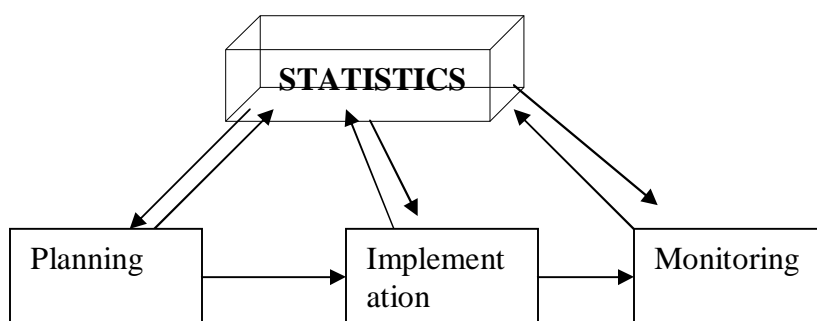
- Ø Women
- Ø People with disabilities
- Ø Media
- Ø Labour
- Ø Youth

1. The National Council on Vision 2020 is at the apex, providing leadership and direction to galvanize the whole nation, with the President as the Chairman.

2. The National steering committee consist of about 70 persons, drawn from the public and the private sectors, with the responsibilit for developing the Vision 2020 Implementation Guidelines, Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy, ensuring a bottom-up approach by which all key stakeholders, Ministries, Departments and agencies (MDAs) as well as State, Local Government Areas (LGAs) are encouraged to prepare and implement their “component of the V2020” . The National steering committee would also develop a template for preparing the V2020 starategic plan.
3. National Technical Working Group would comprise as 20-5 experts in specified thematic areas drawn from both public and private sectors with expertise and passion for the area. They will to undertake specific studies or research work to provide data necessary for the working group report.
4. The Stakeholder Development Committee includes State governments, Federal Ministeries, Departments and agencies (MDAs) and other key institutions. The Nigeria Vision 2020 is a bottom-up stragetice plan in which each major stakeholder group would prepare its V2020 thoughts and ideas based on the guidelines approved by the National Council. These committees were expected to provide information that would feed into the NV2020 Plan.
5. The Economic Management Team will serve as the Think-Thank to drive the visioning process. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the EMT are members of the National Council and National steering Committee on Vision 2020 as well as provide the vital link and feedback from both directions between the National Council and the National Steering Committee. They would therefore provide the vital link and feedback from both bodies.

Statistics Implications of the 7-point agenda

From foregoing it is obvious that adequate planning, implementation and monitoring at all levels can hardly be achieved without sufficeint, timely, consistent, qualitative and acceptable Statistics. In otherwords we must of necessity know where we are, where we want to be and how to get to the desired point. And in all Statistics is the most readily avalaible instrument for achieving that.



What this entail is that to make any development plan workable and realiseable; and particularly the 7-point agenda it must be guided with a good data production process, be it at the braimstorming level, stage of drawing the plan, monitoring stage or implementation stage.

Hence the need to examine the entire Nigerian statistical system, how functional it is right from the Federal until the grass roots level. And thie statistics produced therefrom must be transparent and available.

In otherwords it entails agressive strenghtening of the Nigeria Statistical System to produced on regular bases and at all levels of government good quality data that will sreghthen the implementation of the Agenda as well as achieve the vision.

National Bureau of Statistics has published a Compedium of Statistical Terms and Variables in all sectors of the economy. This speals out the sectorial data needs for each sector as well as likely indices derivable from them. Although for sure it is not exhaustive but has provided a lot of plat form for all data producers at all levels to be seriously engaged in consistent data production. This shall also form bases for proper streamlining and coordinated data generation across the country and will help to remove duplication effort..

Challenges in achieving Data Production capable of sustaining the Seven point Agenda and its Vission 2020.

The following are some of the challenges that characterize effective data production in Nigeria:

- q Lack of sufficient Collaborations
 - Non fully involvement of the stakeholders
 - Producers, Suppliers and Users of Statistics
- q No Adequate Coordination
 - Non availability of Coordinating Body
 - Non Implementation of the State Statisical Master Plan
- q Lack of Qualified Staff
 - Capacity Building of the existing staff not sufficient
 - Non employment of the Qualified Mapower
 - Aging Civil Service particularly the Nigerian Statistical System
- q Poor Funding
 - Very Poor Fund provision for Statistical Programmes
 - Not being able to tap the Funding from International Donors
- q Lack of adequate legislature to strenghten the data production process especially at the states and local Government levels

Recommendations

It is being suggested that

- | Urgent Implementation of the State Statistical Master Plan for the State Bureau of Statistics
- | Better Collaborative efforts in the area of Data Production across the Line Ministries and the various Stake Holders
- | Proper Coordination of all Data Production process to remove duplications, substandard statistics, reckless issuance of false data.
- | Strengthening the Coordinating Bodies.
- | Better Funding – Internally and Donors Agencies.
- | Engagement of Qualified Professionals as well Massive Training for the available staff
- | Consistent data production at all levels.
- | Continuous Archiving of all data produced by various levels of governments, Non governmental Organisations and Individuals.
- | Need to appoint a body that critically examines the various data generated by all level of government, even after it has been issued with a view to justifying the findings. Nigerian Statistical Association must be member of this body.
- | Advocacy at all levels to inform all levels of Administration on the need for evidence based approach.
- | Government at all levels should
 - Encourage consistent data Production in all sectors so as to evolve required data base for implementing, monitoring and evaluating its numerous Development programmes.
 - Evidence based development process is the sure means of reaching targets of development plans.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the NSA has outlined on its own a number of programmes to assist in carrying this message to every level. We are already discussing with stake holders particularly the international donors on how best to mount joint Advocacy Campaign Committees.

We are also using the forum of this conference to recognize those states that have identified themselves in either implementation of the State Statistical Master Plan thereby strengthen the data production process in their state as well as others that encourage consistent data production initiatives.

1. The investiture of His Excellence, the Vice-President of Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, GCON as Grand Patron of NSA
2. The Award of Excellence to the Executive Governors:-
 - (a.) Governor _____ of Zamfara State
 - (b.) Governor Peter Obi of Anambra Statefor the Implementation of State statistical Master Plan in Zamfara and anambra states
- (c.) Governor Emmanuel Ewata Uduaghan for Delta State
- (d.) Governor _____ for Bauchi State

for outstanding performance in supporting data production in Delta and Bauchi States

The Governing council of the Nigeria statistical Association is also conferring the honour of Fellows to some people who similarly identified themselves in encouraging and supporting statistics production and development.

1. Dr. V. O. Akinyosoye, Director General, National Bureau of Statistics
2. Mr. Nelson Ndoya Retired permanent Secretary in Adamawa state
3. Mr. C. M. Okafor the Immediate Past President NSA
4. Mr. T. O. Offor, Retired Director, National Bureau of Statistics
5. Prof. B. A. Oyejola, Immediate Past Editor-in-Chief, NSA

Let me once again appeal to participants to bare their minds in bringing every idea deemed necessary to inform the government on the successful implementation of the Seven-Point Agenda, more so now that the Presidency is adequately represented in this conference. I wish also to sincerely thank Your Excellency, The Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the NSA Grand Patron, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, GCON, on behalf of the Governing Council of the Nigerian Statistical association for personally being present at this conference in spite of his crowded schedule. It simply demonstrates the seriousness the current administration attaches to the issues relating to 7-point agenda and vision 2020 as well as the Statistics profession.

On behalf of the Governing Council of the Nigerian Statistical association I wish to express our profound gratitude to Zamfara State Government for accepting to host this all important conference.

In conclusion I once again welcome you all to this conference and wish you a nice stay in Gusua.

B. O. Amobi
President (NSA)

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