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The situation of MDG in Nigeria I can also assess the situation from MDG office especially the Debt Relief Gains as provided in the 2006 annual budget. The 2004 report which was Nigeria's first report on the MDGs states that "based on available information it is unlikely that the country will be able to meet most of the goals by 2015 especially the goals related to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, reducing child and maternal mortality and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases" It further states that "for most of the other goals (i.e. apart from goal 1) up-to-date data exists which shows that if the current trend continues, it will be difficult for the country to achieve the MDG targets by 2015".

2015 target reduce by half the proportion of people without access to clean drinking water and basic sanitation

The World Bank in its 2001 report titled Attacking poverty points out that "physical capital was not enough, and that at least as important were health and education" and proposed a strategy for attacking poverty in three ways:

1. Promoting opportunity
  - Encouraging effective private investment
  - Expanding into international markets
  - Building the assets of poor people
  - Addressing asset inequalities across gender, ethnic, racial and social divides
  - Getting infrastructure and knowledge to poor area-rural and urban
2. Facilitating Empowerment
  - Laying the political and legal basis for inclusive development
  - Creating public administration that foster growth and equity
  - Promoting inclusive decentralization and community development
  - Promoting gender equity
  - Tracking social barriers
3. Enhancing Security
  - Formulating a modular approach to helping poor people manage risk
  - Developing national programs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to macro shocks-financial and natural
    - Designing national systems of social risk management that are also pro-growth
    - Addressing civil conflict
    - Tackling the HIV/AIDS Epidemic

The UNDP in its Human Development report of 2003 titled Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to end Human Poverty pointed out that to achieve the MDGs require policy responses to structural constraints on several fronts along with stepped up external support. The report recommended six policy clusters to help countries break out of their poverty traps:

1. Invest early and ambitiously in basic education and health while fostering gender equity. These are preconditions to sustained economic growth. Growth in turn can generate employment and raise incomes- feeding back into further gains in education and health gains.

2. Increase the productivity of small farmers in unfavorable environments- that is, the majority of the world's hungry people. A reliable estimate is that 70 percent of the world's poorest people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture.
3. Improve basic infrastructure- such as ports, roads, power and communications- to reduce the costs of doing business and overcome geographic barriers.
4. Develop an industrial development policy that nurtures entrepreneurial activity and helps diversify the economy away from dependence on primary commodity exports- with an active role for small scale and medium size enterprises.
5. Promote democratic governance and human rights to remove discrimination, secure social justice and promote well being of all people.
6. Ensure environmental sustainability and sound urban management so that development improvements are long term.

### CAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES MEET THE GOALS?

The question of whether Africa can or cannot meet the MDGs is a crucial one that should agitate the minds of politicians, government bureaucrats, civil society activists and development workers. In my view, there is no straightforward answer. It can be answered either in the negative or the affirmative. The document clearly states that "if present trend continues, the African countries are not likely to meet the Millennium Development Goals." On the other hand, the report gives the conditions for meeting the goals: strong political will and sustained efforts. Perhaps, a better way to frame the question is what can Nigeria do to meet the MDGs in 2015? In my view, my country Nigeria has sufficient resources to meet the MDGs in 2015. But for this to happen, as argued above, the country will have to change course in the conceptualization and implementation of policies and programmes to achieve the MDGs.

This is perhaps the model that should become the norm in every ministry, department and agency at all levels of government.

In my view, social transformation will require good change and progress in the following areas:

- **Transparency and accountability:** Several analyses of the challenges of development in Nigeria have identified lack of transparency and accountability as a major obstacle. Accountants in Nigeria have a great role to play in this regard. They must change the way auditing is done from financial auditing of certifying payments and receipts to systems auditing and examining the whole concept of value for money. Otherwise, accountants and auditors will just be certifying corruption.
- **Tackling institutional constraints:** To deliver services to the people require effective and efficient institutions that follow due process and standards.
- **Pro-Poor Growth:** It is clear that there has been economic growth in Nigeria in the last few years above 5 percent. But economic growth alone cannot lead to achievement of the MDGs unless the growth is pro-poor. "We must not continue to stress the pursuit of a high growth rate in statistical terms and fail to reduce the social and economic deprivation of a substantial number and group of our people. We must not absolutely pursue wealth and growth at the expense of inner well being, joy, satisfaction, fulfillment and contentment of human beings."
- **Structural Change:** To achieve the MDGs in Africa, there is the need to change the structure of the economy in such a way that the economy is not dependent on only one product but diversified economy and expanding the industrial sector.

- **Distributive Equity:** Deliberate efforts and policies must be put in place to redistribute income. The MDGs will be meeting if the poor and excluded in society are empowered to meet their basic needs.
- **Social and cultural Re-orientation:** There is the need for social and cultural re-orientation to meet some of the goals. For instance, the goals on women and girls require a new kind of mindset to achieve them.
- **Political Transformation:** The political system and the way it engenders commitment, participation and patriotism by the people contributes immensely to national cohesion, peace and stability and development.
- **Human Development:** Development implies the fulfillment of basic human needs including those for education and health.
- **Urban Development:** The growth of urbanization is definitely increasing and there will probably be more people in urban areas than rural areas by 2015. There must be urban development process that is inclusive and not based on dislocation of slum dwellers without alternatives.
- **Employment:** Employment is the surest way of achieving the MDGs because individuals will receive income and will contribute to the economy.
- **Transformation of Power Relations:** Whenever power is concentrated in the hands of a few, they will utilize such powers to accumulate wealth. To achieve the MDGs will require transformation of power relations and challenge of patriarchy.
- **Partnership with development partners:** It has been documented that in order to make adequate progress towards achieving the MDGs, Africa will require additional external financing averaging about US \$6.4 billion annually between 2013 and 2015. Even if the resources in the countries are used effectively there will still be challenges in meeting the MDGs. Meanwhile, Africa is seriously under aided. My Country Nigeria receives only US \$2 per capita in ODA compared to the average for Africa of US \$28 per capita. In addition, meeting the MDGs will require partnership between government, the public sector and the private sector. In particular, it will require transformists from the public sector, civil society, media and private sector to build a critical movement of people advocating for and implementing change.

## CONCLUSION

The situation in West Africa indicates that there are challenges in meeting the goals by 2015. For African Countries to meet the goals in 2015 there is the need to formulate and implement policies that will promote transparency and accountability; overcome institutional constraints; promote pro-poor growth; bring about structural change; enhance distributive equity; engender social and cultural re-orientation; engineer political transformation; promote human development; practice inclusive urban development; generate employment and transform power relations.