

Nigeria's development process, methodology and milestones planned for VISION 20:2020 - 13 years after

Infrastructure development

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Abstract

Infrastructural development is a key requirement for the development of any nation as it is an indispensable tool in facilitating growth and development. The usefulness of infrastructure cuts across many varying sectors relevant to development including health, education, agriculture, telecommunication, power, etc. as well as the sustenance of economic growth and preservation of the environment for sustainable economic development. This article takes a look at the critical areas/aspects of infrastructure for the purpose of judging the level of accomplishment of the Vision 2020. The sectors examined are: power supply, transportation, information communication and technology (ICT), education, health, agriculture, land use management, rural and urban development, water supply and waste management. By and large, Nigeria can not be said to have met her tall, yet laudable goals of the vision 2020, largely as a result of inadequacies in governance, policies and other factors. There is a great need for significant improvement in the political will of the government of the day to commit to the goals and aspirations of the nation for rapid development.

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Received: May 31, 2020

Accepted: December 27, 2020

Published: June 30, 2021

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/rejhs.v9i2.10>

Objectives of the Nigeria's Vision 2020

The two broad objectives are to:

1. Make efficient use of human and natural resources to achieve rapid economic growth and;
2. Translate the economic growth into equitable social development for all citizens.

The development aspirations cut across four dimensions:

- a) Social - building a peaceful, equitable, harmonious and just society;
- b) Economic - developing a globally competitive economy (of which infrastructural development is a key component);
- c) Institutional - having a stable and functional democracy; and
- d) Environmental – achieving a sustainable management of the nation's natural resources.

Weak implementation of previous national strategic development initiatives has constrained the country's growth and development. Another reason for plan underachievement and failures was lack of political will to see the development strategy through to the end. Nigeria therefore adopted a long-term approach to development planning and set for itself the goal of being among the 20 largest economies of the world by 2020. This is why she chose the following vision Statement:

“By 2020, Nigeria will have a large, strong, diversified, sustainable and competitive economy that effectively harnesses the talents and energies of its people and responsibly exploits its natural endowments to guarantee a high standard of living and quality of life to its citizens”.

Nigeria's blueprint for economic transformation

The NV20:2020 offers strategies towards realizing Nigeria's potentials and her emergence as one of the 20 leading global economies in the world by 2020. The specific actions to be taken in that direction include:

- a) Urgently and immediately address the most serious constraints to Nigeria's growth and competitiveness;
- b) Aggressively pursue a structural transformation of the economy from a mono-product to a diversified and industrialized economy;
- c) Investing in human capital to transform the Nigerian people into active agents for

growth and national development;

- d) Investing in infrastructure to create an enabling environment for growth, industrial competitiveness and sustainable development;

Nigeria has suffered major setbacks in her quest for advancement and aspirations as a result of poor and decaying infrastructure among other challenges. As a result of this, one of the macro-economic strategies targeted at achieving Nigeria's vision 2020 was: to encourage massive investments in infrastructure and human capital and creating an enabling environment for domestic and foreign private investment through focus on: increasing the quantity and quality of infrastructure spending; development of a framework for joint financing of infrastructure projects between the tiers of government; and encouragement of private investments in infrastructure was.

Infrastructural development is a key requirement for the development of any nation as it is an indispensable tool in facilitating growth and development. The usefulness of infrastructure cuts across diverse sectors relevant to development such as health, education, agriculture, telecommunication, power, etc. as well as the sustenance of economic growth and preservation of the environment for sustainable economic development. Currently, it can be said that the state of Nigeria's infrastructure falls short of what is needed to achieve the status of a 21st century economy.

Critical areas/aspects of infrastructure to be assessed in details for the purpose of judging the level of accomplishment of the Vision 2020 are:

- a) Power supply
- b) Transportation
- c) Information communication and technology (ICT)
- d) Education
- e) Health
- f) Agriculture
- g) Land use management
- h) Rural and Urban development
- i) Water supply
- j) Waste management

a. Power Supply

Vision 2020 estimated “that Nigeria will need to generate electricity in the range of about 35,000MW by 2020”. “The target is to grow installed power generation capacity from 6,000MW in 2009 to 20,000MW by 2015 and 35,000MW by 2020,” it stated. However, according to operational reports from the Nigeria

Electricity System Operator, Nigeria's installed generation capacity has been 11,165 MW since at least 2014. It increased to 12,910 MW in January 2019 and has not increased since then. Peak generation, on the other hand, has not at any time exceeded 5,375 MW (1).

About 47% of Nigerians do not have access to grid electricity and those who do have access, face regular power cuts. In addition, the economic cost of power shortages in Nigeria is estimated at around \$28 billion - equivalent to 2% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Getting access to electricity ranks as one of the major constraints for the private sector according to the 2020 "Doing Business" report. On 23rd June 2020, the World Bank Board of Directors approved the Power Sector Recovery Operation (PSRO) of \$750 million in International Development Association (IDA) credit to improve the reliability of electricity supply, achieve financial and fiscal sustainability, and enhance accountability in the power sector in Nigeria. According to Shubham Chaudhuri (World Bank Country Director for Nigeria), "the lack of reliable power has stifled economic activity and private investment and job creation, which is ultimately what is needed to lift 100 million Nigerians out of poverty and the objective of this operation (PSRO) is to help turn around the power sector and set it on a fiscally sustainable path. This is particularly urgent at a time when the government needs all the fiscal resources it can marshal to help protect lives and livelihoods amidst the COVID-19 pandemic."

It is therefore evident that Nigeria falls short, by far, of her tall ambition contained in the Vision 2020 agenda (2).

b. Transportation

Decaying infrastructure is one of the deficiencies that Nigeria's Vision 2020 sought to address. The Federal Government has started to repair the country's poorly maintained road network, although work has been at a very slow pace. Due to the fact that Nigeria's railways are in a perilous condition, the government has also been making efforts to rectify the situation by privatizing the Nigerian Railway Corporation (3). Similarly, the government is pursuing a strategy of partial port privatization by granting concessions to private port operators so that they can improve the quality of port facilities and operations.

Nigeria has the largest road network in West Africa and the second largest south of the Sahara, with roughly 108,000 km of surfaced roads in 1990; however, they are poorly maintained and

are often cited as a cause for the country's high rate of road fatalities. Nigeria's airports, whether international or regional, suffer from a relatively poor reputation for operational efficiency and safety.

In 2004 Nigeria had 105 kilometers of pipelines for condensates, 1,896 kilometers for natural gas, 3,638 kilometers for oil, and 3,626 kilometers for refined products. Energy pipelines are subject to sabotage by militant groups and vandalization by oil bunkers. Needless to say, Nigeria is far from attaining her vision 2020 goal on transportation.

c. Information communication and technology (ICT)

Research on ICT in Nigeria has shown appalling reports of a disorganized system of governance where there is no effective and coherent national policy implementation on ICT advancement nationwide. Nigeria, like the rest of the world must embrace the rapid changes in information and communication technology (ICT) so as not to be disengaged from globalization and economic development trends, and Nigeria must quickly join the ICT improvement race before she is left behind in the spheres of industrialization (4).

In recent times, ICT has found great usefulness in Nigeria in the following areas: health, governance, better employment opportunities for the ICT-compliant, education (e-learning), national security (useful in combating crime. e.g. through the use of CCTV), and economic development.

In order to bridge the development gap between developing and developed nations, Nigeria as a country harness the production or use of ICTs to attain her development goals.

a. Education

Currently, Nigeria has over 10 million out-of-school children. According to 2018 statistics from the World Bank, adult literacy rate in Nigeria is 62 per cent, up from 51 per cent in 2008. This is far from the global average of 86.3 per cent. Meanwhile, 18 countries (including Armenia, Cuba, Estonia, Russia, and Ukraine) abound which have a perfect literacy rate of 100 percent, 21 countries have a literacy rate of 99 per cent and 14 have a rate of 98 percent (5).

b. Health

As a result of her poor-performing health sector, Nigeria is at the bottom of most world health indices – having one of the worst maternal mortality rates in the world, high infant and child

mortality rates; has the world's third-lowest life expectancy rate of 55 years; has the second largest number of stunted children in the world, to mention but a few (6). However, in recent times, Nigeria recently witnessed a number of changes that are expected to impact positively on the health sector for the purpose of attaining Vision 2020 and generally bring about improvement in the health sector. Such changes include the following (7):

1. Selection of the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) theme as the focus for the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies' (NIPSS) Senior Executive Course 41 (SEC 41).
2. Passing of the National Health Insurance Bill by the Senate in April, 2019. Healthcare financing will probably always be a huge topic in Nigeria's health sector. 2019 saw robust discussions around the role of the private sector in partnering with government to finance healthcare.
3. Leadership of the Ministry of Health witnessed some changes in key positions of the Minister, Director-General for the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), etc.

Nigeria also attained a polio-free status, having been officially certified to that effect by the WHO on 25th August, 2020. Nigeria was the last polio-endemic country in Africa and was officially certified free from polio after marking three consecutive years since the last case of wild polio had been identified (8).

c. Agriculture

A study conducted by Ofozoba (9) established that the efforts of the Nigerian government to increase agricultural production, especially in relation to tubers and grains as well as livestock and fisheries, as contained in the Vision 20:2020 agricultural policy have not yielded the desired results within the said period of implementation. The author also reported that the Nigerian government's large-scale modernization of the production systems for crops as stated in the Vision 20:2020 had not resulted in any significant increase in the production of tubers and grains within the implementation period of the Vision 20:2020; and also identified that the problem had always been the protection of vested interests when it comes to policy implementation, thus, leading to haphazard results. The quagmire of inflated contracts, non-completion of contracts, reselling of purchased materials through the back door,

embezzlement of contracted funds, etc., have often led to excessive losses, thus creating funding gaps. Resultantly, between 2009 and 2012, conspicuous funding gaps on Vision 20:2020 agricultural policies were recorded as follows: Agricultural Productivity Enhancement – N29362.2 billion; Support to Commercial Agriculture – N22679 billion; Land and Water Management – N97240 billion; Linkages and Support to Inputs and Products Markets – N29362.2 billion; Programme Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation – N2250 billion. The Nigerian government needs to match her vision for a viable agricultural sector with commensurate funding as adequate funding is paramount to the success of any programme that would succeed.

d. Land use management

The Nigerian Land use Act of 1978 abolished the already existing land tenure systems and replaced them with a country-wide uniform Land Administration system. Prior to the Act, there were three land tenure systems namely; the customary, which was essentially based on the customs and traditions of the various communities with the Chief, community or family head holding the land in trust for family or community use; the non-customary, based on the received English Law (operational mainly in the then Lagos Colony) which vested the land on the British Crown but also allowed for either freeholding or lease holding with tenured occupancy; and the special native-favoured system of Northern Nigeria which put the land under the control of the Governor for the use and benefit of the Natives of the Region. All the existing tenure systems encouraged land holding without an obligation to develop them, fragmentation and uncoordinated alienation, hoarding speculatively for value appreciation and without precise documentation. The Land Use Act was therefore designed to achieve the following objectives (10);

- i. Make land easily accessible to all Nigerians
- ii. Prevent speculative purchases of communal land
- iii. Streamline and simplify the management and ownership of land
- iv. Make land available to government at all levels for development
- v. Provide the system of Government administration of rights that will improve tenure security.

If these objectives were achieved by the Act ultimately, the question to be addressed

would be whether the challenges posed by the Land use Act for housing and the overall investment in property development were operation-induced or perpetrated by the provisions therein. The Land use Act established a uniform Land Administration system in the Country with the aim of making land easily available to all Nigerians for unhindered development. Its inability to deliver on this requirement has manifested in the incapability of various measures and schemes developed for housing delivery not have achieved the desired merits in coping with the population dynamics and societal needs in housing and other socio-economic endeavours. Among possible measures for redressing the situation are responsive review of the Act, changing emphasis from land ownership to housing delivery, provision of legalized master plans and structure plans to guide developments, review of plot sizes cognizant of infrastructure cost and efficiency, provision of evolutionary low-cost housing shells for incremental in-fill by families, adoption of alternative local building materials and development of agencies' information system and networking (11).

e. Rural and Urban development

The war of economic transformation in the country would be lost or won in our settlements where productive economic activities are located; hence physical planning of these settlements and the regions across the country is germane to the realization of the 2020 vision or any other future vision. The gross inadequacy of infrastructural facilities and social services i.e., road, power, education, healthcare, railway etc. in our urban and rural areas constitute a major constraint to developmental efforts in Nigeria. These constraints, apart from discouraging any investment, whether local or foreign, make industrial development difficult (12). Nigeria can overcome her developmental challenges if the government on their part demonstrates the needed political will to address these issues. Good governance and exemplary leadership by those in government is necessary ensure the provision of an environment conducive for any developmental goal or objective to be achieved (13).

f. Water supply

Nigeria met the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets for water, as 69 percent of the population now have access to improved water. Between 1990 and 2015,

Nigeria increased access to improved water by 29 percent. In 2015, 69 percent of households had access to improved water. This improvement was mainly driven by a 32 percent increase in coverage for rural areas (from 25 percent in 1990, to 57 percent in 2015) (Figure 3). While coverage in urban areas is higher, access to improved water increased by only 5 percentage points during this 15-year period. Despite the fact that access to improved water at the national level increased, access to piped water on premises declined by 10 percent, from 12 percent in 1990 to 2 percent in 2015. This is mainly due to a steep decline of 29 percent in access to piped water in urban areas – from 32 percent to 3 percent – due to rapid urbanization, lack of investment, and institutional constraints in the expansion of services. Moreover, households continually face the risk of bacteriological or chemical contamination by increasingly relying on alternative water providers or private household solutions, such as unregulated manually drilled boreholes, which offer limited data on aquifer recharge and saline intrusion. On the supply side, the decrease in the provision of water to less than 50 liters per person per day affects the sustainability of the water utility systems, and leads to an inconsistent supply of water for those few consumers who have access to a water connection. In rural areas, access to piped water was already low in 1990, and there was an additional decrease of 2 percent by 2015 (14).

a. Waste management

Solid waste management is the most pressing environmental challenge faced by urban and rural areas of Nigeria. Nigeria, with population now in excess of 180 million, is one of the largest producers of solid waste in Africa. Despite a host of policies and regulations, the poor state of solid waste management in the country is assuming alarming proportions with each passing day (14). Nigeria generates more than 32 million tons of solid waste annually, out of which only 20-30% is collected. Reckless disposal of municipal solid waste has led to blockage of sewers and drainage networks, and choking of water bodies. Improper collection and disposal of municipal wastes is leading to an environmental catastrophe as the country currently lack adequate budgetary provisions for the implementation of integrated waste management programmes across the States.

According to the United Nations Habitat Watch, African city populations will more than triple over the next 40 years. African cities are

already inundated with slums; a phenomenon that could triple urban populations and spell disaster, unless urgent actions are initiated. Out of the 36 states and a federal capital in the country, only a few have shown a considerable level of resolve to take proactive steps in fighting this scourge.

Nigerian states, especially those with heavy population burdens (e.g., Lagos, Oyo, Kano and Rivers) despite the institutions and functionality (though inadequate) of their respective Waste Management Agencies, grapple incessantly to manage the large volumes of solid wastes generated by their populace. Generally speaking, population increase in Nigeria has led to an unprecedented growth in its economy but with a devastating effect on the environment as more wastes are generated due to the need for housing, manufacturing industries and a boost in trade volume. Having fallen short of the targets of waste management within the purview of vision 2020, the government at the federal level as a matter of urgency needs to revive its regulatory framework that will be attractive for private sectors to invest in waste collection, recycling and reusing (15).

In the light of the above discussion, declaring that Nigeria has failed to meet her tall ambitions of the Vision 2020 infrastructural goals is merely stating the obvious; there is much work to be done and several issues bordering on governance, policies, etc., if Nigeria will rise up to become the true Giant of Africa.

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How to cite this article:

Omobuwa, O., Hassan, M.B. Infrastructure development. Research Journal of Health Sciences, 2021, 9(2): 185-191

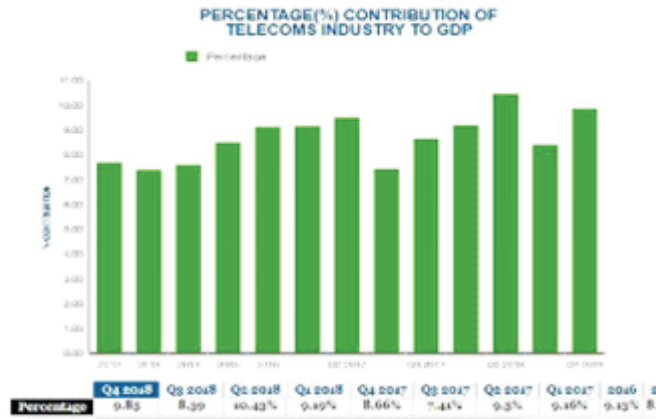


Fig. 1: Percentage Contribution of the Telecommunication Industry to GDP (Source: NCC 2019)

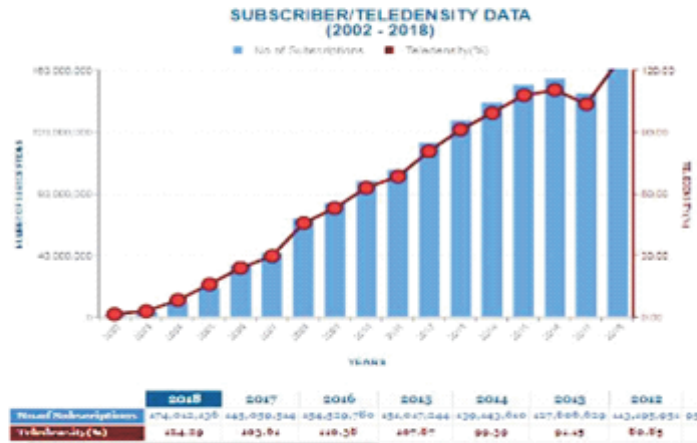


Fig. 2: Internet Subscribers Data 2002- 2018 (Source: NCC 2019)

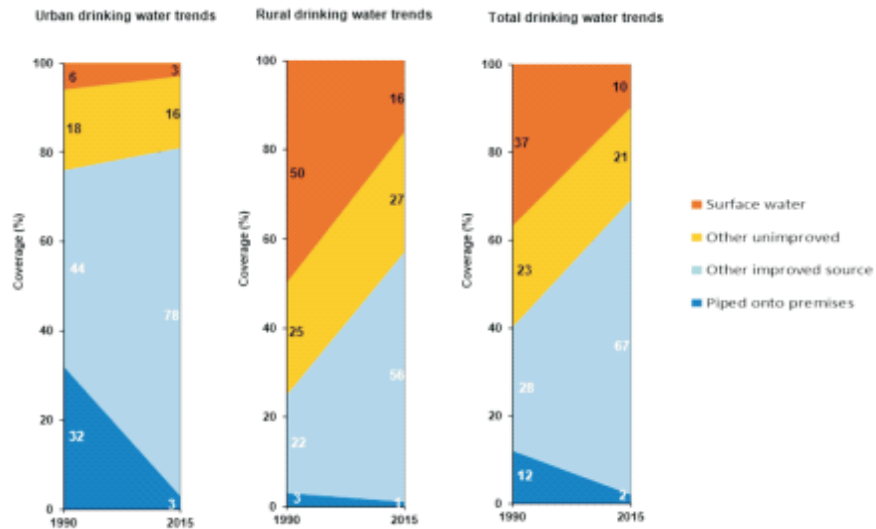


Fig.3: trends in access to water in Nigeria, 1990-2015