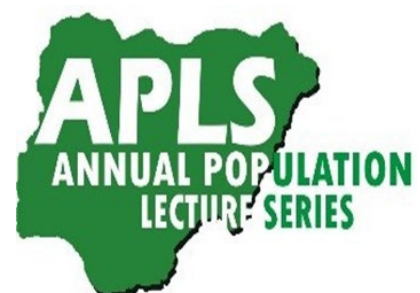




**THE ANNUAL  
POPULATION  
LECTURE SERIES  
(APLS): A Decade of  
Dialogues on  
Nigeria's Population  
and Development  
(2012 – 2022)**

November 2023.



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## ACRONYMS

National Demographic and Health Survey	NDHS
The Total Fertility Rate	TFR
Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate	mCPR
Nigeria Bureau of Statistics	NBS
Family Planning	FP
African Union	AU
National Population Policy for Sustainable Development	NPPSD
International Planned Parenthood Federation	IPPF
Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria	PPFN
Millenium Development Goals	MDG
Demographic Dividend	DD
State of the World Population	SWOP
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries	OPEC
Structural Adjustment Programme	SAP
National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies	NEEDS
Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative	EITI
Economic and Financial Crimes Commission	EFCC
Independent Corrupt Practices Commission	ICPC
International Conference on Population and Development	ICPD
Gender-based Violence	GBV
National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons	NAPTIP
Post Enumeration Survey	PES
Census and Survey Processing	CSPro
National Population Commission	NPC

# FOREWORD

The Annual Population Lecture Series has turned out to be a veritable perennial platform for discussions on population and development-related issues in Nigeria. Given the strategic sub-national, the national and global geo-political significance of Nigeria's demography, the compelling need for such a platform was what propelled the National Population Commission, the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria, development partners and other key stakeholders to envision, develop, implement and sustain the APLS. Over the past ten years, the lecture series has thrown up cogent, policy-oriented insights and actionable recommendations on population and development linkages in the Country. The series has been anchored by competent, well-qualified, resource persons from academia, development agencies, civil service and activists in the population and development field. Key themes X-rayed by the lecture series over the ten years include demographic divide, demographic dividends, demographic transition, population characteristics, living conditions and quality of life in Nigeria. Others include family planning, gender, reproductive rights and demographic data.

The 2023 APLS undertakes a review of the APLS vision and lectures under the theme: 'APLS: A Decade of Dialogues on Nigeria's Population and Development'. The review presents an opportunity to assess the achievements and challenges of APLS since its inception and set an agenda related to population and development in Nigeria. This compendium is an outcome of this review. As such it is a very rich collection of information on the diverse aspects of population and development themes X-rayed by the APLS over the years. It is my earnest desire that the compendium will be given wide circulation among critical policy and implementation stakeholders in the executive and legislative arms, private sector, development agencies, diplomatic community, academia, opinion and community leaders and the general public.

Hon. Nassiru Isa Kwara (FNSA)  
Chairman National Population Commission

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is my pleasure to acknowledge the contributions of various individuals and organizations to the production of this compendium and the planning and implementation of Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) over the last ten years. First, I must thank the Chairman, National Population Commission (NPC) Hon. Nasir Isa Kwarra not just for his immense support and encouragement for APLS but also for providing strong motivation for the production of this compendium. I am also grateful to the Director General, NPC, Dr. Ojogun Tellson Osifo for his pivotal role in the APLS planning and implementation process. I also want to acknowledge the immense contributions of the former Executive Director, Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN) late Dr. Ibrahim Muhammad Ibrahim, Dr. Okhai Haruna Aku, Executive Director, PPFN, Mrs. Patience Uju Mbagwu, former acting Director General, NPC, Ms. Margaret Edison, Director, Department of Population Management, NPC and Dr. Kole Shettima, Country Director, McArthur Foundation, Nigeria. These people provided purposeful leadership and direction for APLS over the ten-year period. In addition, several partner agencies, networks and individuals consistently played a huge role in dedicating their resources, time and expertise in ensuring the successful implementation of the APLS vision and agenda through active participation in the APLS Local Organizing Committee which meets annually as a core-group to define each year's theme, to plan and carefully coordinate the APLS implementation.

I must also acknowledge the continuous support and contributions of the following great APLS allies and partners over the ten year period: the Federal Ministry of Health, the Federal Ministry of Youth Development, the National Planning Commission, Federal Ministry of Education, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA), Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Federal Road Safety Corp, JHUCCP, Marie Stopes International Organization Nigeria (MSION), Education As Vaccine (EVA), Nigeria Inter-Faith Action Association, BraveHeart Initiative (BHI), HACEY, Society for Family Health, the Nigerian Urban Reproductive Health Initiative, Association for the Advancement of Family Planning (AAFP), Association for Family and Reproductive Health (ARFH), Development Communication Networks (DEVCOMS), the Media, Rotary International, Breakthrough Action Nigeria (BA-N), and others whose contributions and support to this national initiative remain indelible in the annals of population management and development in Nigeria.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the NPC in close collaboration with the PPFN has over the past decade received funding assistance from the UNFPA, USAID and other Development Partner Organizations towards the initiation of the Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS), 2012 – 2022.

**Aisha Abdul-Azeez Adamu**  
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**Coordinating Director Population & Climate**

# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

Nigeria's population is estimated at slightly over 223.8 million (NPC, 2023) and ranked as the 6<sup>th</sup> most populous country in the world and largest in Africa at an annual growth rate of 3.2 per cent and a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 5.3 children per woman (National Demographic and Health Survey Report – NDHS 2018). The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has slightly declined from 5.5 in 2013 to 5.3 children per woman in 2018, contributing to the sustained rapid population growth rate. By projections, Nigeria may become one of eight countries expected to account collectively for half of the world's total population by 2050. Structurally, Nigeria's population is youthful with over 73 percent of the population under the age of 30 years. Females constitute 49.3 per cent of the population and half of them are in their reproductive years (ages 14-49 years). The modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (mCPR) remains low at 12 per cent in 2018. The unmet need for family planning is at 19 per cent. The life expectancy at birth for women and men is estimated at 59.51 years (male) and 63.27 years (female). Maternal mortality ratio has declined from 576/100,000 in 2013 to 512/100,000 live births currently, while infant mortality rate declined from 75 per 1,000 live births in 2013 to 67 per 1,000 live births in 2018, under-5 mortality rate was 157 children per 1,000 live births in 2008 and improved to 128 in 2013 but increased to 132 currently. Nine per cent of teenage girls aged 15-19 have begun childbearing. These outcomes constitute a major health concern as it is associated with high maternal and child morbidity and mortality. Childbearing during adolescence is acknowledged as having adverse social consequences, particularly regarding educational attainment, as women who become mothers in their teens are more likely to drop out of school or not have access to education at all in their lifetime. This also relates to the persistence of early/child/forced marriage, where the percentage of women marrying before age 18 declined slightly from 48 per cent (2013) to 43 per cent currently. Similarly, the percentage of women aged 15-19 marrying before age 15 declined from 12 per cent to 8 per cent within the same period.

In the last 10 years, Nigeria has become more urbanized, with about half of the population residing in cities and slums (at the peripheries). Sixty-three per cent of persons living in Nigeria (133 million people) are multi-dimensionally poor, of which the majority of these are women (NBS, 2022). Access to quality and affordable health services and other basic amenities including safe drinking water and improved sanitation facilities (which relates to SDG 6.1 and 6.2) is still limited at 14.4 per cent (MICS, 2021) and, economic opportunities are still inadequate, where unemployment rate as at 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2020 stood at 27 per cent.

Economically, Nigeria is rich in oil and gas, which contributes 99 per cent of exports and 78 per cent of government revenues. Within the non-oil sector, agriculture still plays a substantial role. Nigeria's economy operates under a mixed sector of public and private sectors with the public sector having the larger share.

Nigeria operates a democratic system of government with a Presidential structure which is practised under three tiers of governance – the Federal, 36 States and the FCT and the 774 Local Government Areas (LGAs) with similar legislative arrangements cutting through the three levels. Also, there are three distinct arms of government, the Federal, the Executive

and the Judiciary. Nigeria since 1999, has operated a democratic system of government which has remained stable since then.

The issue of population management has always evoked different viewpoints and even emotions in Nigeria and could equally be a contentious matter that has affected the political, social, and economic decision-making processes. Rather than investing and harnessing the benefits of the largely youthful population for potential socio-economic growth and development emphasis has been misplaced on the use of population as a revenue allocation tool thus creating unhealthy competition among the tiers of government for resources rather than positioning for improved governance and advancement.

The Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) was therefore initiated as a policy forum to regularly engage policy makers in high-level dialogues to appraise Nigeria's progress in the management of her population and to ensure improved governance in matters that are critical to improving health, socio-economic and developmental outcomes improved quality of the lives of the citizens.



## CHAPTER TWO

### POPULATION STUDIES, POLICY AND MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

In 1988, Nigeria launched Nigeria's Policy on Population for Self-Reliance and Development with the recommendation of four children per woman. Some saw the policy as a negation of human rights, a violation of religious principles and a ploy by the western world to reduce Nigeria's population. The revision of the 1988 Policy in the Year 2004 drew further emphasis that for Nigeria to attain sustainable development, effective population management must be on the front burner in all its national development agenda. Strategically, Nigeria must reduce the prevailing high fertility rate, slow down its population growth rate and scale up the use of modern family planning (FP) among women of reproductive age (14-49 years).

The 2004 Policy also responded to emerging issues such as the HIV-AIDS epidemic, as well as other national, regional and global aspirations. The 2004 Policy on Population for Sustainable Development provided an elaborate and in-depth explanation of the population-development paradigm. However, as was the case with the 1988 policy and despite the government's recognition and efforts to respond to the new paradigm shift which emphasized quality of life and human development, the implementation of the 2004 Policy was inadequate due to lack of political will, weak coordination, and low investment in population management.

To respond to the emerging global and national population and development agenda such as the: Agenda 2063 for Africa Development (2013), the 2014 Further Actions on the 1994 Cairo Agenda, the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015), the New York Declaration on Large Movement of Refugees and Migrants (2016), Habitat III New Urban Agenda (2016), African Union (AU)/Nigeria Road Map on Demographic Dividend, the Nigeria Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (2017- 2020), and the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020-2030), as well as the need to accelerate consciousness on Population Management, which is an essential element for achieving Sustainable Development, the Federal Government reviewed the 2004 National Population Policy.

The revision sought for the entrenchment of population management at the centre of all development efforts and the harnessing of the demographic dividend to achieve sustainable development. Specifically, the Revised Policy, which was launched in 2021, addresses the inter-relationships of population, the environment and socio-economic factors. It also addresses reproductive health and rights, family planning and fertility management, including maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, ageing plus nutrition; HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, women empowerment, gender equality, gender-based violence, the girl-child and special population groups, including the elderly and persons living with disabilities as well as people affected by humanitarian crisis and climate change.

The Policy recognizes the importance of data collection and information management and highlights critical coordination and management concerns including a clearly

defined institutional framework as crucial elements of effective policy programming and implementation. The Revised Policy is novel and commendable because it is not just about demographic numbers, but also emphasizes respect for the rights of individuals and couples in shaping the quality of their lives and their wellbeing.

### **Key Issues and Challenges**

It seems from all indications that despite Nigeria's commitment and efforts to put in place a robust National Population Policy for Sustainable Development in 2021, full implementation of the policy and its National Strategic Plan (2022) has been hindered by poor funding and over-dependence on external funding from donors and development partners for resources. Consequently, Nigeria's population has not been managed properly to translate into real economic growth and social development. Lack of understanding and appreciation of population issues and lack of integration of population-based data in all facets of planning in Nigeria is a major setback to Nigeria as a growing economy. Opposition to population management still cuts across the country. Even highly educated Nigerians often seem to lack understanding of the population issues. High levels of poverty, poor health indices (particularly for women and children), unemployment, crime rate, and dependency ratio are all manifestations of unplanned and poor population management in Nigeria. Nigeria therefore must achieve demographic dividends from its population pool to move forward and be counted as a developed country.

### **The Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS)**

The APLS is an annual event aimed at creating awareness concerning issues of population and development. The first lecture was held in November 2012 under the Initiator; The Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN). The National Council of the Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN) instituted the Annual Population Lecture Series in July 2006 to commemorate the PPFN Founders' Day (19th of November 1964).

The maiden edition of the APLS which also marked the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the PPFN in Nigeria as an organization, was held in close partnership with the UNFPA, National Population Commission (NPC), McArthur Foundation and other stakeholders in Nigeria's population development and management. Over the years, these key stakeholders have transformed into a National Organizing Committee for Nigeria's APLS.

About 500 participants attend the one-day annual event which has been held since its inception in 2012 in Abuja FCT. Participants include the Office of the Vice President, NASS, SGF, The Chairman and Board of the National Population Commission (NPC), Federal Ministries and Agencies, State legislators, traditional rulers, youth representatives, the general public, Development Partners, policy makers, and other stakeholders.

The APLS is a policy-focused forum that stimulates high-level discussions on Nigeria's population and related themes. The themes and focus of discussions are determined on the understanding that the current population growth rate in Nigeria, if unaddressed urgently, will continue to put undue pressure on every sector of the nation's economy and progress towards sustainable development. It, therefore, seeks to support the Federal Government of Nigeria to ensure that the country eventually attains a demographic dividend, through commitment to voluntary childbirth spacing/family planning, investment in maternal

health, child survival and health programmes, as well as in prioritization of quality education for all, including the girl child.

Each APLS edition, based on its specific theme, comprehensively examines Nigeria's population, the prospects, the challenges and what the nation needs to do to achieve progress. Every event and activity that culminates around each edition of the APLS creates a platform for a better understanding among stakeholders and decision-makers on the issue of population management in Nigeria, especially from the perspective of ensuring real sustainable national development. The theme and topics are purposeful and intentional. The recommendations from each edition of the APLS propose concrete, doable actions on how Nigeria can better manage its current population without making the issue of the population more contentious in the country.

The Guest Speakers are distinguished thought experts in their various professional fields, and they are carefully selected. The lectures and presentations provide feasible and practical ways as well as recommendations on how to balance the country's population and sustainable development. In addition, Panel Discussions are also held to complement the key lecture and re-affirm some of the assertions from the lecture. Apart from the guest speaker, the panel of discussants also take and answer any questions raised by participants including those that might come from journalists.

Broadly, and also depending on the theme, each APLS paper provides insight on: Nigeria's population growth and trends (what does the future holds); Determinants of the issues in focus and situation analysis; Dynamics and facilitators of Nigeria's low-case scenario; What critical factors are propelling the issues; Critical steps to take to address the issues in focus; Critical assumptions concerning Nigeria's situation; Ways forward; and Key practical approaches and steps with recommendations on how to effectively achieve desirable solutions for sustainable development [Different scenario, options and approaches].

### **The Vision, Objectives and Goal of the APLS**

The Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) is an annual event that aims at creating awareness and stimulating high-level policy dialogues and discourse with decision-makers and policymakers, leaders, technocrats and programmers with the aim of drawing attention to issues that are critical to Nigeria's population dynamics, its management and impact concerning the country's course to sustainable development and demographic dividend. Each edition of the APLS attracts the attendance and participation of high-level government officials and a keynote speaker whose presentation focuses on the theme/topic which focuses on key areas of concern on population and development or issues linked to the World Population Day theme. The topic covered by the keynote speaker attracts discussions that are directed towards proffering clarifications and solutions to the evidence-based challenges Nigeria faces as a result of rapid population growth rate, high fertility and policy inaction.

The goal of the Annual Population Lecture Series is to entrench consideration of population management as a national priority at the highest level of leadership and in all of Nigeria's socioeconomic and development policies and plans as a country.

The objectives of APLS are to create awareness among the populace on the need for the country and its citizens to leverage the benefits of optimal and efficient population policy

implementation and population management. The APLS adds visibility to the issues of population and how it can be better managed towards the agenda towards demographic dividend.

### **Nature and Coordination**

The APLS lecture is usually delivered by a reputable expert or authority in the field of population and development. A multi-sector national planning committee, composed of interested and willing shareholders, is responsible for the overall management and conduct of the Annual Population Lecture Series with the intended audiences cutting across key policymakers, leaders of private organizations, academics, researchers and development partners and other related institutions in Nigeria.

The decade of the Nigeria's Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) was launched in 2012, on the 29th of November. The theme of the inaugural lecture in 2012 was *"Population and Development: A Tale of Two Regions in One Country"* and was delivered by Professor Layi Erinsho, the then Executive Secretary of the Health Reform Foundation of Nigeria (HERFON).

His Excellency, the then Executive Governor of Ekiti State, Dr John Kayode Fayemi, delivered the Second Annual Population Lecture Series titled *"Nigeria's Quest for Demographic Dividend: Young People and Population Growth"* on the 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2013.

The Third Annual Population Lecture Series was held on the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2014. The theme *"Opportunities & Challenges for Demographic Dividend in Nigeria: Family Planning Dimension,"* was delivered by Dr. Akanni Akinyemi, a Senior Lecturer, Demographic & Social Statistics Department, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile Ife, Nigeria.

The theme of the Fourth Annual Population Lecture Series was *Nigeria the 3<sup>rd</sup> Largest Population by 2050: The Way Forward* and was delivered by Dr Amina Mohammed, the Honourable Minister for the Environment and the then immediate past Special Adviser to the United Nations' Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning and former Head OSSAP/MDG. The Special Guest was Professor Akin Mabogunje, a foremost Nigerian Geographer, the first African President of the International Geographical Union and the first African to be elected as a Foreign Associate of the United States National Academy of Sciences.

Subsequent editions were held each year and despite the COVID-19 global pandemic and national lock, the 2020 APLS was successfully held in December. Each edition of the APLS proffered concrete, feasible and evidence-based actions on how Nigeria can make strategic improvements. The lectures were always interesting and very well received widely by large audiences. Questions raised from the floor by participants including those from journalists were addressed also.

### **Pre-Lecture Activities**

The pre-lecture activities included roundtable interactive sessions with journalists, advocacy visits to mobilise support and solicit funds from selected ministries, organizations and donors and media appearances/discussions involving the traditional and new media to create awareness and publicity.

## **The Gap in Management of the APLS**

The APLS as a yearly event has been very successful. The Planning Committee is always convened and meets regularly during the planning period to focus on this one-off event each year. Whilst each edition concludes with the production of a report, an important observation is that these reports are not widely disseminated to key stakeholders and policy makers who are best positioned to respond to the learnings and recommendations from the lectures. This remains a key gap in the management and promotion of the APLS as a mechanism and tool for effective policy dialogues and advocacy. In addition, a framework for monitoring the implementation of the learnings and lessons from each edition of the APLS should be in place as this would help to ensure that the necessary outcomes are identified and applied to decision making and policy making processes. This, however, does not exist. So, the lack of follow-up and non-existence of post-APLS action plan positions and weakens the APLS as an adhoc event, despite its strategic nature. It is therefore envisaged that these gaps will be addressed over the next decade so the APLS can be transformed and become more productive not only for policy dialogues but also for research and knowledge management.

## **The APLS Papers (2012-2022)**

This compendium presents the first ten APLS (APLS 1-10) lectures in one compact volume for easy access, use and reference by all stakeholders in population studies and management within and outside Nigeria. The first lecture (APLS 1, Chapter 3) titled: Population and Development: “A Tale of Two Regions in One Country” was delivered by Professor Layi Erinosh. It focused on the yet unresolved issues of regional, geopolitical and sectoral (urban-rural) variations in demographic and socio-economic indicators like fertility, mortality, standard of living and quality of life in Nigeria. The second lecture (APLS 2, Chapter 4): “Nigeria’s Quest for Demographic Dividend: Young People and Population Growth” was delivered by Dr. Kayode Fayemi, former Executive Governor, Ekiti State. The lecture, the first amongst a number on demographic dividend brought to the fore the need to harness the potentials provided by the country’s youthful population for socio-economic development. The third lecture (APLS 3, Chapter 5): “Opportunities and Challenges for Demographic Dividend in Nigeria: Bridging the Gap between Knowledge and Use of Family Planning” explored the important nexus between demographic dividend and family planning. It was delivered by Professor Akanni Ibukun Akinyemi. The fourth lecture (APLS 4, Chapter 6): “Nigeria the 3rd Largest Population By 2050: The Way Forward” was delivered by eminent stateswoman and diplomat Amina J. Mohammed. It focused on rapid population growth in the country and its strategic national and international implications. The theme of the fifth lecture (APLS 5, Chapter 7) was: “Achieving Demographic Dividend: Strategic Tool for National Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development” It was presented by Professor Peter Olasupo Ogunjuyigbe and focused on harnessing demographic dividends as a strategic tool for socio-economic recovery and transformation in the country. The sixth lecture (APLS 6, Chapter 8): “Governance. People. Rights. Opportunities” delved into issues related to the intersection between governance, rights and demographic outcomes in the country. It was presented by Professor Ayo Atsenuwa. The seventh lecture (APLS 7, Chapter 9) in the series: “Nigeria’s Population Issues: Harnessing 21st Century Innovations to Achieve Demographic Dividends” was presented by Professor Olanrewaju Olaniyan. It highlighted socioeconomic prerequisites and strategies for achieving demographic dividend in the country. The eighth lecture (APLS 8, Chapter 10) titled “Gender-Based Violence and Family Planning in Times of Emergency” was presented by

Mnguember Vicky Sylvester Professor of Literature and Gender Studies. It explored the nexus between gender violence, family planning and various outcomes for households, society and the economy. The ninth lecture (APLS 9, Chapter 11): "Population, Rights and Peace in Nigeria: Addressing Insecurity and Gender-Based Violence" was presented by Professor Jibrin Ibrahim and assessed the linkages between human rights, gender violence and peace in Nigeria. The tenth lecture (APLS 10, Chapter 12) was presented by Dr. Inuwa Jalingo and titled: "The FP 2030 Agenda in Nigeria and the Imperatives of a Successful 2023 Population and Housing Census". It explored the importance of the national census and demographic data to attaining the family planning 2030 agenda in Nigeria.

# CHAPTER THREE

## Population and Development: A Tale of Two Regions in One Country

APLS 2012  
(THE MAIDEN EDITION)

By

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[Protocols],

I wish to express my gratitude to Dr Kole Shettima, the Chairman of the Planning Committee of the Annual Population Lecture Series of Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN) and the organization for the opportunity to deliver this lecture today. For sixty years, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) has been active in the field of population, and family planning programmes in 182 countries. I join in congratulating PPFN under its parent body (IPPF) for its vision, commitment, and invaluable contribution to the well-being of Nigerians and I hope it will continue to do so.

The organizers gave me a blank cheque to choose any topic within the ambit of population and development. This gave me the opportunity to opt for a modified theme, namely, *Population and Development: A Tale of Two Regions in One Country*.

This lecture will therefore attempt to do the following: (a) draw attention to the sharp disparity in our country in the context of population and development; (b) adduce reason(s) for the disparity; and (c) highlight the implications of the disparity for the security challenges facing our country today. Secondly, we will attempt to underscore the most important determinant of the development of human capacity which we have danced around for too long. In conclusion, I argue that we have been treating the symptoms rather than the disease and it is absolutely necessary to bring Nigeria out of the woods.

The lecture is subdivided into seven sections, starting with a preamble and introduction, followed by an overview of Nigeria's health indices. Other sections are as follows: disparities between geopolitical zones; poverty and fertility; implication of formal education for development; lack of formal education and implications for national security; and concluding remarks.

As it may well turn out, some of the ideas canvassed in this paper may not be new. However, they are critical to our survival as a country. The challenge is for Nigerians and interested stakeholders to collectively put pressure on the authorities to embrace the proposal that is contained in this lecture in order for Nigeria to realize the full potential of her huge and dynamic human resources.]

## **INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria is among the most populous countries in the world and is indeed the most populous in Africa. One in every ten Africans is a Nigerian. Not surprising that Nigerians can be found in any part of the world such as the remotest, coldest, and hottest where they should hesitate to take residence!!!

Nigeria has experienced a population explosion in the last fifty years due to its high fertility rate which ranged from 5.4 in the early sixties to about 2.25% today. Nigeria's population which was 37.9 million in 1950 rose to 45.9 million in 1960, the year the country gained political independence from the United Kingdom. By the current growth rate, her population was about 158.4 million in 2010. The United Nations predicts that Nigeria's population will reach the 390 million mark in 2050 and possibly 720 million by the end of this century<sup>2</sup>.

Nigeria's population is both an asset as well as an albatross. It is an asset because a large population offers a huge market just as is the case of countries like the United States, China, Russia, India, and Brazil. These are countries with huge populations. By virtue of population, Nigeria is a big market for goods that are locally produced and/or imported into the country. With a full productive capacity, Nigeria could benefit from goods that are exported, earning substantial foreign exchange. The sheer size of the population also endears many countries to Nigeria. Every country would like to maintain close ties and do business with Nigeria in order to exploit her market for the sale of their goods.

Secondly, in nearly all cases, countries with large populations like Nigeria have huge egos. Nigeria is quick to remind everyone that she is the giant of Africa even though she currently lacks the industrial capacity to lay claim to this. Much of the claim simply derives from the fact that Nigeria can boast of a huge population.

Finally, a huge population if properly harnessed to realize its full potential can be a propelling force for rapid socio-economic development. Can we imagine if Nigeria were able to develop her institutions (e.g., one hundred and forty of her universities) to produce excellent students who apply themselves in science and technology? Nigeria will become a top flier and possibly the undisputed leader of Africa and one that can also carve a niche among the most industrialized countries in the world.

Paradoxically and painfully, the sheer potential strength of Nigeria's population has turned out to be an albatross. More than 65% of her citizens live below the poverty line which is about a dollar or two a day (UNDP, 2011). Widespread poverty among Nigerians has incapacitated them and vast numbers are unable to realize their full potential and/or contribute meaningfully to the economic development of the country.

It is widely acknowledged Nigeria's failure to harness her human resources has been due to a lack of transparency in governance. Although corruption is a universal phenomenon, it is more serious in Nigeria. Both Transparency International (2012) and Mo Ibrahim (2012) Indices on transparency rank Nigeria very low and among the worst countries in the world. Billions of naira have been, and/or are continuously being misappropriated by



key functionalities. Lack of transparency in governance is having untoward consequences on the citizenry. The resources that are meant for development and/or to support social sector programmes like education and health are simply spirited away by unscrupulous functionaries. The impact of this on institutions is grave as services become comatose. The provision of basic amenities like water supply, sewerage disposal, good roads, power supply, and the repair of basic equipment in public facilities are affected. All of these in turn affect the well-being of everyone in Nigeria. The most affected in the country are the poor who are largely women and children.

Consequently, there is an interplay between the physical, mental, and social well-being of Nigerians on the one hand and the level of transparency in the governance of a country on the other. The more transparent the level of governance in a country, the more the likelihood of a better life for its citizens. There is therefore a political dimension to having a good life. This explains why the needs of Nigeria's population are unmet which in turn accounts for the appalling health indices. Hence, her population which should be an asset has become an albatross. We turn our attention to the health indices of Nigeria in the following section.

## **OVERVIEW OF NIGERIA'S HEALTH INDICES**

Nigeria is in the 115th position among 169 countries on access to potable water while only about 51% of Nigeria's girl children are enrolled in primary schools. Nearly 800,000 Nigerian children die every year before the age of 5. Because of this, the risk of a woman dying during childbirth which is one in 1000 in a country like Sweden is about 1 in 20 in Nigeria (WHO, 2012). The death of childbearing women is so common and has become a national embarrassment. Our women and children die like flies.

These appalling statistics could be better but for the fact that the country's health system is in a deplorable state. And it has been so for so many years despite efforts aimed at retooling the system. Citizens lack access to health care, skilled health personnel, and basic amenities (e.g., portable water). The use of family planning methods is low in the population. Besides there is widespread ignorance, misconception, myths, erroneous beliefs, and practices that act as barriers to the use of skilled personnel and services (Harrison, 1990; 2012). Nigeria is therefore among the countries with the worst health indices in the world. All of the foregoing as previously argued can be remotely linked to bad governance.

The failure of governments to respond to the basic needs of the population partly explains the huge interest of development partners like IPPF and their investment in assorted programmes in Nigeria. They cannot leave Nigeria to wallow in such a poor state despite bad governance. Take the case of Polio which countries like India have successfully tackled. Inaction by the Nigerian Government could easily impact other countries in her sub-region. Consequently, partners are assisting Nigeria to improve the health of her people and also prevent Nigeria from exporting her problems to other countries in the sub-region or parts of the world.

For nearly fifty or more years, the development partners drawn from bilateral and multilateral organizations like the IPPF, USAID, DFID, CIDA, UN System etc. have

committed huge resources to the development of Nigeria. They have also funded family planning services and provided family planning commodities as well as assisted in the control of malaria, HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases. Nigeria, a richly endowed country, is a major beneficiary of AID in the form of grants and technical assistance from assorted bilateral and multilateral agencies for improved health and the well-being of her population.

The main strategy for improving the well-being of the people of Nigeria has been through the interventions of these development partners and civil society organizations. The efforts of the partners as well as local civil society organizations have paid off over the years to the extent that the well-being of the peoples of Nigeria has improved. Morbidities and mortalities have been slightly reduced, down from all-time high to low levels. As an example, more people are now surviving rather than dying at infancy as shown by 39.23 births in 1000 in contrast to 13.48 deaths in 1000 (NDHS, 2009). Some people now use family planning services to reduce and space the number of their children.

### **DISPARITIES BETWEEN GEOPOLITICAL ZONES**

But it would be deceptive to argue that all is well with Nigeria’s population. This picture of improved well-being for Nigerians as a result of donors’ interventions masks regional variation. All is generally not well if the health indices are examined by geopolitical zones. By and large, Nigeria is today a country of two distinct regions and the evidence for this assertion is glaring.

Firstly, 25 per cent of all physicians practising in Nigeria live and work in Lagos. There is a doctor to about 2,000 people in Lagos: one to 20,000 in the south and one to about 75, 000 in the north. There are therefore more doctors in the South than in the North which in effect means that Northerners are less likely to access formally trained physicians at the onset of health when compared to their Southern counterparts (FMOH, 2009). The table below shows the distribution of health personnel in Nigeria with the north lagging far behind the south. About 76.5% of doctors and dentists in Nigeria practice in the south in contrast to 22.5% in the north.

Geopolitical Zones	Doctors and Dentists		Community Health Workers		Total Health Professionals in Nigeria	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
North East	675	4.1	3103	16.3	8136	9.5
North West	1388	8.3	2477	13.0	9810	11.4
South East	3257	19.6	2130	11.2	13,850	16.1
North Central	1841	10.1	4937	25.9	15,489	18.0
South South	2168	13.0	2655	13.9	15538	18.1
South West	7300	43.9	3779	19.8	23,105	26.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,629</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19,081</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>85,928</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1: Distribution of Health Personnel in Nigeria by Geopolitical Zones in 2007  
Source FMOH

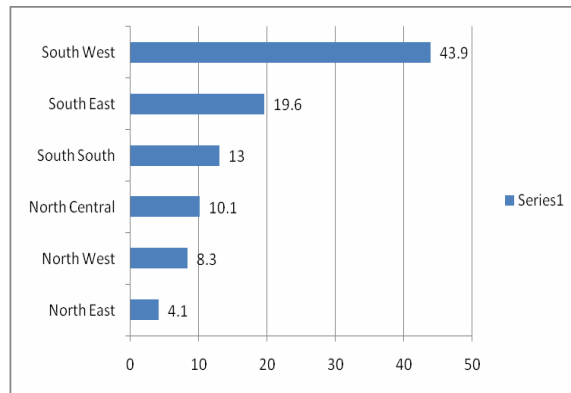


Figure1: Distribution of Doctors and Dentists by Geopolitical Zones as of 2007

National immunization coverage is about 23% (NDHS, 2009). But vaccination coverage in the north is much lower than in the south. The challenge is to expand vaccination coverage in the north to avoid a high rate of infant mortality.

S/N	Geopolitical zones	% Coverage
1.	North West	6%
2.	North East	8%
3.	North Central	26%
4.	South South	36%
5.	South East	43%
6.	South West	36%
7.	National	23%

Table 2: Geopolitical Zones by Vaccination Coverage  
Source: NDHS 2009

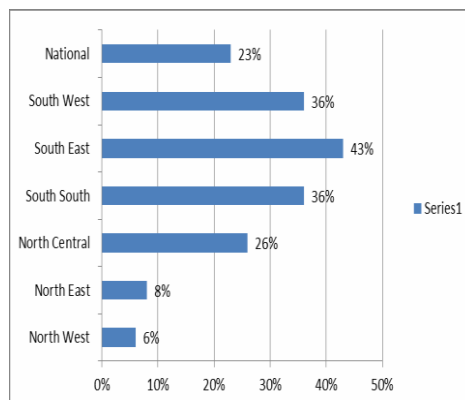


Figure 2: Geopolitical Zones by Vaccination Coverage

Reports on women’s health in Nigeria as contained in past demographic and health surveys conclude that southern women are better off than women in the north in access to skilled health workers (NDHS, 2004; 2009). The NDHS report of 2009 clearly indicates a regional disparity between the north and south on formal schooling among women of reproductive age of between 15 and 45 years. The northern women also lag behind their southern counterparts in family planning.

There is also evidence of disparity if education is combined with age at marriage. Northern women marry very early while Southerners delay this. The average age at marriage is about 15 years in the North in contrast to 21+ in the South.

S/N	Geopolitical Zone	Age at Marriage
1.	North West	15.2
2.	North East	15.6
3.	North Central	18.3
4.	South South	20.9
5.	South West	21.8
6.	South East	22.8

Table 3: Geopolitical Zones by Age at Marriage

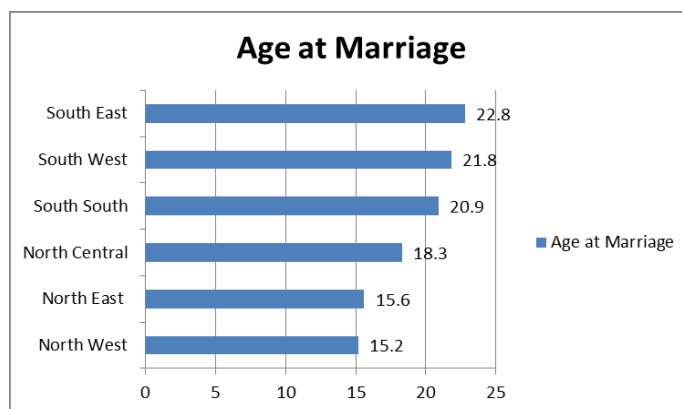


Figure 3: Geopolitical Zones by Education and Age at Marriage

Northern girls/women who embark on childbearing and rearing much earlier than their southern counterparts are at the risk of losing the children. The maternal mortality rates are higher in the north than in the south as can be seen in the figure below (165 in the southwest, 286 in the southeast as opposed to 1025 in the northwest and 1549 in the northeast).

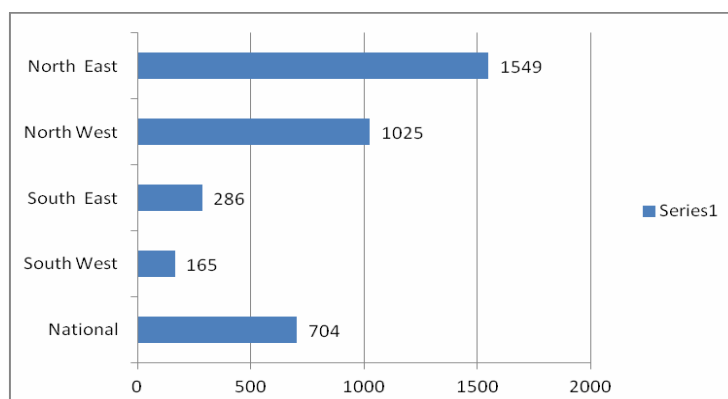


Figure 4: Maternal Mortality in Nigeria as Per 100,000 in the population  
 Source: SOGON 2004 Report on Status of Emergency Obstetrics Services in Nigeria

One of the reasons for the appalling figures on maternal mortality in the northern zones is that their women are not attended to by skilled health workers. Other factors include poor health facilities/services; irregular or non-use of ante-natal clinics; reliance on traditional modes of care of pregnant women (e.g., being delivered by older women at home), myths and misconceptions about childbearing, male dominance in decision-making on women's health etc. As can be seen in the table below, southerners are more likely to access doctors during ante-natal care than northern women. Northerners rely more on nurses/midwives or community extension workers.

S/N	Zones	Doctor	Nurse/midwife	Community extension workers
1.	North West	5.4	31.5	1.9
2.	North East	10.9	36.4	5.3
3.	North Central	23.8	50.0	0.5
4.	South South	38.8	33.3	0.7
5.	South East	50.8	45.4	0.2
6.	South West	56.0	35.9	0.8

Table 5: Access to Ante-Natal Care by Type of Provider by Geopolitical Zones  
 Source: Nigerian Health Review, 2007

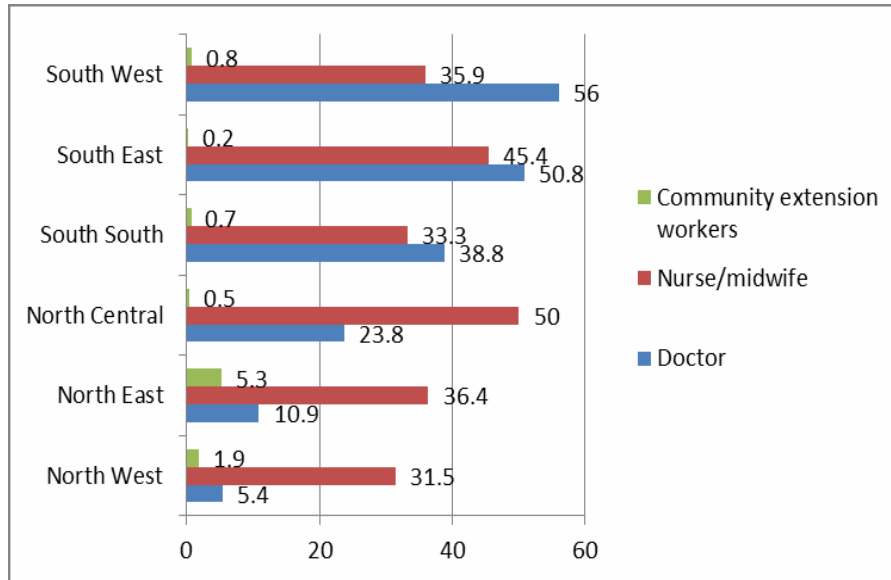


Figure 5: Access to Ante-Natal Care by Type of Provider by Geopolitical Zones

Infant mortality rates are higher in the north than in the south as shown in the figure below where northeast has the highest with 125 in 1000 live births followed by the North-West with 114 and North-Central with 103. South-South joins in the north in this regard with 120 while South-East and South-West have figures below 100.

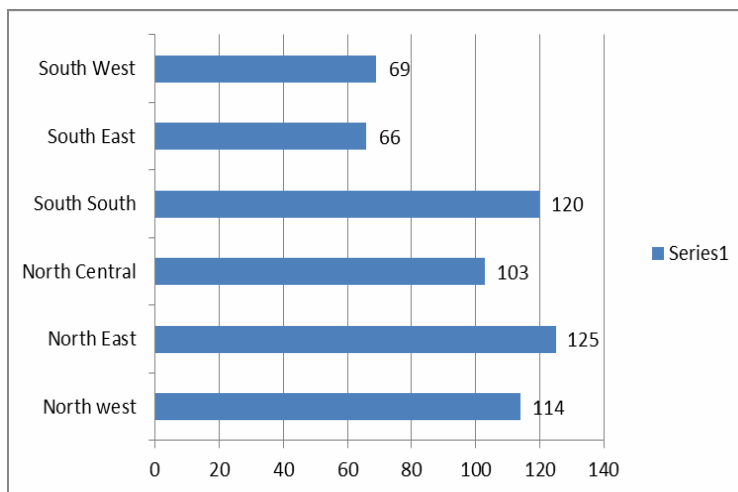


Figure 6: Infant Mortality as 1000 Live Births in Nigeria

Access to formal education is better in the south than in the north. The combination of the distribution of health personnel as well as access to education among women places Southerners in a better position than their northern counterparts. Significant numbers of southern women with formal education are better placed to look after their health and that of their children. They are more likely to seek health care from skilled health workers

and more likely to be receptive to health education than their northern counterparts. This explains the difficult situation of women in the far north who have limited or no education and who are less likely to seek help from skilled healthcare providers (See Table on education by attendance during ante-natal care below).

### Poverty and Fertility

Poverty is more pronounced in the north than in the south. This situation has implications for the standard of living in the two sub-regions of the country. Women with education are less likely to have as many children as those with little or no education. High fertility exposes women to risks, especially in a country like Nigeria where the health care system is weak. The fertility rate is higher in the north than in the south and lower in the South-East than in the North.

S/N	Geopolitical zones	Total Fertility Rate
1.	North West	7.3
2.	North East	7.2
3.	North Central	5.4
4.	South South	4.7
5.	South East	4.8
6.	South West	4.5
7.	National	5.7

Table 6: Geopolitical Zones by Total Fertility Rate

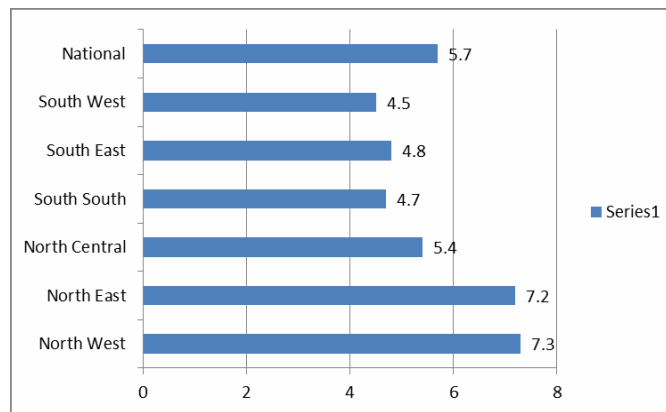


Figure 7: Geopolitical Zones by Total Fertility Rate

Poverty drives fertility because poor women who are non-literate are likely to marry early, have many children in quick succession, and are less likely to have the wherewithal to look after themselves and the children they bear. They are also more likely to lose some or many of their children due to inadequate care or failure to have access to quality care. The predicament facing them over childbearing and rearing or over the loss of children increases the likelihood of them imbibing fatalistic attitudes such as believing that *'what will be will be'* or *'God taketh and God giveth'*. They are susceptible to all manner of mental health problems such as neurosis, anxiety, and paranoia. There is

a relationship between income and education on the one hand and better living standards on the other.

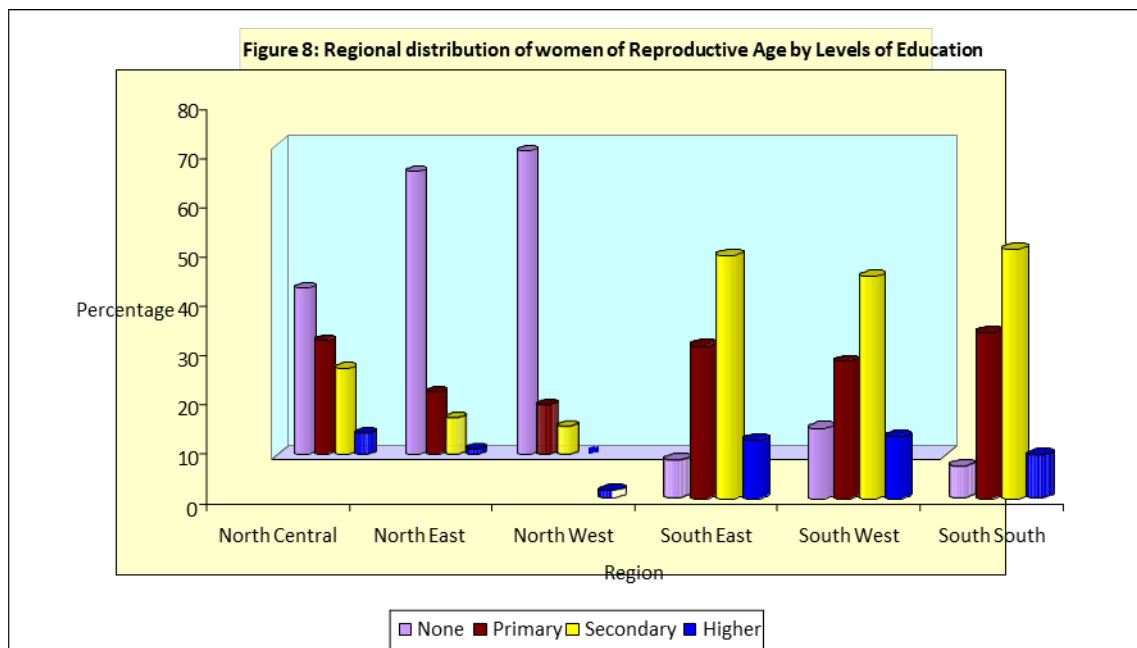
Furthermore, there is pronounced regional inequality in Nigeria which also transcends gender. The hardest hit are women in society. According to a British Council Report (2012):

*nearly six million young women and men enter the labour market each year but only 10% are able to secure a job in the formal sector, and just one-third of these are women.*

Consequently, women lack income-generating jobs that are needed to support and live a good life. It is not farfetched to argue that women with higher income are likely to have better health status than those with little or no income. Similarly, women with formal education are likely to secure jobs which provide them with income, unlike women with very little or no education. The interplay between these variables (income and education) is a significant determinant of maternal morbidity and mortality in Nigeria. Overall, northern women are more affected than their southern counterparts.

### Implications of Formal Education for Development

From all available evidence which can be garnered from past National Demographic and Health Surveys in the country (NDHS, 2004; 2009), there is a sharp disparity between the south and north if the interplay between maternal health and formal education is taken into consideration. The farther you move from the south towards the north the worse the health indices.



Source: Ogunjuyigbe, 2012

Whatever is the case, formal education is the recurring variable in population and development. It is so in Nigeria as is the case in the high-income and developed countries. Formal education impacts women’s health. Education helps them to delay marriage, childbearing, and rearing. Formal education brings about attitudinal change



among everyone including women. Women are likely to be more concerned about having children who will live long and bring glory to their family, a key value among Nigerian families.

Formal education for women will prevent child marriage (Ojobo, 2008; UNESCO, 2010). It can (or will) change attitudes towards harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and taboos that are often targeted at them for no just reason. Child trafficking will be significantly reduced while child labour will be completely eliminated if children especially the girl-children who are roaming the streets and being regularly abused by male predators are kept in school during their formative years. Formal education of women will undoubtedly have a catalytic effect on the well-being of the population.

Observation: It will be good to show educational disparities across Regions/Zones to buttress the paragraph above as one may argue the other attitudes and practices (Female Genital Cutting, Child trafficking and Child labour may not significantly be higher in the northern zones

Finally, enlightened girl-children and women are in a better/stronger position to demand and also enforce their rights in contrast to the present situation where non-literate women are helpless and seem to resign themselves to the whims and caprices of their parents and male chauvinists.

### **Why has Education Not been the Centrepiece of Development Programmes?**

One is tempted to ask the following questions after several decades of interventions to improve the well-being of Nigerians:

Where formal education is so vital to population dynamics, why have all stakeholders including development partners not collectively devoted their energies and resources to the education and indeed the education of women in developing countries or see education as a pre-requisite to population and development?

Why one may ask are they committed to the implementation of perfunctory projects (i.e., projects on advocacy, behaviour change etc.) that tackle symptoms rather than the disease?

Why are they consistently devoting their energy to a strategy that has not yielded a long-lasting impact?

Could it be because of the daunting challenge if they are take on education which should ordinarily be the responsibility of the state?

Are they too timid to confront responsible national authorities and demand education for all their citizens, especially their girl-children and women?

Could it be out of the desire to take on a less demanding and contentious development strategy?

Why are stakeholders and development partners expending too much energy on symptoms rather than helping to eradicate illiteracy from the land?

These questions deserve a bit of soul-searching and answers.

For example, we can, or may go on distributing family planning commodities and/or making such services accessible for years without making an appreciable impact unless the womenfolk in particular have access to formal education. Education is the key to development as can be seen in the case of two regions in one country, - Nigeria.

## **Lack of Education and the Implications for National Security**

The failure to use formal education as a tool for population development is having serious implications for national security in Nigeria. The present security challenge in the North has nothing to do with religion. Here is a region that has been left behind for so long or, which inadvertently left itself behind for too long. One of the Special Advisers to Mr. President summed up the situation in the north today as follows which corroborated my assertion (I quote)<sup>3</sup>:

*I accompanied the President (Jonathan Goodluck) on a tour of a number of states in northern Nigeria and for the first time in my life, I saw many children carrying small bowls or plates, begging for arms from passersby at several stops most especially around the palaces of emirs and at various intersections of major township roads. These children, between the age of 9 and 15 years were unkempt and had probably not taken a bath for days. They were usually in rags and looked very miserable.*

*I had not lived in the north before my present appointment at the presidency and was therefore shocked to see these children (fellow Nigerians) in this condition. Consequently, I was curious to find out from my colleagues about these children who were roaming the streets begging for arms? I asked:*

*Who are these children? Where do they come from?*

*Who are their parents? And*

*why are they not in school? I asked?*

*My colleagues who are acquainted with the north told me that these children are known as Almajiri. They are children sent by their parents to study Arabic and Islamic studies under reputable Islamic teachers. The Islamic teachers in turn deploy them to the streets to beg for arms. They return daily to their teachers with proceeds from the arms collected. The teachers in turn use part of the money from the arms to feed and house them during their training.*

*I bemoaned the conditions of these children and wondered why our northern elite who have ruled Nigeria for nearly thirty-eight years out of more than fifty-one years of our political independence had not done anything about these children? Why have our northern elite not prevented this humanitarian disaster? Why have they not taken steps to ensure that these children are in school?*

*No one has been able to give me a satisfactory answer. All I hear is that it is part of the religion/culture, - that is to send children to Islamic scholars for training during their formative years in this part of our country.*

It is therefore superficial to suggest that the Boko Haram insurgency has its roots in religion. Widespread poverty is a catalyst for revolution and social disorder. Not surprisingly their neighbours (fellow Nigerians of southern origin) living among them who seem to be more prosperous become easy targets of aggression. Our northern brothers and sisters have waited for too long to gain access to formal education which could have transformed their region. This situation has led us to a country of two regions, one of the *haves* that appears to be doing well and the other of the *have-nots* that are not doing

so well at all. This is no longer tolerable, and it is indeed the root of the security challenges facing everyone in the country today.

I also envisage another source of security challenge to Nigeria in the near future which is likely to be linked to the failure of the authorities to meet the yearnings of young people. Nigeria has a youthful population, characterized by a as high dependency ratio. What this means is significant numbers of people in our country are very young people who depend on a few. Unfortunately, the authorities are not responding fully and effectively to the growing band of young people who need jobs after their education. The economy is not expanding well enough to absorb very many young Nigerians who are being produced by the educational system.

Already, we have nearly a hundred and forty universities in the country as well as hundreds of polytechnics, and colleges of education, all of which are churning out nearly 900,000 graduates yearly who may be half-baked. Yet, employment opportunities are not rapidly expanding for these graduates, many of whom brandish first-class honours degrees often awarded by private universities. Some graduates are already remaining unemployed for five to ten years. Others are now working as gatemen, bartenders, Okada riders, etc. while some are gravitating towards crimes, - 419, armed robbery, yahoo, yahoos etc.

A very large number of young unemployed or under-employed graduates of institutions of higher learning in Nigeria is a threat to national security. Nigeria is now inadvertently creating an army of potentially restless, miserable, frustrated, and violent young people with a reasonable amount of education. This group can easily be mobilized to demand their social and economic rights. The group can easily become another tool of political violence just as the Boko Haram is to us today.

The foregoing assertion is not farfetched judging from recent events in other parts of the world. Take the case of Tunisia. The Tunisian revolution was sparked by a seemingly innocuous incident which involved an unemployed university graduate who was harassed by the police at the roadside in Tunis where he was trying to eke a living by selling vegetables. The unemployed graduate was infuriated by further harassment by the police, and he decided to commit suicide. This incident sparked the Tunisian revolution. The already restive populace instantly took to the streets, - demonstrated until the president who had been in office for more than twenty years fled. This can happen to the PDP which is currently boasting that it will be in power forever!! Former President Obasanjo who some perceive as part of Nigeria's problem warned of impending revolution recently.

The Tunisian situation has had a domino effect on other Arab countries in similar situations, countries with corrupt leaders who overstayed their welcome; countries with high rates of unemployment among their fairly educated youths; countries with high costs of living and poverty etc. The Egyptian Government under Hosni Mubarak fell; Gadhafi of Libya has fallen. Syria is in flames while Jordan and Morocco are desperately trying to nip unrest in the bud. Swaziland and Malawi are in serious difficulties because people are calling for regime change. Uganda is also not left out. Angola is restive.

## Concluding Remarks

The deadline for the attainment of MDGs is barely two years away. Nigeria from all indications is not unlikely to achieve the set targets. This may be due to the following: (a) failure to allocate the resources needed to implement programmes that will lead to human development; (b) lack of judicious use of the resources that are allocated toward development activities; and/or (c) inappropriate development strategy.

Whatever may be the case, my hunch is that there is a window of opportunity to adopt new strategies to tackle the challenges facing the country in population and development. This calls for a fresh approach and new ideas about how to improve the lives of vast numbers of Nigerians. Reducing infant and maternal morbidities and mortalities to a level that is comparable to those of 20 top high-income countries as envisioned in the so-called Vision 202020 blueprint is a goal that cannot be achieved through perfunctory interventions. What is required is free and compulsory education for all children in Nigeria. Formal education is a critical determinant of social, mental and psychological well-being. The minimum education for all Nigerians should be up to secondary school level by which time the children will be nearly 16 years old and above. They will be able to read and write as well as make informed decisions about their life.

Professor Kesley Harrison (2012), one of our eminent scholars a landmark study of maternal mortality in Northern Nigeria concluded in a recent lecture that education is key to human development in Nigeria. Permit to quote him extensively to drive the point home:

*Whichever way we look at it, high maternal mortality is about human development. In other words, high maternal mortality in this country is one result of social, economic, and political failure on a very large scale. It should be seen and tackled as such. Every thoughtful person knows that reorientation of the entire population may be necessary and, in the process, organization and discipline and mass education are needed. But then, organization and discipline taken together is hard and messy work. It will not produce an immediate result. Over time, it will, and the result will endure. There is not much money in it. It cannot be episodic; instead, it must stick". Additionally, there is a need to promote self-reliance and work out ways of controlling corruption. On mass education, it is not difficult to see that the ability to read and write lights up other benefits than merely being able to place letters and figures in the right sequence in order to express thoughts and be understood. Being able to count, weigh, measure and record accurately must reduce belief in magic and superstition, and we need to rid ourselves of such untruths if reason is to prevail, meaningful progress made, economic growth shared, and lives increasingly saved.*

The ball is in the court of responsible authorities in the northern states as well as all the other interested stakeholders to promote education for all. It should be free and compulsory for all children up to the Senior Secondary School Class of III. I also hasten to add that not only should education be free and compulsory, but the government should also provide uniform and mid-day meals for the children because parents may hesitate to send their children to school unless such incentives are put in place. All states as well as those in the north can afford to implement free and compulsory education for their children if there is commitment and more transparency in government.

The northern geopolitical zones will be transformed within a decade of the faithful implementation of such a policy. In a decade, infant and maternal morbidities and mortalities will be significantly reduced to the barest level. Formal education for the children will lead to heightened expectations and aspirations among them. Fatalistic attitudes will disappear because beliefs based on myths and age-old cultural imperatives will be questioned and/or eroded and many more people will no longer be prisoners of harmful practices that are rooted in their cultures. Street children will disappear. More Nigerians will know and demand their rights. The use of appropriate health-giving agents will be recognized by all, thereby reducing the hold which quacks have on the population. The use of ante- and post-natal clinics as well as family planning will become the norm in the population. All of the foregoing will be the benefits of formal education.

In concluding, I am calling on authorities especially at the state level (since education is on the concurrent list) to make education the centrepiece of human and economic development. The Governors of the zones that lag behind cannot continue to gloat over the plight of their people. They cannot be blinded to a situation of two regions in one country, southern zones making remarkable progress in the provision of formal education and another that is impoverished due to lack of it.

Education is a human rights issue, and it is also a powerful key to human development. Education must be accessible to children, most especially girl-children. It must be compulsory and free, and it must also include other incentives that will encourage parents to send their children to school. Through this sort of policy imperative, backed by wholesome commitment, the Authorities will transform their states overnight and equally nip the security challenges in the bud. They will go down as the change agents who have transformed their states from ewers and drawers of water to productive citizens. The late Lyndon Johnson, a former President of the United States summed it up as follows:

*At the desk where I sit, I have learnt one great truth. The answer for all our national problems comes to a single word. That word is "education".*

Education is the key to social, economic and political empowerment. It is the key to physical, social, economic, and mental well-being. Nigeria cannot afford to and should not dance around formal education if her people are to develop their tremendous human resource capacity and achieve their full potential. Nigeria can afford to make education compulsory and free for her school-age children up to Senior Secondary School (SSS) III if there is transparency in governance. On this note, I rest my case and thank you for listening.

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#### General comments/observation

- The paper started with highlighting disparities in health workforce distribution, health services and the prevalence of poverty. After reviewing health indices, it then narrowed and concluded that education is the root cause of the differences between North and South. I am worried for most people in the audience the argument has not been made strongly.
- The audience is not the Northern Governor's Forum- the case has to be made for inefficiency in the planning and execution of a national plan. Did Nigeria plan to leave some regions behind?
- While highlighting regional/zonal disparities is good it may play down the failure of the country on Human Development. More so the current trend on planning on average (e.g.: One PHC per Senatorial zone) does not respond to need nor address inequality and inequity.
- Socioeconomic status determines access to education and health services. Health is probably determined by the disposable income available to families than any other factor.
- There is a lot of averaging in the Paper; Are all the states in e.g., the Northeast region the same or is Ebonyi state more similar to Yobe than it is to Enugu state? Similarly, for indices like MMR and IMR
- Is it practical for State Governments to focus on Secondary education free for all with their current funding? What will happen to health and other services?

- The Regional/Zonal analysis is flawed-in the last forty years there has not been regional/zonal administration, how do we attribute success or failure to an administrative entity that doesn't exist?
- The architecture of inequality and inequity has not been explored deeply.
- The role of the private sector and entrepreneurship has not been considered.
- Education has been used without any qualification. Formal education (to SSS) is what is probably considered by demographers as useful in influencing fertility. It is assumed that education to this level confers some empowerment to the beneficiary-Is it true for our current educational system?



# CHAPTER FOUR

## Nigeria's Quest for Demographic Dividend: Young People and Population Growth

APLS 2013  
(SECOND EDITION)

BY

*His Excellency Dr. Kayode Fayemi  
The Executive Governor of Ekiti State, Nigeria*

I feel privileged to be opportune to give this address on a subject that is central to our pursuit for transformation, realizing the Vision 20:2020 and sustainable development. Today presents an opportunity for us as a nation to explore the plausible ways of reaping a demographic dividend from our precious endowment-Young People in the next two decades. Before proceeding, may I use this opportunity to thank the Annual Population Lecture Series (APLS) Planning Committee for organizing this distinguished lecture and for the choice of the theme which is very timely and appropriate to help us re-position our focus with attention on priorities regarding policies and actions that will guide our decisions in the coming years.

### **The Population Context**

Population size and structure vary across continents and regions of the world and do influence the pace at which countries make progress and achieve desired development levels. Globally, population growth has slowed down appreciably, especially in the developed hemisphere, but with insignificant decline in developed countries, particularly within Sub-Saharan Africa which still retains huge population sizes with large cohort of young people. The regional dimension of this demographic upsurge shows Sub-Saharan Africa as having about 900 million people, estimated to swell to about 2 billion by 2050, with persons below the age of 15 comprising 43 per cent of the population (Zulu, 2013). Hence, the future of the region would certainly remain youthful, necessitating planning and policy directions across Sub-Saharan Africa to take, appropriate steps in view of this situation. As a reflection, across the world, many countries are experiencing changes in their population structure in a manner that has effects on their potential for economic growth and development, as an increasing working population has the capacity to generate more per capita income.

Nigeria has continuously housed the largest population size in Africa and the 7th in the world with an estimated current population figure of about 177 million People (National Population Commission, 2013), growing at the rate of 3.2 per cent annually. By projections, the population is expected to reach over 221 million by 2020 and is anticipated to continue to grow till 2050 if there are not alternations in the current growth rate. The structure of Nigeria's population is currently youthful due to the large proportion of young dependents. Structurally by the 2006 census, the National Population Commission (NPopC) figures of youth aged 15-24 represented over 28 million people (20.2 per cent), age 0-14 constituted 58.7 million (41.8 per cent) and age 0-24 represented over 87 million (62 per cent). By this year, the estimated figures of the cohorts show an increase that calls for concerns. The

proportion of those ages 15-24 to the total population is almost 37 million (20.9 per cent), ages 0-14 represent over 74 million (42.1 per cent) and ages 0-24 constitute 111.6 million (63 per cent).

Dependency ratios on the other hand indicate the potential effects of changes in population age structures for social and economic development, pointing out broad trends in social support needs. The current dependency ratio is 83 and particularly youth dependency ratio shows that for

every 100 persons of "Working Age" (ages 15-64 years), there are 76.9 children (ages 0-14 years) to support, which is substantially high and negates the prospect of reaping a demographic dividend.

The Demographic Dividend Population dynamics provide an apt picture of the shift in the structure of the population purported by the interplay of fertility and mortality, from high to low. Thus, the shift explains the alteration in the age structure from a youthful population to a working population ageing. In some countries, the transition process is more rapid, while in others like Nigeria, the process is slow and gradual due to the slow fertility decline. Ensuing from the alteration in the age structure of the population emerges a "Window of Opportunity" that allows countries that are prepared to act wisely as fertility decline commences and during the transition to achieve faster economic growth and human development. Equally, the transition moves the large cohort of young people into the cohort of working age, followed by a decrease in dependency ratio and because fertility is declining fewer births will occur producing a bulge at the working age as experienced by the Republic of Korea in 2000. Based on lessons learnt from countries that have reaped demographic dividend (DemDiv), one of the key factors that prompted and sustained fertility decline to an appreciable level for the opening of the window was the attainment of a high Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) that resulted in low Total Fertility Rate (TFR). This dividend becomes feasible within the framework of wise effective policies and investments in quality education, to improving health standards, job creation and opening up of markets to set the stage.

### **The Nigerian Situation**

Currently, young people constitute Nigeria's most valuable resource, rather than oil and this scenario will persist into the middle of the twenty-first century (British Council and Harvard University, 2010). Fertility decline has just commenced although insignificantly from a TFR of 6.0 in 1990 to only 5.5 in 2013 with a similar trend in CPR of 9 percentage points in 1990 to a very insignificant increase to 10 per cent of modern methods among currently married women in 2013 (NDHS Reports). Also, contraception unmet need has remained high fluctuating between 26 percent and 22 percent across the four-point NDHS years (1990, 2003, 2008 & 2013). As mentioned earlier, the population size is large and will continue to grow in the coming decades with a very heavy base. There exists a large disparity between the north and south in terms of TFR and CPR with low outcomes from the north that calls for concerns. The government's current attention on Family Planning which commenced in 2011 with \$3.5 million and increased to \$11.5 million after the London Summit in 2012 supported with a pronouncement of "free contraceptive" by the government has demonstrated hope. However, access to quality education and health care services is still limited and out of reach for majority of the population who are poor. Recent figures show that about 112 million Nigerians live below the poverty line representing about

67 percent of the entire population (NBS/World Bank, 2013), job creation is inadequate to meet the outturn of young job seekers coupled with increased inequality and if current levels remain, it will elongate our journey to reaping DemDiv. The other dimension that accentuates Nigeria's challenges to achieving DemDiv. are the upsurges of ethnic and religious conflicts revealing that the state is not adequately prepared to explore and maximize the economic opportunities that are likely to emerge as the population age structure changes.

### **Attaining the Demographic Dividend in Nigeria**

Nigeria between 1990 and 2010 was placed sixth of the ten fastest growing and most promising economies (The Economist). The feat was not achieved only by existing abundant mineral resources and direct foreign investments from the West and Asia, but partly due to a huge block. of human resources. In the 1960s, Nigeria had a similar economic outlook and outcomes as the Asian Tigers, however, it suffered a series of economic reversals due to political instability, high level of corruption and the failure of leadership to keep promises; and unlike the Asian Tigers, it failed to invest heavily in health, family planning and economic reforms.

Currently, health and education standards in the country have dwindled, especially in the northeast and western regions and among the poor many young people are ill-equipped to compete in a modern economy and particularly young women are likely to be excluded from opportunities. In order to achieve the demographic transition that will necessitate achieving demographic dividends, there is a need to undertake deliberate actions and implement them. programmes that will further propel fertility decline drastically through movements in family planning practice that will alter the age structure, investments in child survival and other health programmes, and meeting the reproductive health needs of both women and adolescents; while also prioritizing education, especially education of girls.

May I propose and suggest some line of actions that possibly will enhance our chances of achieving DemDiv.:

- The government to embrace and understand demographic challenges as a priority. Formulate wise, favourable and innovative policies supported with actions and resources that will promote investments that have a direct bearing on fertility decline in:
- Education, training, skills acquisition and entrepreneurship, particularly education of women and girls to tertiary level.
- Health with emphasis on reproductive health and family planning targeting women and adolescents.
- Robust and sustainable job creation to about 25 million jobs annually to absorb existing and future young job seekers.
- Invest in infrastructure that will sustain economic growth and progress. Promote diversification of the economy and less reliance on oil and promote inclusive growth with broader opportunities for young people.
- Implement programmes that will create access and ensure the availability of FP commodities free, improve CPR, improve maternal, newborn and child health and narrow gaps in unmet need, and accord attention to addressing poverty and inequality.

In conclusion, young people remain our most valuable and existing resource for development, if properly harnessed to position us for achieving a dividend. Key in this

process is for us to be aware of the window of opportunity for reaping DemDiv. is not elastic and the dividend is not automatic, therefore we need to capitalize on favourable conditions avail by fertility declines to step up action with resources and act now.

I Thank You.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## Opportunities and Challenges for Demographic Dividend in Nigeria: Bridging the gap between knowledge and use of Family Planning

APLS 2014  
(THIRD EDITION)

By

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### INTRODUCTION

Arguments and concerns about the linkages between demographic parameters and socioeconomic indicators predate to the ancient writings of great philosophers. The major emphasis of the thrust of some of these ancient writings was more of warning signals on the pace of population growth and economic outputs. A few of the quote's suffix in underpinning the views of the ancient writer:

*Excessive population growth may reduce output per worker, repress levels of living for the masses and engender strife.* [Confucius – philosopher 551 – 479BC]

*Through our long peace and seldom sickness...we are grown more populous than ever heretofore. Many thousands of idle persons are within this realm, which, having no way to be set on work, be either mutinous and seek alteration in the state, or at least very burdensome to the commonwealth.* [Richard Hakluyt – writer 1527 – 1616]

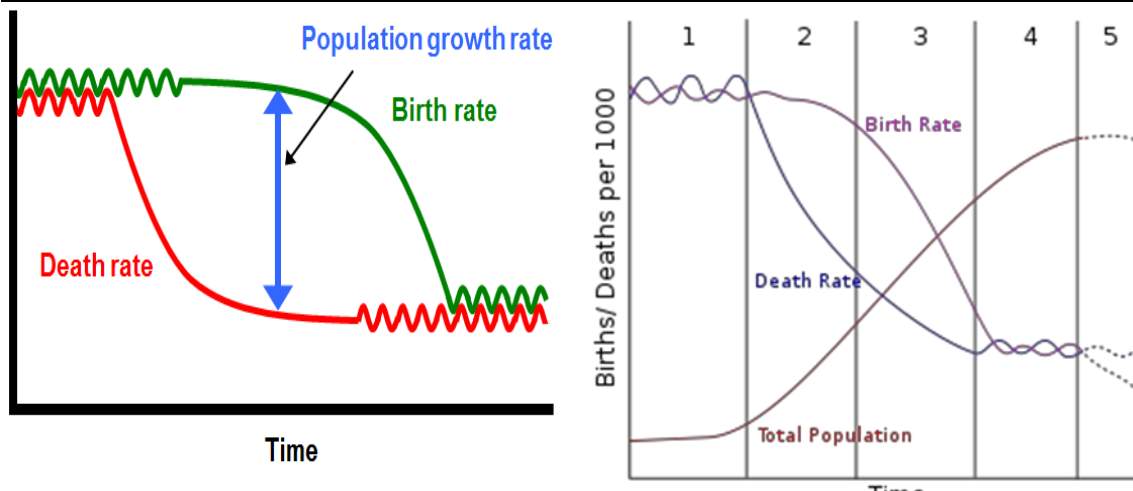
*The hungry world cannot be fed until and unless growth of its resources and the growth of its population come into balance. Each man and woman and each nation must make decisions of conscience and policy in the face of this great problem.* [Lyndon B Johnson – US President 1908 – 1973]

These assertions from historical and philosophical orientations bring to the fore, on one hand, the linkages between growth and productivity in one hand and the implication of population structure capacity on resultant economic productivity. These in part set the tone for the current debate on demographic dividends across the globe. The demographic dividend refers to the opportunity for accelerated economic growth that results from a favourable distributed age structure of the population combined with favourable social and economic policies. The demographic dividend is the economic growth potential that is created by favourable shifts in the age distribution of the population.

The concept of demographic dividend is greatly indebted to the demographic transition. A demographic transition refers to the transition from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates as a country develops from a pre-industrial to an industrialized economic system. The transition in demographic logic refers to a four-phase process where, in the first phase, death rates and birth rates are high, in the second phase death rates drop rapidly due to improvements in social and economic development, in the

third phase birth rates fall in part due to access to family planning and a fourth phase where both birth rates and death rates reach a low point and maintain it. A major assertion is that, when fertility falls, countries have a window of opportunity for rapid economic growth which is partly due to an increase in the working-age population as a sizeable number of young people join the working age bracket and the number of people aged 16 and under decreases. However, an additional stage that reflects both more-fertile and less-fertile futures has been claimed as a Stage Five for some countries with sub-replacement fertility.

Fig 1: Stages of Demographic Transition Fig 2: Stages of Demographic Transition



Additionally, at this middle stage, the population has not reached a period of population ageing. The overall effect of these two processes happening simultaneously results in a large working-age population and a small dependent population. Linking the demographic dividends to economic opportunities have many pathways and orientation, however, the emphasis thus far have been more on the economic orientations (See Bloom et al, 2013; Bloom, D, D Canning, G Fink, and J Finlay. 2007; and Bloom, D and J. Finlay. 2009). Bloom et al, (2011) identified two major determinants of the demographic dividends to include accounting and behavioural effects, these two parameters transcend economic parameters. Some of the major behavioural effects relate to the empowerment of women as well as lowering the dependency burden. Family planning, access to reproductive health services and education of women are some of the main determinants of the behavioural effects.

#### Nigeria Demographic, Age Structure and Economic Indicators

The Nigeria demographic structure reflects a growing youthful population with a broad-based population pyramid. According to the 2006 Nigeria census, about 42% of the over 140 million people were aged less than 14 years, 29% were aged 15-19 years and 24% were in the prime age of 30-59 years, and the proportions are similar for the estimated 158million population as well as the projected 176million in 2015 (NPC, 2009; UN, 2012) (see table 1 below)

Age groups	Population Distribution		
	Both Sexes	Males	Females
0-4	22,594,967	11,569,218	11,025,749
5-9	20,005,380	10,388,611	9,616,769
10-14	16,135,950	8,504,319	7,631,631
15-19	14,899,419	7,536,532	7,362,887
20-24	13,435,079	6,237,549	7,197,530
25-29	12,211,426	5,534,458	6,676,968
30-34	9,467,538	4,505,186	4,962,352
35-39	7,331,755	3,661,133	3,670,622
40-44	6,456,470	3,395,489	3,060,981
45-49	4,591,293	2,561,526	2,029,767
50-54	4,249,219	2,363,937	1,885,282
55-59	2,066,247	1,189,770	876,477
60-64	2,450,286	1,363,219	1,087,067
65-69	1,151,048	628,436	522,612
70-74	1,330,597	765,988	564,609
75-79	579,838	327,416	252,422
80-84	760,053	408,680	351,373
85+	715,226	404,021	311,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>140,431,790</b>	<b>71,345,488</b>	<b>69,086,302</b>

Table 1 Population Distribution by Age Groups and Sex, Nigeria Census 200

Nigeria is ranked among the ten fastest-growing populations in the world with an estimated growth rate of about 3.2%. It is projected that at that rate, the population will double in size in just 24 years (NPC, 2009). As the most populous country in Africa and the eighth-most populous country in the world, the population quantum is estimated to have grown from 56 million in the year 1970 to over 176million in 2014 and is projected at 184million for the year 2015 (UN, 2012). According to the demographic parameters as presented in Table 2 below, the median age between 1970 and 2015 ranges between 18.7 years and 17.5 years which reflects a very youthful population.

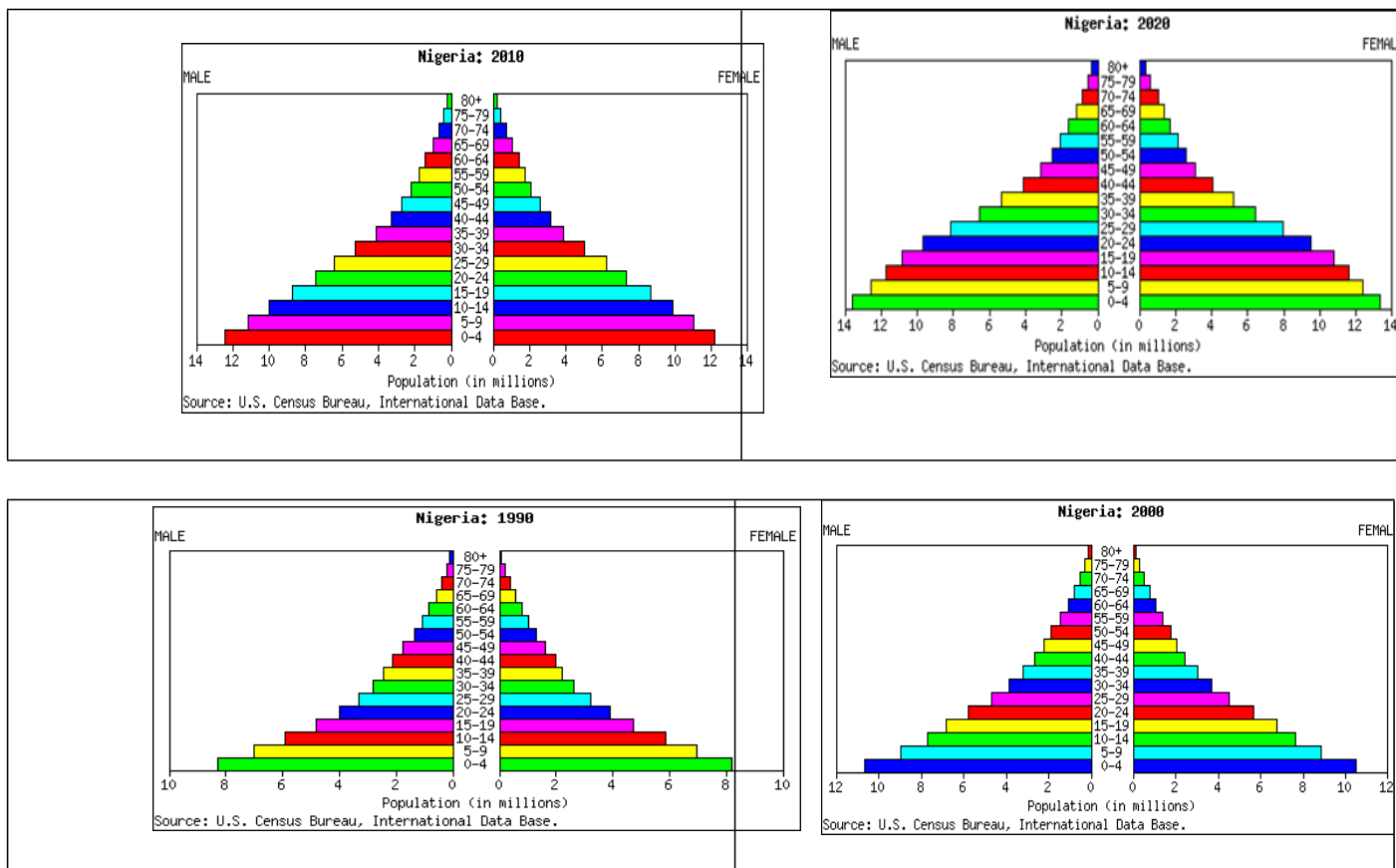
Table 2: Nigeria Demographic Parameters 1970-2015

	1970	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015
Mid-year Population (000)	56132	95617	122877	139586	159708	183523
Median Age (Years)	18.7	17.5	18.0	18.1	17.9	17.7
Child dependency ratio	78.0	85.9	81.0	81.1	82.7	83.9
Old age dependency ratio	5.2	5.5	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.1
Total dependency ratio	83.1	91.4	86.2	86.2	87.8	89.1

Source: United Nations, 2012

Among the critical demographic parameters for the demographic dividends is the alteration of dependency proportion through a favourable alteration of the age structure. The age structure showed that child dependency ratio ranges from 78 to 86 per 100 workers while ranges from 5.1 to 5.5 per 100 workers. The total dependency burden ranges from 83 to 91 per 100 workers. The age-sex structure showed a broad-based pyramid as presented in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3: Age-Sex Nigeria Population Pyramid from 1990-2050

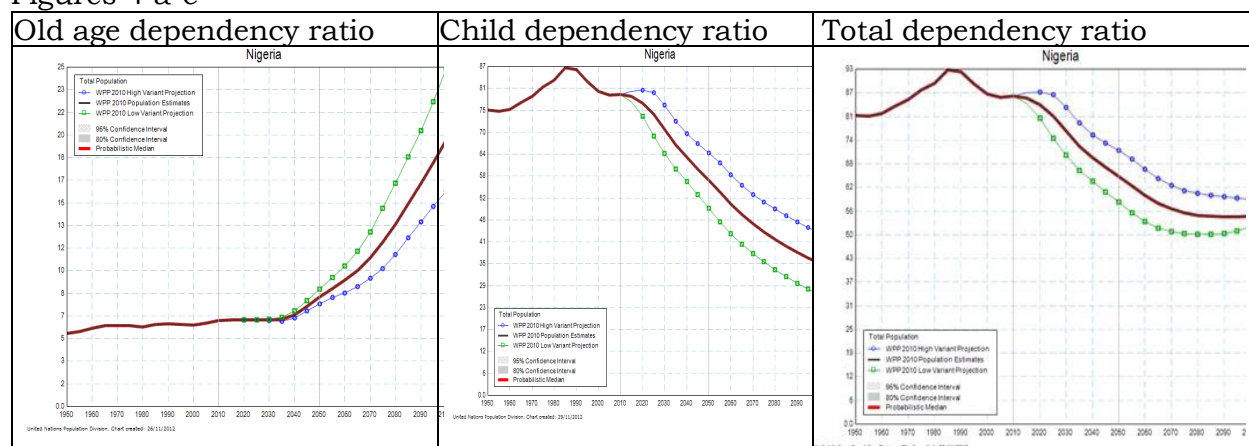


*Source: Akinyemi and Abanihe, 2014*

A major feature of the population parameters is on the carrying capacity of the population by age structure in terms of the dependency ratio. Figure 4 below presents the trend of the dependency ratio over time including old-age, child and total dependency ratio. A shift in age structure that will ensure the benefit of the demographic dividends is primarily towards adjusting the dependency loads.



Figures 4 a-c

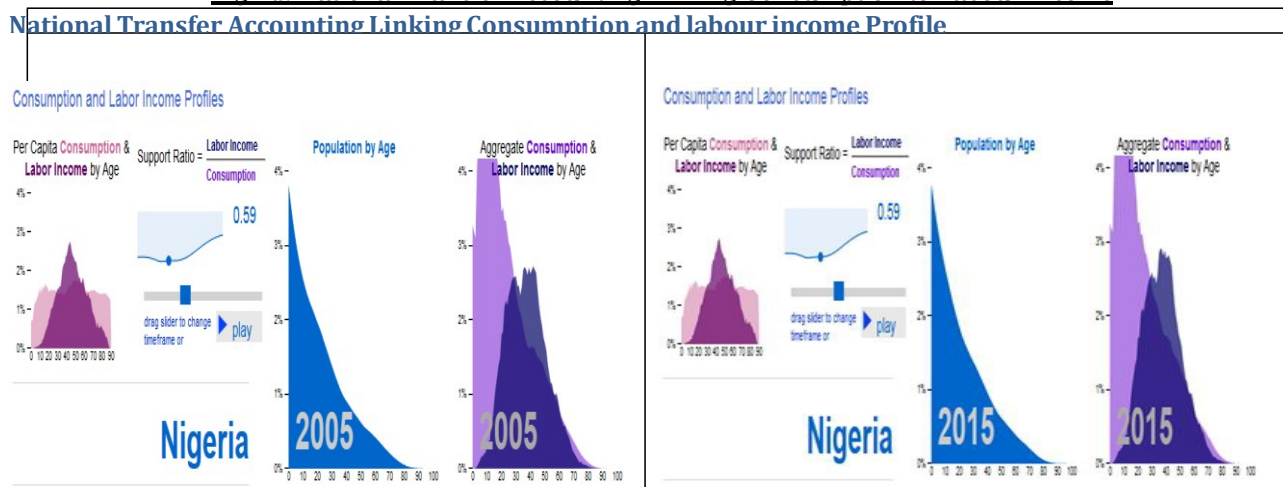


Source: World Population Prospects: The 2012 Revision

A conservative estimate of the unemployed prime-age population presented by the National Bureau of Statistics (2011) showed that overall, over 21 per cent of those in their prime ages are not gainfully employed. According to the estimates as presented in Table 3 below, overall, 36% of young people 15-24 years, 23% of those 25-34 years, 17% of those 35-44 years, 14% of those 45- 54 years and 16% of those 55-64 years are unemployed. This modest estimate excludes those underemployed. Also, the gender variation in the estimated proportion of the unemployed with an overall rate of 25% of all women compared with 18% of all men is quite significant. Studies have confirmed that women in Nigeria are generally disproportionately affected by education, training and economic opportunities (Aina, 2012).

The proportion of the working age to non-working age (WA/NWA) for the prime ages, otherwise defined as the reciprocal of the dependency ratio is mainly driven by the fertility rate; declining fertility leads to a higher (WA/NWA) ratio. This ratio is therefore expected to provide the primary basis for the associated economic growth. The National Transfer Account (NTA) presented in Figure 4d below (copied from the NTA site), presents the relationships between the ratio of the working age and the non-working age on consumption and labour income. Also, the development of industries, particularly small and medium scale outlets and employment opportunities are also crucial on the supply side.

Fig 4d: National Transfer Accounting Linking Consumption to Labour Income



Source: National Transfer Account Site

Unemployment rates are quite high among prime-age Nigerians and women are more disproportionately affected. The demographic adjustment in the age structure towards a favourable proportionate working age group will translate to more working age groups in the population as well as positive economic engagement of the active population. Nonetheless, the required skills, expertise and training are veritable inputs to ensuring the productive engagement of the active population. The evidence from the Nigeria Census and DHS reported that almost 30 per cent of the Nigerian population had no formal schooling. In general, Nigerian women are much less educated compared with men. Statistics from the DHS suggested that more than one-third of women have no formal schooling, one-fifth completed only primary education while about two-fifths had completed at least secondary education. However, education has been identified as a major indicator of empowerment and a major determinant of the economic potential of the population. Studies have shown the impact of education on family planning, fertility behaviour, and health outcomes.

Table 3: Proportion of those in Prime Ages who are unemployed by age groups, Nigeria.

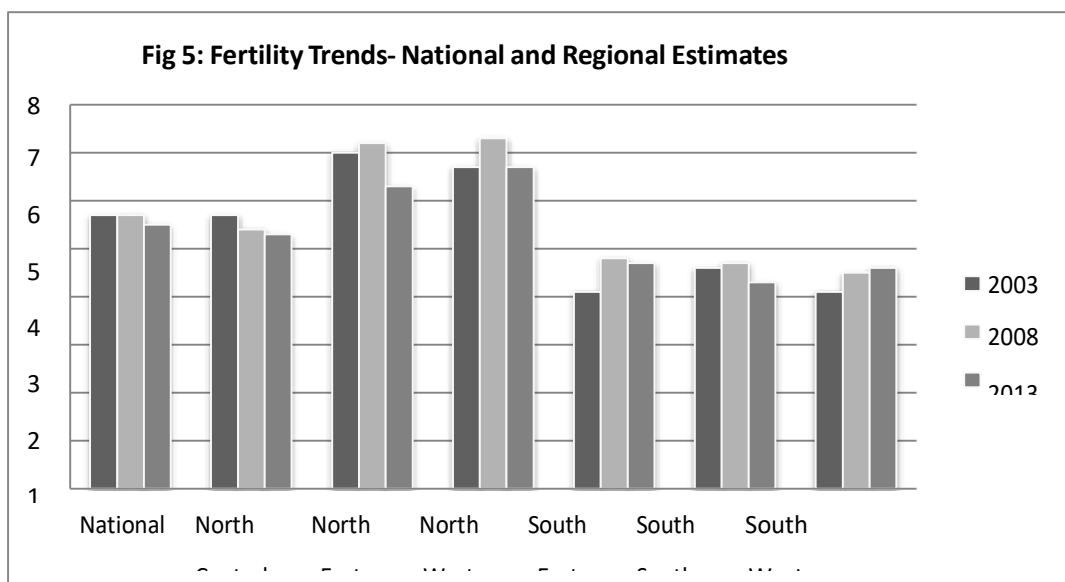
Age Groups	Male	Female	Both
15-24 years	35.6	36.1	35.9
25-34 years	19.5	26.7	23.3
35-44 years	12.3	21.8	16.8
45-54 years	11.8	18.2	14.4
55-64 years	14.6	18.4	16.0
Total	17.7	24.9	21.1

Source: National Bureau of Statistics, 2011

### Fertility and Family Planning Trends in Nigeria

Fertility reduction is one of the major considerations for the alteration of the population age structure which is a major factor in the process of harnessing demographic dividend. A reduction in fertility of one child per woman in Nigeria would lead to a 13% increase in GDP per capita in 20 years, and 25% in 50 years (Canning and Schultz, 2012). However,

although there is a minimal decline in TFR in Nigeria from 5.7 in the period between 2003 and 2008 to 5.5 in 2013, there are mixed results from the regions. Across the six regions, as presented in Figure 5 below, the rates remained highest in the two regions of North-East and North-West. Although there was a slight decline in the rates in the two regions between 2008 and 2013 from 7.2 to 6.3 in the North-East and 7.3 to 6.7 in the North- West, yet these rates are very high. The Northcentral maintained a modest steady decline in TFR while the South-West region reflects an upward trend in the fertility levels from 4.1 to 4.5 between the years 2003 and 2008, and from 4.5 in 2008 to 4.6 in 2013. The South-West is the only region with an upward increase in fertility levels in the 10 years from 2003 to year 2013. The highest decline in fertility rates (.9 and .6 differences) is in the North-East and North-West regions respectively between the years 2008 and 2013. The highest increase in fertility rates is in the southeast and North- West (.7 and .5 difference) respectively between the years 2003 and 2008.



Besides the total fertility rates that are generally considered high across the regions, there are other compelling factors influencing the high fertility estimates. Among these are the proportions of women under the age of 18 years who have either been married or begun childbearing. The fertility rates among these groups of people are generally higher than the general population and the risk and factors associated with it in terms of health challenges and poor socio-economic status through some other processes have an effect on the economic outcome.

Table 4: Fertility Levels and Trends for Early Marriage and Births

Region	First Marriage before 18 years			First Birth below age of 18 years		
	2003	2008	2013	2003	2008	2013
North Central	6.8	6.4	6	6.7	6.2	6
North East	7.2	7.6	7	7.8	7.9	7.4
North West	6.8	7.7	7.3	7	7.9	7.4
South East	5.5	7.2	6.8	6.1	6.9	6.9
South –South	6.5	6.3	6.1	7.2	6.4	5.2
South West	5.7	6.2	5.7	5.7	5.9	5.6
National	6.8	7.2	6.8	7.1	7.2	6.8

DHS, Nigeria.

Also, non-marital fertility constitutes a major high fertility- sustaining factor in Nigeria. As presented in Table 5 below, there is about average number of 4 children per woman who are not in marital union in Nigeria. This is critical and suggests a major gap in efforts aimed at preventing unwanted pregnancies and births.

Table 5: Trends in Marital and Non-Marital Fertility

	Marital Fertility			Non-Marital Fertility		
	2003	2008	2013	2003	2008	2013
National	7	7.3	6.9	3.5	4.1	3.9
North	7.1	6.8	6.6	3.2	3.5	3.6
North East	7.8	7.8	7.1	4.2	4.5	3.9
North West	7.1	7.7	7.3	4.1	5.2	4
South East	6	7.8	7.5	5.2	6.2	4.8
South	6.7	7	6.5	3	3.2	4.8
South West	6.1	6.4	6.5	1.8	3.5	4.5

Contraceptive use, particularly modern contraceptives remain the main proximate determinant of fertility. The overall contraceptive prevalence among women in Nigeria according to 2013 DHS is estimated at 16 percent. Details from the estimates as provided in the report showed that the proportion of women currently using a modern method of contraceptive was estimated at 11 per cent, while 5 per cent use traditional methods.

The use of family planning methods is higher among sexually active unmarried women than among currently married women (68 per cent versus 15 per cent). A higher proportion of sexually active unmarried women (55 per cent) than currently married women (10 per cent) use modern family planning methods. Those who are currently using modern contraceptives have lower fertility compared to those who do not ever intend to use contraception, and those women who have an unmet need for limiting fertility report an extremely high mean number of children ever born (6.0 in 2003 and 6.9 in 2008).

Some salient highlights of contraceptive dynamics in Nigeria suggest that:

- Nigeria is among the 8 countries with the largest share of the world’s population (UN, 2013)
- Nigeria is among the 12 Least Developed countries (UN, 2013)
- Contraceptive prevalence Rate 10%
- Adolescent girls 15-19 years who are mothers or currently pregnant- 23% (NPC& ICF Intl, 2014)

Invoking expanded family planning coverage to address high unmet needs is an important health right but is only one of several policies that can be exercised to lower fertility and achieve an improved NWA/WA ratio.

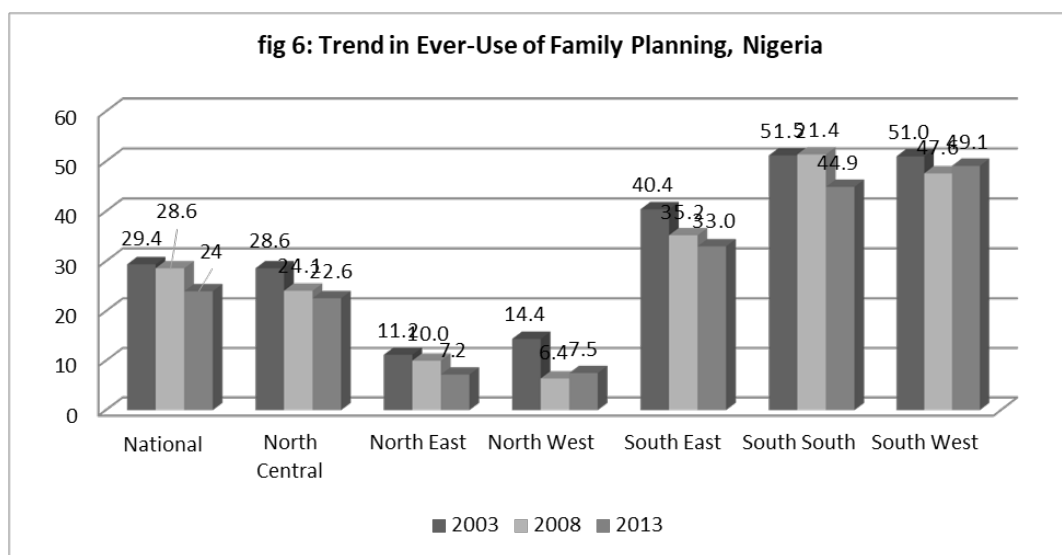


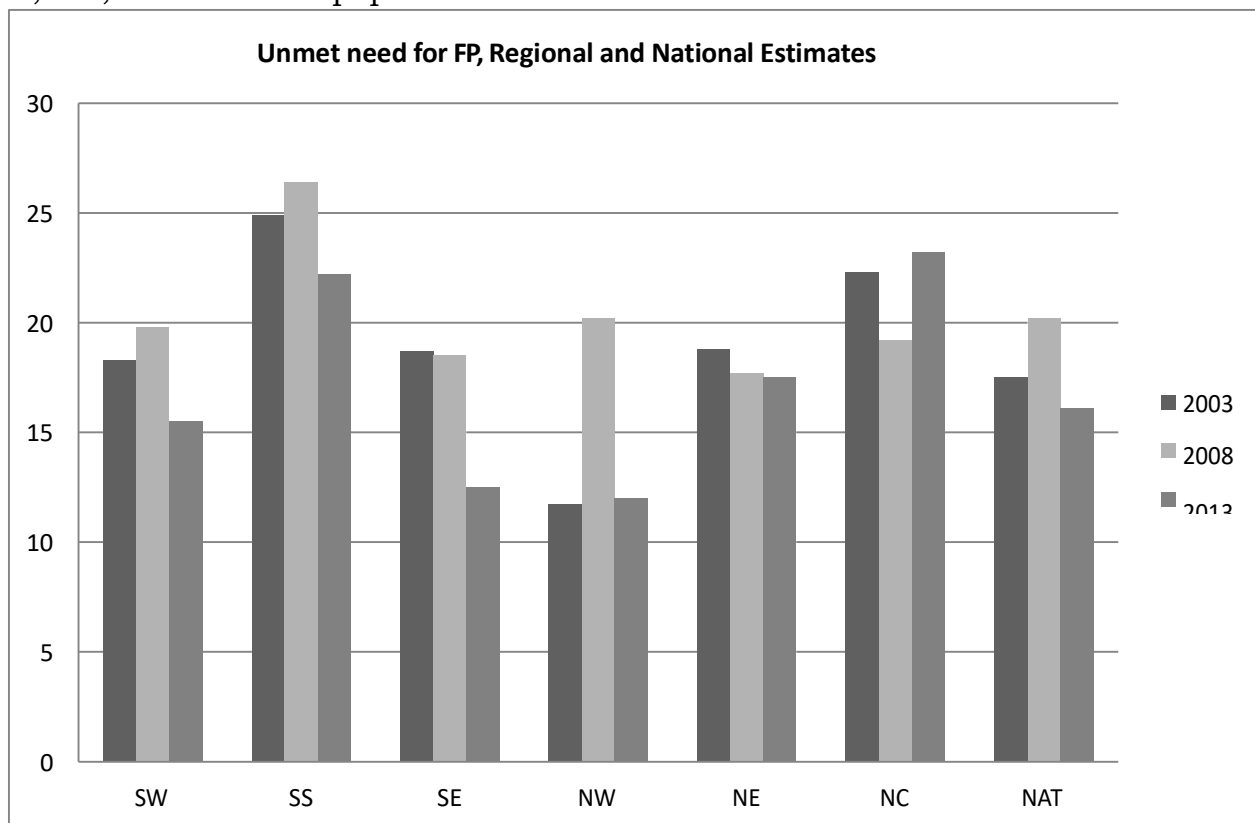
fig 6: Trend in Ever-Use of Family Planning, Nigeria

### Unmet Needs for Family Planning

National estimates of unmet needs for family planning showed that there was an increase from 2003 to 2008 rate from 17.5 to 20.2 but a decline to 16.1 in 2013. The South-South and North-Central are two major regions with the highest proportion. It is highest among those with primary education and lowest among those with tertiary. Nationally, there is a slight decline in the TFR among women with an unmet need for contraception from 9.3 in 2003 to 9 in 2008 and a slight increase to 9.5 in 2013. (figure However, in the North-West,

South-east and South-West, there is a general pattern of upward increase in the TFR for women with unmet needs from 2003 to 2008 and 2013. If all unmet needs are met in Nigeria between the period 2005-2015 according to conservative projections by Mooreland et al (2006), at least over:

- 4,000,000 unwanted pregnancies averted.
- 1,000,000 abortions avoided.
- 2,000,000 unintended births prevented.
- 4,500,000 less total population



**Figure 7a: Unmet need for FP, Regional and National Estimates**

## TFR among FP Users and Women with Unmet Needs, 2013

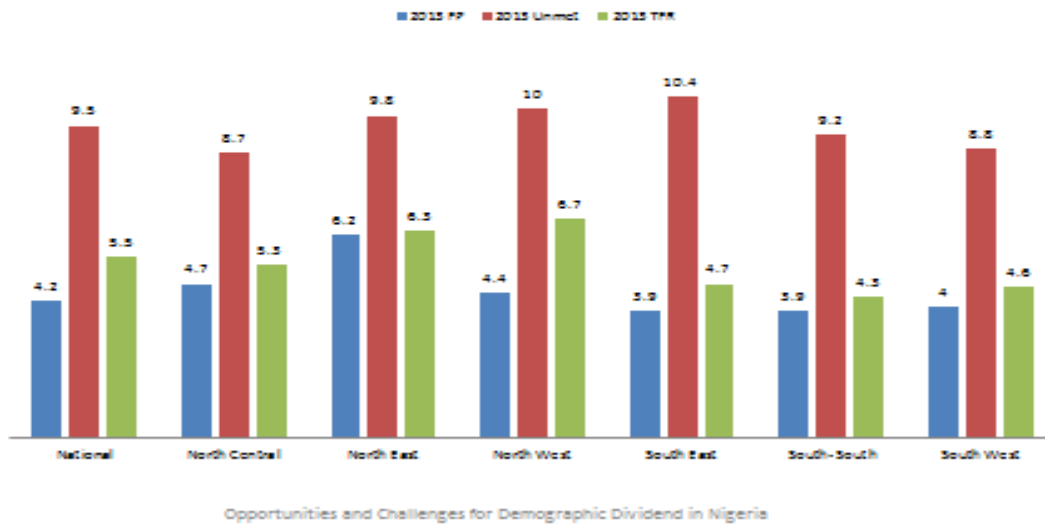


Figure 7b: TFR amongst FP Users and Women with Unmet Needs, 2013

## Working age-share of the population under different MUN scenarios: B(0); L(1/3); M(2/3); H(all): (Bloom, et al 2013)

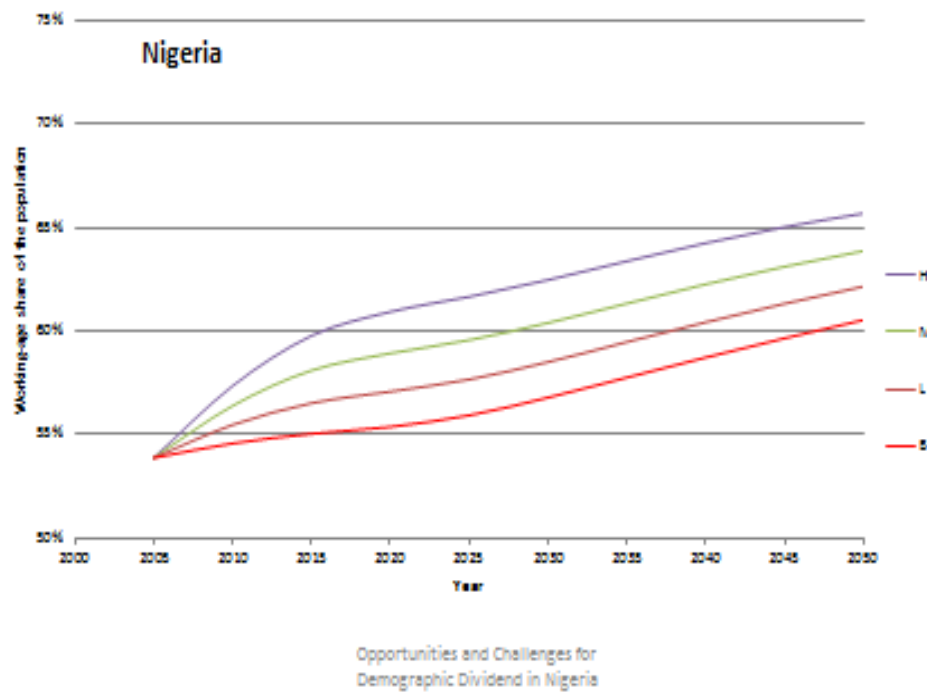


Figure 7c: Working Age Share of the Population Under Different munsenarios

## **Policy and Program Option**

The benefits of demographic transition and adjustment can only be actualized as a result of deliberate policy and programmes which are sustained over a long period. This process requires a lot of investment in a positive direction. There is a dire need to focus on policies that will catalyse the transition through improved health systems, educational facilities and capacities, social infrastructures and maternal and child health. There is a need to make more investments in health and education. There is also the need to focus on programmes and policies to accelerate the transition through sustained accelerated fertility decline. The TFR of 5.5 at the national level and of over 7 in some regions is unacceptable. There is a need to improve the provision of family planning supplies and services, and the expansion of education and job opportunities for girls and women (Bloom et al, 2013).

It is also important to note other pre-conditions for countries to capture the demographic dividend, since the gains from a change in age structure are not automatic (Bloom 2011; Bloom et al, 2013). Besides the expansion of family planning services, there is a need to boost school enrolment and promotion of gender equity. Actualizing the DD demands courageous and determined actions that will:

- Promote family planning and meet the unmet needs for FP as a prerequisite.
- Improve access to quality health services including reproductive health.
- Encourage Government at all levels to invest in health, infrastructure, human capital, particularly secondary education, and gender equality.
- Promote good governance.

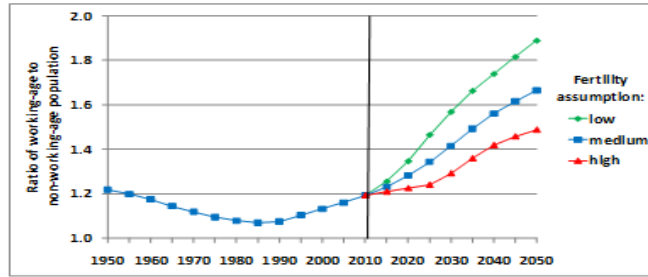
## **NEED TO STABILIZE THE FINANCIAL SECTOR**

There is a need to understand the heterogeneous and complex agglomeration of Nigerian societies in policy and program drives to accelerate demographic dividends. As noted by Holly and Mberu (2014), there is a need to identify major subgroups within the population with special emphasis on population and economic policies. The northern regions, Muslim and traditionalist populations, and rural areas, in particular, require increased resources and infrastructure, particularly in the areas of family planning, education (especially female education), job creation, and public health. Beyond this, other impediments including corruption and unethical practices need to be checkmated.

In conclusion, investment in education, improvement in girls schooling to delay marriage, nutrition to increase cognitive capacity and energy to boost worker performance, and investment in health and other infrastructures are key drivers to stimulate the expected benefits of the demographic transition. Family planning is a cost-effective investment in the health and livelihood of women and children. To achieve full potential for economic growth, Nigeria will need to address the young age structures through investments in development, education, and a health and family planning strategy, which will reduce family size and improve health thus producing a demographic dividend.



## Options for the future age structure



Opportunities and Challenges for Demographic Dividend in Nigeria

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Richard Hakluyt – writer 1527 – 1616  
Lyndon B Johnson – US President 1908 – 1973

# CHAPTER SIX

## Nigeria the 3<sup>rd</sup> Largest Population By 2050: The Way Forward

APLS 2016  
(FOURTH EDITION)

By

*Amina J. Mohammed*  
*The Honourable Minister of Environment*  
*Nigeria*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Theme of this year's population lecture-Nigeria the 3rd Largest Population by 2050: The Way Forward-is timely and it is coming at an opportune time when the Report of the 2016 State of the World Population (SWOP) was formally and publicly presented by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) on 26th October 2016 in Abuja, Nigeria. Indeed, I am in complete agreement with those who believe like Eze Duruiheoma, Chairman, National Population Commission (NPOPC), that the 2016 SWOP Report would be a constant reminder that population-related issues constitute the bedrock of national development. Nigeria's high (and rapid) population, if unaddressed, will negatively impact Nigeria's ability to attain the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and its accompanying 17 Sustainable Development Goals. They may never be achieved. The climate change crisis is real, but opportunities are amazing.

### **LECTURE AREAS OF FOCUS:**

This year's annual lecture will focus specifically on the following six areas:

- The Current World Population
- Nigeria's Population Data Sheet
- Factors Responsible for Nigeria's Rapid Population Growth
- The Projected Nigeria's New Population Ranking
- Implications of Nigeria Becoming the 3rd Largest Population by 2050: Issues reinforcing importance because we know, years of research, and practice, prove so.
- The Way Forward

### **THE CURRENT WORLD POPULATION**

As of November 2016, the world population is put at 7, 432, 663, 275 (approximately 7.5 billion people) [Source: [www.Worldometers.info/world-population](http://www.Worldometers.info/world-population)], up by 33 per cent from an estimated 7.4 billion [Source: 2016 World Population Data Sheet from the Population Reference Bureau (PRB)]

During the past century, the world population has grown significantly faster; it reached 3 billion in 1960 and jumped to 7 billion in 2011 [Source: David E. Bloom, Demographic Upheaval, Finance & Development, International Monetary Fund, March 2016 OR <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs>]

The latest United Nations projections now indicate that the world population will reach 10 billion persons in the year 2056 (six years earlier than previously estimated) [Source: ([www.Worldometers.info](http://www.Worldometers.info))]. According to the World Population Milestones, the United Nations

has projected the world population to reach 10 billion in the year 2056, 8 Billion in 2023, 7.5 Billion in 2016, 7 Billion in 2011, and 6 Billion in 1999.

According to the President/CEO of PRB (Jeffrey Jordan), “very low birth rates in Europe will mean population declines while Africa’s population is expected to double” reaching 2.5 billion by 2050. Asia will gain about 900 million to 5.3 billion, while Europe registers a decline from 740 million to 728 million. Oceania (which includes Australia and New Zealand) is expected to rise from 40 million to 66 million.



Figure 1: World Population Data showing Nigeria in the 4<sup>th</sup> position in 2050.  
Source: [World Population Data Sheet \(www.worldpopdata.org\)](http://www.worldpopdata.org)

According to the 2016 World Population Data Sheet’s estimates of the current population, over 25 per cent of the world's population is less than 15 years old. The figure is 41 per cent in the least developed countries and 16 per cent in more developed countries. Japan has the oldest population profile, with over a quarter of its citizens older than 65. Qatar and the United Arab Emirates are at the other end of the spectrum, with each having only 1 per cent over 65.

While some forty-two (42) countries around Asia, Latin America and Europe will register population declines, Africa’s population will double with Nigeria as the primary contributor. There is an average of 526 people per square kilometre of arable land in the world. The number is 238 in more developed countries and 697 in less developed countries.

The top 10 fertility rates in the world are in sub-Saharan African countries, with nearly all, above six children per woman, and one topping seven (demographic crisis is real). In Europe, the average is 1.6.

### **The Nigeria’s Population Data Sheet**

Currently, in 2016, Nigeria with an estimated population of 179 million is the seventh most populous nation in the world. In 2050, however, Nigeria will be the third most populous nation with 398 million people, displacing the United States of America. [Source: www.Worldpopdata.org, World Population Data, PRB 2016]

The current population of Nigeria is 188,556,713 as of Thursday, November 3, 2016, based on the latest United Nations estimates. Nigeria's population is equivalent to 2.48% of the total world population. Nigeria ranks number 7 on the list of countries by population. The population density in Nigeria is 205 per Km<sup>2</sup> (532 people per mi<sup>2</sup>). The total land area is 910,802 Km<sup>2</sup> (351,662 sq. miles). 48.1 % of the population is urban (91,668,667 people in 2016). The median age in Nigeria is 18 years.

Factors Responsible for Nigeria’s Rapid Population Growth

Several factors are responsible for Nigeria's rapidly growing population. They include high fertility, unemployment, procreation as a past time, poverty especially lack of economic empowerment of women which some people consider as the root cause of rapid population growth, and religious and cultural beliefs relating to the use or non-use of certain family planning methods. We have a solution here, [Suffice to say here that no religion in Nigeria is against the use of modern family planning methods or optimal spacing of pregnancies and births], the large cohort of young persons in population with parental pressures to show fertility status through pregnancies, and use of population as a determinant for national resource allocations in Nigeria, etc.,

### **THE PROJECTED NIGERIA'S NEW POPULATION RANKING.**

The projection in 2050, Nigeria will be the third most populous nation with 398 million people, displacing the United States of America. [Source: [www. Worldpopdata.org](http://www.Worldpopdata.org), World Population Data, PRB 2016] has implications for the country. To some, it means Nigeria has joined the League of world nations with huge populations- a source of huge labour and human workforce.

To some others, such projected population ranking is a sure way to demographic upheavals (note, I did not say, national unrests!)-with the likelihood of such a huge population putting additional huge pressures on infrastructures and national development.

The projected new population ranking for Nigeria, therefore, comes with a mixed feeling.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF NIGERIA BECOMING THE 3RD LARGEST POPULATION BY 2050**

Whichever way is viewed, Nigeria becoming the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest population by 2050 as well as its current Nigeria's rapid population growth have some serious implications for the country. As Peter Ogunjuyigbe, a demographer at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, put it "Population is key. If you don't take care of the population, schools can't cope, hospitals can't cope, there's not enough housing — there's nothing you can do to have sustainable economic development." [Source: [NyTimes.Com/2012/04/15/World/Africa/in-Nigeria-a-Preview-of-an-Overcrowded- Planet.html/](http://NyTimes.Com/2012/04/15/World/Africa/in-Nigeria-a-Preview-of-an-Overcrowded-Planet.html/)]

I will provide a few implications of Nigeria becoming the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest population by 2050 (34 years from now) beginning with an aspect of food securities:

Because of Nigeria's rapid population growth, agriculture is now failing to keep pace and Nigeria now has to rely upon huge food imports which has negative effects on the country's economy and foreign reserves.

SDGs- With the current Nigeria's rapid population growth, Nigeria's ability to achieve the 17 goals and 169 targets across the three dimensions (social, economic and environmental) of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is in doubt and highly questionable. If Nigeria does not effectively manage its population, the country cannot achieve the SDG goals and targets.

Human Development- The current rapidly growing population in Nigeria, if not well managed, will and continue to negatively affect the lives of children and youths, marriage and families, the labour force, standard of education, standard of living, the environment, immigration and migration, gender norms, the prevention, treatment and management of diseases including HIV/ AIDS/ STIs, nutritional status of Nigerians especially children, crime rates and security, poverty, and maternal, child and reproductive health of millions of Nigerians, etc.

Urbanization- Rapid population growth in Nigeria can and will unfortunately continue to compound the existing problems in the nation's urban and metropolitan cities like Lagos, Kano and Ibadan in Nigeria which include unemployment, especially among the youth, poor

roads, drainages, and waste disposal facilities, and the problems of security and overburdened public transport system.

## **WAY FORWARD**

Here are my thoughts and recommendations on the way forward on the projection that Nigeria will become the 3rd largest population by 2050 as well as on what to do concerning the current Nigeria's rapid population growth.

## **CONTEXT/COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY/REQUIRED LEADERSHIP**

We need to begin to develop a national strategy (among civil society organizations, legislators, media, students and the public) to raise awareness among Nigerians about the implications or effects of the country's rapid population growth on every facet of national development awareness. It is imperative for the Government of Nigeria, at all levels, to begin spreading the word, especially at the local and community levels on the implications of and the need for Nigeria to better manage the nation's population growth, at this critical stage.

We need to begin urgent advocacy and public enlightenment for the country to prevent the impending demographic upheavals. These demographic upheavals include the consequences of migration (local and international), rapid urbanization, environmental degradation, rapid depletion of the nation's resource aspects of human development, the pressure of large population density on arable lands in the country, etc.

While the voices of civil society organizations including the media must be heard on the matter of rapid population growth in Nigeria and the need for Nigeria to take concrete steps to manage its population, the Government of Nigeria must provide the needed national political leadership to ensure that Nigerians are informed.

The United Nations Report (2016) projected that by 2050 the populations of six countries are expected to exceed 300 million. The countries are China, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan and the United States (Source: <http://www.in.org/apps/news/story.asp>, United Nations News Centre-UN projects world population to reach...). Nigeria cannot and must not ignore the United Nations' projections. Since a stick in time saves nine, the early Nigeria begins to plan on how to address the implications of the projection, the better for the nation. It is like making adequate preparations for the rainy days.

The Government of Nigeria needs to begin raising public awareness that Nigeria's population is growing most rapidly in the world [Source: (Source: <http://www.in.org/apps/news/story.asp>, United Nations News Centre-UN projects world population to reach...)]. The most that can be done now is for the Government of Nigeria, at all levels, to begin to raise public consciousness and open discussions on ways to decelerate and slow down the current population growth rate of the country. Being the country growing most rapidly in the world does not do us good at this stage and in the midst of all the socio-economic problems confronting the country.

The Government of Nigeria must begin to pay particular attention to the effective management of its own rapidly growing population. It is imperative for Nigeria to show the political will to manage its population.

Climate Change- Nigeria will contribute significantly, in a negative way, to the high level of carbon emissions per metric ton if the nation's rapid population growth is not curtailed. In addition, the current rapidly growing population of the country will put unnecessary pressure on arable land and may create unnecessary tensions among the vast ethnic

groups in the country. The UN Report (Source: <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/news/population/2015/4\report.>) indicates that there is an average of 526 people per square kilometre of arable land. The number is 238 in the more developed countries and 697 in less developed countries including Nigeria.

Education- One critical way to prevent the negative consequences of rapid population growth in Nigeria is for the Government of Nigeria including the private sector to begin massive investments in every child's education to enable the nation to harness and harvest their potential. Let us all support the HE for SHE campaign. Educated girls are great assets to their nations. The future of Nigeria lies in the hands of millions of educated girl children who are able to create better paths for their future fertility thereby slowing down the future population growth of Nigeria through appropriate fertility decisions.

Health- Leave no one behind, every life matters. Family Planning is essential for sustainable growth.

The Government of Nigeria needs to begin to use the international agreements and charters such as ICPD, MDGs now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) the country signed to address and deal with Nigeria's rapid population growth. We must lead by setting good examples in the country's population health management.

As Nigeria experiences improvements in child survival, high births, and life expectancy rates, while death rates reduce, but no decline in fertility, the country still faces and will experience demographic upheavals (listed under item #2 above) due to its rapidly growing population. For now, all hands must be on deck to explore the current window of opportunity in Nigeria's demographic dividends for the Government of Nigeria to re-direct its national efforts towards promoting fertility decline, reducing the burden of youth dependency and using national resources for rapid growth of incomes and poverty reduction through well-thought-out national policies and programs including heavy investments in education, technology and research development.

Above are therefore few of my submissions as ways by which Nigeria can prevent demographic pressure and upheavals due to its current pathway in a population that is rapidly growing and yearning for effective management by the Government at all levels and by the general public and by the distinguished participants and delegates present here today.

I thank you for your attention.

# CHAPTER SEVEN

## Achieving Demographic Dividend: Strategic Tool for National Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development

APLS 2017  
(FIFTH EDITION)

By

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Population has become an important issue of concern in contemporary society. This is so because population, in terms of its size and composition, has far-reaching implications for change, development and the quality of life in society. Population is a major asset, as a resource for development, and is also the prime beneficiary of development in society. It constitutes the bulk of the producers of goods and services as well as the major consumers of the goods and services. Thus, the population of a country is a major determinant of the size of the national and international market for investment.

Nigeria has the continent's largest population, with an estimated population of 193 million people (NPopC, 2017). The rate of growth of the population rose steadily from an estimate of 2.8% in the 1960s to around 3.3% in the contemporary time (CBN, 2007). A growth rate of 3.3% per annum suggests a population doubling time of 22 years. The continued rapid population growth of Nigeria has major and adverse consequences for the environment, increasing the pressure on infrastructure and available resources. Therefore, Nigeria's population size and the probability of its doubling in about two, decades, resulting from population momentum, have been of immense concern to the government and policymakers especially in the face of a slowly declining fertility rate despite several invented policies to address population problems.

Recent Nigerian governments at various levels have expressed the prevailing population growth as unacceptable and some efforts were put to control it. For instance, whereas Nigerians in The 1970s did not see population growth of the time as an issue (Fed Government, 1972) in 2004, a National Policy on Population for Sustainable Development was formulated with the primary objective of improving the quality of life and standard of living of the Nigerian Population (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004). Specifically, the policy desired to reduce the population growth rate through a reduction in infant mortality rate to 35 per 1000 live births and under-five mortality rate to 45 per 1000 live births by 2015. Later, the Federal Ministry of Health produced a draft policy on child health in 2006 whose targets were to reduce infant mortality rate by half of the 1990 estimate (126 per 1000 live births) and reduce the under-five mortality rate by two-thirds of the 1990 rate (213 per 1000) by the year 2015 (Federal Ministry of Health, 2006).



However, most of the government policies to regulate the population have not yielded any tangible result probably due to some reasons including the monolithic structure of the country that has made no provisions for its socio-cultural diversities.

Until 1991, Nigeria's Total Fertility Rate (TFR) remained above 6 children per woman (NPC, 1999). The TFR declined rapidly between 1990 from 6.0 to 4.7 (21.7%) in 1999 and stalled afterwards between 2003 and 2008 at 5.7. A further decline of 0.2 children per woman was achieved between 2008 and 2013. Evidence adduced from the 1990 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) by Makinwa-Adebusoye and Feyisetan (1994) indicates that fertility decline began around 1986. They argued that the economic crisis that started in the early 1980s as a result of the oil glut and the decision by the high parity women to postpone childbearing were the reasons for the onset of the decline. The period was characterized by unemployment, devaluation of the currency, rising costs of children's education and withdrawal of subsidies on many social services as is currently observed in the country.

A major concern about the rapidly growing population is the fact that jobs, national infrastructures, social services, housing, and healthcare facilities are not also growing at an equally comparable rate, or a faster rate compared to the national population growth rate. Rapid population growth is generally conceived as shifting spending away from physical capital investments and towards expenditures on social services like health, housing, education and food among others. Hence, the concern and clamour for population management programmes. However, previous studies by Bloom, Canning *et al.* (2003) and Ebigbola and Ogunjuyigbe (2004) have indicated that a slow population growth rate does not necessarily lead to better living conditions for the population. Indeed, better living standards depend on the efficiency of covariates like political stability, sustained economic growth, accountability and probity and reliable database that will facilitate development planning aimed at improving the welfare of the people.

### **Trend and Pattern of Economic Growth in Nigeria (1970-2015)**

Nigerian governments have at various times launched recovery plans to boost or reform the economy. Such plans include the Vision 20-20 of Abacha, the 7-point agenda (2007) of Umar Yar'Adua, the Vision 20-20 (2010), National Industrial Revolution Plan (2014) and the Nigeria Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (2014) of Goodluck Jonathan administration and the 2016 Strategic Implementation Plan for Budget change by Mohammadu Buhari government. Recently, the Buhari administration came up with, yet another plan tagged "Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP)" aimed at resuscitating the Nigerian economy, accelerating the country's development and bringing it back to a sustainable level in the medium term (2017-2020). In spite of all these efforts or strategic measures, Nigeria is still having issues with its economy and the sustainability of its development. Even though investment in human capital is one of the broad objectives of most of these plans, especially the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017- 2020, available evidence does not show that Nigeria's economic landscape has been adequately prepared to successfully incorporate the large entry-level working-age population.

During the first decade after independence, Nigeria can considerably be described as an agricultural economy. More importantly, from the standpoint of occupational distribution and contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), agriculture was the leading sector contributing about 70 per cent of the GDP, employing about the same percentage of the working population and accounting for about 90 per cent of foreign earnings and federal government revenue. This situation began to change drastically with the discovery of oil in the late 1960s. However, as revealed by the economic indicator (World

Bank, 2017), during the 1970s, Nigeria evolved from a relatively poor agricultural economy into a relatively rich oil-dominated economy.

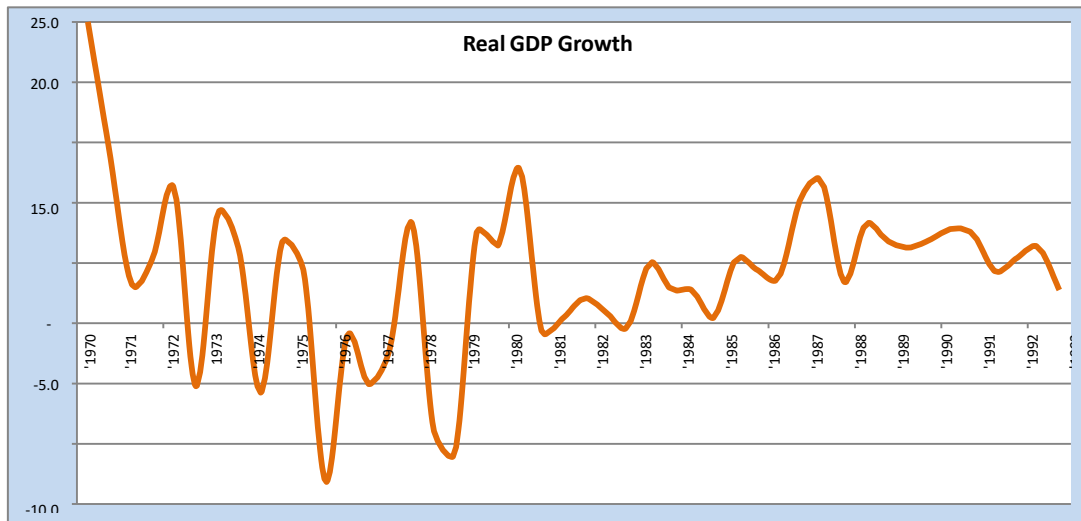


Figure 1: Trend and Pattern of Economic Growth in Nigeria (1970-2015) Source: Computed based on Data from World Bank Development Indicator

Specifically, as evidenced in Figure 1, the growth rate of real GDP reached its peak in 1970 with approximately 25 per cent annual growth (The World Bank, 2017). From the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, the growth rate of real GDP fluctuated with little overall growth, but then it plunged in 1981 to -13.12 per cent.

This plummeted in the growth rate of real GDP reflected the economic policy orientation during the period which left the country ill-prepared for the eventual collapse of world oil prices in the early 1980s and the sharp decline in petroleum output. The latter resulted from the lowering of Nigeria's Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) quota. Consequently, this led to recession and economic deterioration as manifested in fiscal crisis, foreign exchange shortage, balance of payments and debt crises, high rate of unemployment, and negative economic growth among others. Unfortunately, the absolute population size of the county continues to grow uncontrolled even during the crisis period.

Pre-Liberalization Era (1970-1986)		Liberalization Era (1987-1999)		Post-Liberalization Era (2000-2015)	
Year	Real GDP Growth	Year	Real GDP Growth	Year	Real GDP Growth
1970	25.00724193	1987	-10.7517001	2000	5.318093381
1971	14.23753156	1988	7.542522025	2001	4.411065196
1972	3.36426203	1989	6.46711944	2002	3.784648183
1973	5.392760484	1990	12.76600917	2003	10.35418456
1974	11.16067455	1991	-0.61785059	2004	11.73577503
1975	-5.22774756	1992	0.433725357	2005	3.444666813
1976	9.04235173	1993	2.090377801	2006	8.210964859
1977	6.024117846	1994	0.909763335	2007	6.828398348
1978	-5.76415839	1995	-0.30746897	2008	6.270263697
1979	6.759430935	1996	4.993705537	2009	6.934416004
1980	4.204831047	1997	2.802256439	2010	7.839739477
1981	-13.1278805	1998	2.715640179	2011	7.367386611
1982	-1.05318606	1999	0.474237575	2012	4.279277314
1983	-5.05045111			2013	5.394416311
1984	-2.02153757			2014	6.309718253
1985	8.3228297			2015	2.652693623
1986	-8.75417698				
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.089229</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>2.270647</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>6.320982</b>

Table 1: Trend and Pattern of Economic Growth in Nigeria 1970-2015  
*Source: World Bank Development Indicators (2017)*

Table 2 further revealed that beginning from 1982 and through 1987, the country had become saddled with negative trends in economic growth as indicated by the decline in the growth rate of GDP (Table 1), persistent current account and budget deficits, a huge backlog of uncompleted projects, especially in the public sector, factory closures, large-scale retrenchment, acute shortages of essential commodities and galloping inflation. In response to the economic problems highlighted above, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was introduced in 1986. This programme brought about temporary relief with the annual growth rate averaging 8.92% between 1988 and 1990. However, between 1991 and 1999, the overall annual growth average was less than 3 per cent and throughout the period it had the highest of 4.9 per cent in 1996.

However, real GDP growth rate rebound to 11.7% in 2004 having risen from 5.3% in 2000, reflecting an improved economic policy of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) implemented in four main areas –

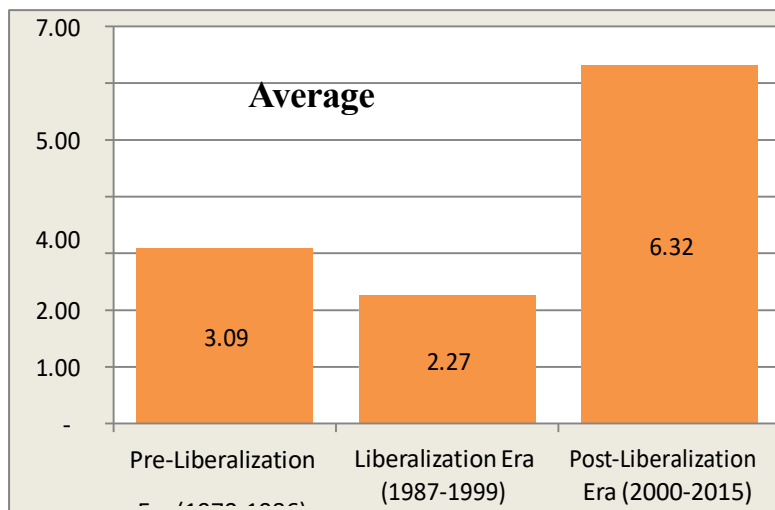
- I. macroeconomic reform
- II. structural reform
- III. governance and institutional reform and
- IV. public sector reform.

Under the macroeconomic reform programme, government adopted prudent oil price-based fiscal rule; introduced Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and Medium-Term Sector Strategies (MTSS); improved the implementation of monetary policy by the Central Bank; undertook a bank consolidation exercise to strengthen the financial sector; adopted trade liberalization reform; and privatization of some government enterprises. Under institutional and governance reforms, the government introduced the *Due-Process* mechanism in public procurement; adopted the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) in Nigeria; and established the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to

address corruption in public offices. Under the Public Sector Reforms, there has been a restructuring of some government agencies and an increased focus on service delivery (Temidayo and Taiwo, 2011).

The impressive real GDP growth rate was sustained till 2011 averaging 7.7 per cent per annum since 2003. The development in 2011 was attributed largely to the conducive macroeconomic environment. The specific factors include the favourable credit conditions, which enhanced financing of the private sector, the stable supply of petroleum products, the favourable weather conditions which boosted agricultural output, increase in crude oil production, sustained investment in infrastructure by the government, building and construction activities across the country and expansion in the telecommunication sub-sector.

Recently, in order to better reflect the size and structure of the economy, the National Bureau of Statistics in 2014 undertook a GDP rebasing exercise with the year 2010 selected as the new base year. The rebased GDP figure (N80.22 trillion in 2013 compared to N42.39 trillion in the preceding year) made Nigeria the largest economy in Africa and the 26<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. With rising contributions of previously undocumented services to GDP, the Nigerian economy appeared to be more diversified. In particular, the remarkable real GDP growth rate of 5.39 per cent and 6.38 per cent which were recorded in 2013 and 2014 respectively has plunged to 2.65 in 2015. The recent downward trend in the real output can be attributed to the continued plunge in global oil prices which has led to strained pressure on the Naira. This, in turn, led to the recent devaluation of the local currency; continued depletion of the excess crude account; continued depletion of the external reserves; feared political disturbances and vulnerability of public finances; insurgency and other disturbances, which often lead to the high level of insecurity in Nigeria among other factors.



*Figure: Trend and Pattern of Economic Growth in Nigeria 1970-2015*

As can be deduced from Figure 2, overall average economic growth differs only marginally between 1970-1986 (that is before the Structural Adjustment Programme era referred to as the Pre-Liberalization era) and 1987-1999 (that is during the Structural Adjustment Programme era otherwise called Liberalization era) amounting to 3.1per cent before SAP and 2.3 per cent during the liberalization era. The inter-temporal pattern of growth differs markedly with the first period characterised by a massive boom and bust cycle and the

second by protracted stagnation following the initial burst of growth. While the post-liberalization has an average of 6 per cent growth, regrettably, the economy has been on a slow track. In particular, the remarkable real GDP growth rate of 5.30 per cent and 6.38 per cent which were recorded in 2013 and 2014 respectively plunged to 2.6 in 2015. It must be stated that the continued depletion of Nigeria's fiscal and external buffers, the absence of strategic and significant structural and infrastructural reforms, and the escalating insecurity may impede economic growth in Nigeria. In what ways then will demographic dividend contribute to economic recovery and sustainable development in Nigeria?

## **POPULATION GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Rapid population growth constitutes a major threat to the continuous availability of different types of resources and may therefore limit the capacity of the country to achieve any tangible development. Whereas many people may not agree that the population-resource relationship may take the form put forward by Malthus, resource scarcity relative to the needs of a growing population may be real. It is this realization of the scarcity problem that underlies the emergence of the concept of sustainable development. The concept is developed from the work of the World Commission on Environment and Development set up in 1984. The concept pertains to that type of development that meets both the present and future needs of the population. In other words, it is the type of development which while meeting the needs of the present generation does not in the process compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Though, sustainability of development is desirable, putting it into practice is hindered by a number of factors. These factors are mainly the high rate of population growth and poverty. In our case, it is evident that Nigeria's population grows at a rate that is much more than the growth of the resource base.

Although the interdependence of population and development is recognized by most planners and policymakers, much still has to be done in the area of incorporating population factors in development planning. The failure to fully incorporate demographic factors in development plans has been attributed to the absence of certain prerequisites like reliable data on population change and structure, personnel trained in the analysis of these data, and their cause-and-effect relationships with development factors. Planning to boost Nigeria's economy and achieve sustainable development requires considering population factors. Such may include:

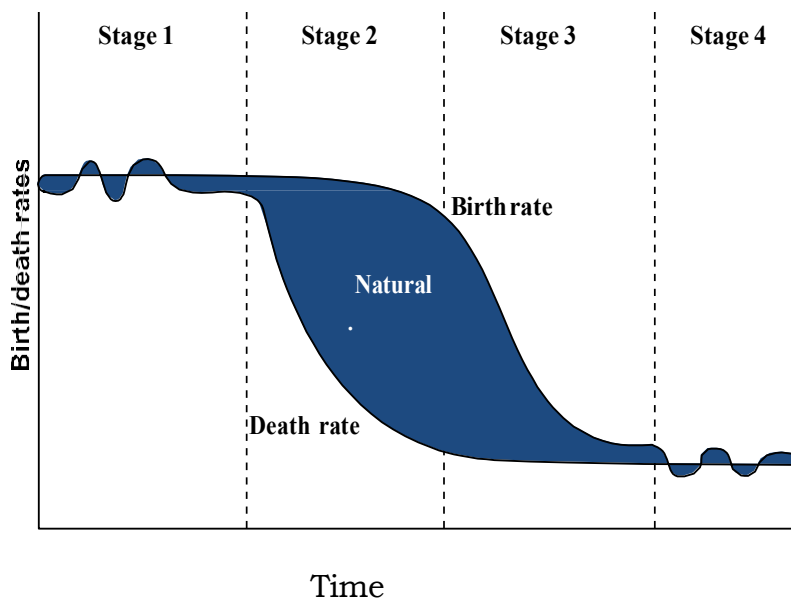
The formulation of policies and targets, taking into account assessments of the expected numbers and characteristics of the population, with particular reference to sex, age groups and urban-rural residence; The provision, in the formulation of consumption targets, for the needs created by a growing population and its composition and for the desired increase in per capita levels of consumption; Explicit consideration in the formulation of growth policies on the impact of internal and rural-to-urban migration on income levels and distribution, production, consumption and investment; Improvement in the levels of living of the population by ensuring an adequate and equitable supply of commodities and services essential for the well-being of all individuals; Reduction in the disparities in income and living conditions among different socioeconomic groups of the population and different regions

Ensuring the full utilization of the potential for economic growth and social development created by a growing population through natural growth or migration.

Unfortunately, it is not clear if, most of these factors are taken into consideration in the planning process in Nigeria. In some instances, these factors are explicitly documented but there is no evidence that they are often applied.

**Demographic Transition: Nigerian Experience**

The history of most nations that achieved successes in social and economic development indicates that they experienced a transition in both fertility and mortality. The transition usually started initially with high fertility and mortality regimes. It progressed to a high fertility regime with a declining mortality rate and is often completed with the attainment of low fertility and even sometimes below replacement level with a lowered mortality rate. This transition is often referred to as the Demographic Transition. The standard demographic transition scenario indicates that infant mortality declines, and fertility falls with a lag only after the mortality decline has begun. The demographic transition first leads to a demographic “burden” because population growth is faster than the growth of the working-age population. Later, as fertility declines, the demographic transition leads to a demographic “dividend” because the growth of the working-age population is faster than the growth of the total population (Bloom et al. 2003). In addition, as argued by Mason (2005), the working-age population increases also due to lower mortality. However, as shown in Figure 3, once the mortality further declines at higher ages and fertility stays at low levels, the demographic dividend turns into a demographic burden as the retired population increases. The countries of Western Europe and North America experienced this transition towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.



*Figure: Showing Demographic Gap Source: Population Reference Bureau, 2006*

Nigeria had a population of 56 million people in 1963 (Table 2). It grew to almost 89 million in 1991, and almost more than doubled the 1963 figures in just 38 years reaching 119 million in 2001 (FGN, 2004). Within just a span of another five years i.e. in 2006 the country’s population reached 140 million (NPC, 2007) and is currently estimated at over 190 million by both the National Population Commission and National Bureau of Statistics, 2017 ([www.worldometers.info.world-population/nigeria-population](http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/nigeria-population)). It is also

expected to double its size in the next two decades if the prevailing fertility and mortality rates persist.

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Nigeria’s Population between 1911 and 2006

Census Year	Population		
	Northern (Million)	Southern (Million)	Nigeria (Million)
1911	8.12	7.93	16.05
1921	10.56	8.16	18.72
1931	11.44	8.62	20.06
1952/53	16.84	13.58	30.42
1963	29.78	25.88	55.66
1991	47.37	41.62	88.99
2006	75.03	64.98	140.43

*Source: National Population Commission, Abuja, 2017*

Unlike in most Asian and North African countries, the majority of the sub-Saharan African countries show little or no sign of the commencement of the transition. The five successive Demographic and Health Surveys (1990, 1999, 2003, 2008 and 2013) reveal that fertility transition has commenced at the national level in Nigeria (Table 3). However, regional variations in the levels of decline exist. The socio-cultural practices in some parts of the country which favour high fertility are keeping the national average at a high level (Sani-Zakirai, 2014). Infant mortality is very high, contraceptive utilization is low, and significant proportions of women who want to delay pregnancy for some periods are not using any method of modern contraception (NPC & ICF Macro, 2008). In some regions, the average age of marriage for girls is still between 15 and 17 years. Generally, in the country, the boys had more advantages than the girls in school enrolment, thus causing the widening of the socio-economic status disparity between the sexes at adult ages. All these factors exert significant influences on the level of fertility.

Table 3: Fertility Indicators in Nigeria between 1990 and 2013

NDHS YEAR	TOTAL FERTILITY RATE	DESIRED NUMBER OF CHILDREN	AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE	CONTRACEPTIVE UTILIZATION (%)	INFANT MORTALITY RATE
1990	6.0	5.8	16.9	6	84.7
1999	4.7	6.2	17.9	10	75
2003	5.7	6.7	16.9	13	100
2008	5.7	6.1	18.6	15	75
2013	5.5	NA	NA	15	69

*Sources: Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (1990, 1999, 2003, 2008, and 2013), National Population Commission, FOS and Macro, and ICF Macro*

### **IS POPULATION GROWTH DESIRABLE?**

The relationship between population, development and quality of life has been a subject of debate by demographers, economists, and specialists in some other disciplines. Malthus and other population pessimists believe that rapid population growth is

problematic because it tends to overwhelm any induced response by technological progress and capital accumulation (Coale and Hoover, 1958; Olusanya and Ebigbola, 1985). Malthus opined that “Population when unchecked increases in a geometrical ratio”. So, the world’s human population increased five-fold from 1.2 billion to 6.1 billion during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, contrary to this position, the population optimists are of the opinion that rapid population growth promotes technological and institutional innovation and allows economies of scale to be captured (Boserup, 1981; Simon, 1981 and Kuznets, 1967). The third group, usually referred to as population neutralists, contends that population growth in isolation from other factors has neither a significant positive nor a significant negative impact on economic growth (Bloom and Freeman, 1986; Kelley, 1988). Nigeria is a high-fertility country and there is evidence that its large population inhibits efforts to improve the country’s economy and achieve sustainable development. With a population that already exceeds 190 million people and growing at roughly 3 per cent annually (Rosenthal, 2012), a considerable proportion of the country’s resources is consumed instead of being accumulated as capital for development purposes (Onwuka, 2006). Fashola, laying credence to Malthus’ postulation, therefore noted that:  
*there was no way quality of life could be enhanced now or beyond today if there is no conscious effort to stem the increase in the population of the people, arguing that if life is difficult for those already here, there was no guarantee of a better life for those coming in future* (Businessday of September 2014). The call for population management is therefore necessary.

Some researchers, however, criticize Malthus and blame the population pessimists for relying on the theory formulated by Malthus that the population grows geometrically (2, 4, 8, 16...) and food production arithmetically (1, 2, 3, 4...) and that soon the human population will outstrip food production and we will all starve. They claimed that none of his predictions had come true. Many of the optimists disagree with the claim that population growth retards economic growth since that assertion contradicts all known facts and figures. The case of the United States, China, India, Japan and Indonesia, which are forces to reckon with, was cited as an example. According to Ayodele and Sotola (2012), globally, highly populated countries are important to the world economy. They provide the market which drives entrepreneurship and the exchange of goods and services. According to Nwachukwu (2013):

*It is an act of insincerity and cowardice to say that the cause of poverty, unemployment, insecurity, shortage of resources, lack of housing is overpopulation, and the cure is population control.*

However, today’s events have vindicated Malthus and his group. For instance, while it is widely acclaimed that Nigeria is presently experiencing growing economies, yet majority of the citizens are argued to be living in abject poverty. The large-scale poverty that pervades this country subjects its citizens to lack of access to improved health services, suffer from hunger, starvation and experience mental and physical problems that make it difficult to improve their situation. Coale and Hoover, as far back as 1958, noted that: *A higher rate of growth of population implies a higher dependency rate, with a greater need of housing and other demographic capital that is provided at the expense of productive capital.* In the same vein, Kuznets (1966) observed that a high rate of population growth impedes the generation of adequate employment, income and personal freedom. Huge investments are, therefore, required on a sustained basis in health, education and nutrition.



The current rate of population growth (3.2% per annum) suggests that Nigeria would have to double its entire infrastructure for food production, health services, education, water supply, housing, energy, and services in the next 20 years just to maintain today's low standard of living (FGN, 2004). There is no doubt that doubling infrastructure in the next two decades in Nigeria with the current GDP per capita (which is still low) and coupled with wide-scale corruption and other development challenges will be a highly challenging task.

Already the country's educational sector cannot cope with the teeming potential intakes at all levels. Health facilities are overstretched. High fertility has created a huge dependency ratio of 80 dependents per 100 persons in the productive age range of 15 - 64. This is posing a great development challenge for the country's leadership (The World Bank, 2013).

### **REASON FOR PERSISTENT POPULATION GROWTH IN NIGERIA**

According to the 2006 population and housing census, Nigeria's population was 140,431,790 and an estimated national growth rate of 3.2% per annum (NPC and ICF Macro, 2009). Nigeria is reputed to be the most populous country in the black race; seventh most populous country in the world in 2011 with a population of 162 million and with a projected population figure of 433 million in 2050 which places the country at third position (after India and China) in the whole world (PRB 2011, 2012). The two important demographic events responsible for the high rate of population growth are fertility and mortality. Even though both fertility and mortality are coming down, yet the country is still experiencing a high population growth rate. Some of the factors that account for the prevailing high population growth in Nigeria include but are not limited to the following:

#### **The Value Placed on Children**

Nigerians generally desire larger families, in part as a result of the institution of polygyny and in part because children are perceived to enhance the family status and the prestige of their lineage. Even though Nigerian women consider a large family size to be desirable, however, fertility rates in Nigeria are high not because of a deep-rooted desire to continue childbearing among these women but because of a preference for large family size by men. The perception of many Nigerians (especially men) as regards family size has not changed. The large family is still seen as a sign of prosperity. However, the shifting economics and lifestyles of the middle class may help turn the tide.

*As Nigeria urbanizes, children's help is no longer needed in fields and the extended families have broken down. In the past, children were seen as a kind of insurance for the future but now they are a liability for life* (Rosenthal, New York Times, April 14, 2012).

In many parts of Nigeria, the presence of at least a male child is regarded as necessary, since to have a son is a sign of social completeness and economic investment. It is not that daughters are not important. Sons are traditionally expected to maintain the family "tree" and make financial contributions towards the support of their parents. Male children are regarded as the pillar of the family and the object of perpetuation of family lineage. Modernization and globalization have not yet weakened this deeply rooted traditional trait in Nigeria.

### **Age At Marriage**

Nigeria is still faced with an increasing rate of child and early marriage in spite of the law banning the practice. As reported in the Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (2013), among Nigerian women between the ages 20 and 24, forty-three per cent are reported to have been married before the age of 18 and almost 20 per cent are reported to have been married before the age of 15 (NPC & ICF Macro, 2013).

### **Reduction In Mortality Rate**

Another factor responsible for the kind of population growth being experienced in Nigeria is the reduction in mortality rate most especially in infants whose contribution to mortality is enormous. The country in recent decades witnessed improvement in public health services as a result of the importation of modern orthodox medicine and health intervention programmes, better hygiene, improved nutrition and knowledge of the causes of diseases. This development led to a reduction in mortality rates and an increase in the expectation of life at birth.

Attitude towards modern contraceptive

Despite a high knowledge of contraception, Nigerian Demographic and Health Surveys (NDHS) have consistently shown that millions of people who do not want more children (or want to delay the next birth) are not using modern contraceptives. Despite the concerted efforts to promote contraceptives and make family planning more accessible and affordable, patronage is still low and fertility levels remain high. For instance, the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS, 2008) showed that 68.4% of women (all or those who desire to stop/delay birth?) had knowledge of modern contraceptive methods but the prevalence of modern methods was only 14.6%.

### **Gender Power Dynamic**

In many parts of Nigeria, women's fertility preferences and behaviour are strongly influenced by their husband's reproductive motivation. This influence is a function of both men's dominance and women's financial dependency on their husbands, most especially in rural areas. Being a patriarchal society, many Nigerian traditions often invest power and authority in males to make decisions and control valued resources. A personal opinion of males within their familial context becomes the overriding factor in decisions pertaining to reproductive health.

### **What Does This High Population Growth Portend for The Country?**

High population growth is characterized by many adverse effects that slow down the development of the country. The consequences of high fertility and its attendant rapid population growth to national development are enormous. The Rapid population growth creates economic and social problems that threaten to make many Nigerian towns and cities unmanageable. The high rate of population growth that eats into surpluses available for economic and social development also hinders improvements in social amenities. This is one of the reasons why the country is faced with the grim situation of increased unemployment rate and poverty level, reduced living standards, escalating migration levels, pressure on available resources, urban drift, insurgency and inter-tribal wars, recurrent bloody communal and religious clashes and poor health seeking behaviour with increased mortality arising from preventable diseases. With rapid population growth, health, housing conditions, and the quality of education and public services all deteriorate. Excessive population growth is also responsible for the problems the country is having with over-cultivation and overgrazing which often cause environmental degradation. Although Nigeria is claimed to be one of the countries dominating the top

list of the world's fastest-growing economies, yet majority of the citizens are living in abject poverty. The large-scale poverty that pervades these countries subject their citizens to a lack of access to improved health services, suffer from hunger, and starvation and experience mental and physical problems that make it difficult to improve their situation. Many child deaths that motivate parents to bear more offspring are due to poverty-related causes. Poverty increases the risks of homelessness, ignorance, diseases and drug abuse. The negative effects of these factors have the capacity to undermine human capital formation which will combine with financial capital formation to stimulate economic growth.

The lean and thin capital is widened instead of being deepened as the little resources are being thinly distributed over the huge growing population. Public policy designs are always grappling with the conflicting interests between the provision of social services, human capital formation and productive investments. Much of the depleted resources are committed to the social overheads in a bid to maintain the poor, deplorable and overstretched infrastructure at the expense of making investments into the real productive sectors that will stimulate economic growth.

Unfortunately, the Nigerian economy is at the moment unable to cope with the social, infrastructural and environmental demands of the ever-growing population. There is evidence of decay in the critical areas such as education, healthcare services, employment, transportation, energy and power, information and communication technology etc that are required for the attainment of accelerated economic growth.

### **Prospects Of Demographic Dividend**

Demographic dividend refers to the economic growth resulting from a change in the age structure of a country's population. A demographic dividend arises when a falling birth rate changes the age distribution of a population. This indicates that demographic change will bring about a demographic dividend. The changes marked the outset of a period in which the proportion of the population in potentially productive ages grows steadily relative to the number of people in potentially unproductive ages. The reduction in birth and death rates results in the changing of the age structure in a population, which invariably affects the proportion of the working population (Table 4). This appears to position the country to increase productive potential by raising the economic support ratio (defined as the ratio of the share of the working-age population to the overall population) following Wang and Mason (2007) and Prskawetz and Sambt (2014), and human capital accumulation (defined as the skills and knowledge intensity of the labour force in any economy, which are essentially acquired through schooling and training).

Age	1963		1991		2006	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
15-19	5,251,184	9.4	9,335,788	10.5	14,899,419	10.6
20-24	6,923,188	12.4	7,671,570	8.6	13,435,079	9.6
25-29	5,570,585	10.0	7,311,671	8.2	12,211,426	8.7
30-34	4,325,578	7.8	5,913,927	6.6	9,467,538	6.7
35-39	2,478,446	4.8	4,214,933	4.7	7,331,755	5.2
40-44	2,410,144	4.3	3,845,918	4.3	6,456,470	4.6
45-49	1,168,048	2.1	2,416,703	2.7	4,591,293	3.3
50-54	1,216,899	2.2	2,570,799	2.9	4,249,219	3.0
55-59	463,476	0.8	1,119,769	1.3	2,066,247	1.5
60-64	785,792	1.4	1,690,374	1.9	2,450,286	1.7
65+	1,151,109	2.0	2,907,407	3.3	4,536,761	3.2

Table 4: Proportional Increase in Persons in the Productive Years 1963, 1991, 2006

*Source: Federal Office of Statistics (1989), Digest of Statistics, Lagos, Federal Office of Statistics; National Population Commission (1998), 1991 Population Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: Analytical Report at the National Level, Abuja, National Population Commission; National Population Commission, Abuja, 2006.*

The Acting President at the launch of the Nigeria roadmap on harnessing demographic dividend noted that:

*“With the current total fertility rate of 5.5 children per woman and a youthful age structure of about half of the population under the age of 35 years, the implication of this kind of demographic realities for our country’s development may have consequences too grave to be ignored”* (Vanguard Newspaper July 6, 2017).

The demographic change, as shown in Figure 4 below, has implications for resource allocation and utilization at both the family and national levels. The fewer the population becomes the less is the resources required to provide for social services such as health and education. This means that fewer investments are needed to meet the needs of the youngest age groups, facilitate their skill development and that there are relatively more adults in the population of the productive labour force. This creates an opportunity for more rapid economic growth and human development for a country as more resources are available for investment in economic development and family welfare. This opens a window of opportunity for a nation to invest the resources in other areas that will generate economic growth. The opportunity avails itself more prominently if the appropriate social and economic policies are put in place.

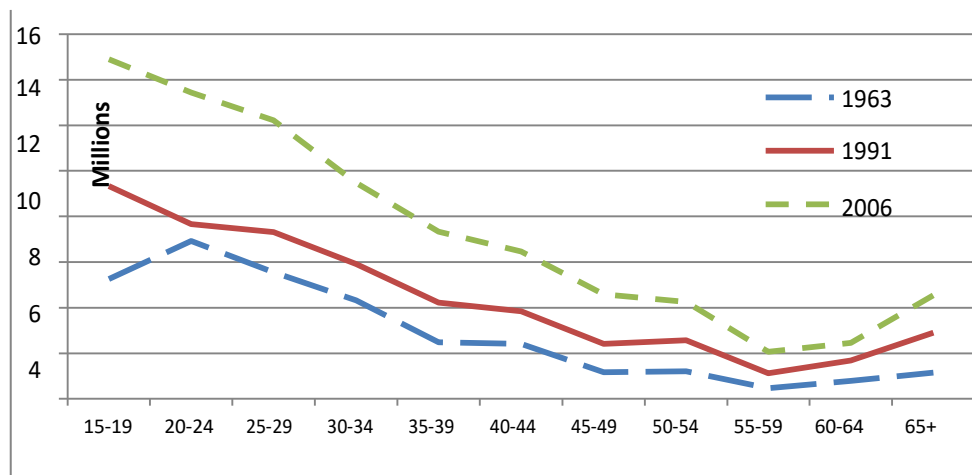


Figure 4: Proportional Increase in Persons in the Productive Years 1963, 1991, 2006

Consequent upon the demographic transition, the age structure of Nigeria's population has been undergoing remarkable changes in a relative number of children, the elderly and working age population. It is important to emphasize that for the country to achieve a demographic dividend, there must be a reduction in fertility, and this must be in conjunction with sound social and economic policies such as expansion of family planning programmes and services, improvement in child health outcomes, promotion of girl-child education, creation of labour-intensive industries and promotion of technical and vocational education. Enhance the potential of young people by promoting education, including for the girl child, creating conditions for them to complete school and acquire skills that will help them to adapt to the changing labour market. As indicated in the recently launched Nigeria's roadmap in harnessing demographics presented by Director General, National Population Commission, Dr Ghaji Bello, much emphasis must be placed on economic development and fostering job growth, expansion of infrastructure, high standards of economic productivity and creating job opportunities that can absorb large numbers of the youth (National Population Commission, 2017).

If Nigeria can follow the example of the Asian Tigers (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore), the country will reap a window of opportunity that will propel its economic growth if fertility and mortality rates are maintained at low levels coupled with appropriate investments in education, health and job creation. The reduction of fertility and mortality rates will ensure an increase in the working-age population due to a resultant decline in the dependency ratio. As aptly demonstrated with the experience of the Asian Tigers by the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, the reduction will lead to an increase in output per head and generate savings that will in turn create investment opportunities (Galor, 2005). It is opined that with an increase in the share of the working-age population, there will be an increase in labour supply and growth potential, thereby contributing to a demographic dividend.

The cases of these Asian Tigers can be a good lesson for Nigeria. For instance, as indicated in his presentation, Sani Zakirai (2014) noted that with the adoption of a demographic dividend, the agrarian South Korean economy was transformed into an industrialized economy, making it the 9th largest exporting country in the world. The

country achieved this feat by making massive investments in educating the general population and the establishment of an effective family planning policy, which included the dissemination of contraceptives and the improvement of maternal and child health (Sam-Silk, 2009). Consequent upon this, the high birth rates drastically fell. The average TFR of the early 1960s declined to about 2 children per woman two and a half decades later. This resulted in the doubling of the working-age population (15-64) between 1970 to date. The resultant decline in fertility caused a decrease in the total population of the young.

South Korea grasped this opportunity by using the demographic bonus by starting to make heavy investments in the education of the population, including that of women. The great leap in education coincided with the successful integration of the graduates into the labour market. Thereafter, South Korea's economy began to grow astronomically with the declining birth rates and improvement in education. Having realized these gains, the state increased investments in human capital formation and health care as well as in infrastructure and rural development. With its increasingly qualitative population, western capitalists began to show interest in the South Korea economy, a result of which significant capital flight from the West was witnessed (peripheral investments). Since then, the South Korean economy continued to grow at an average of 6.3 per cent despite the 1997/98 Asian crisis and the 2008 global financial crisis (World Bank, 2011).

### **Why is it difficult to achieve demographic dividend in Nigeria?**

The 2006 Census indicated that over 60% of the population is made up of persons younger than age 25. The preponderance of youths in the population and the strong population momentum that has been built into Nigeria's population suggest that the population will continue to grow in the next 40 – 50 years even if fertility is drastically reduced to replacement level. It is even striking to observe that the current desired fertility is still higher than the TFR (5.5), which means Nigerians have a desire for more children (NPC & ICF Macro, 2013). High fertility kindles a youth explosion that challenges governments to satisfy the ever-increasing demand for food, housing, education, health services and employment. Under this situation, the country can reap either a demographic dividend with productive young workers or a catastrophe of massive joblessness, overcrowded schools and hospitals, high crime rate and civil strife.

Given a continuation of high birth rates, Nigeria would have a population of almost 195 million by the end of year 2017 (United Nations Statistics Division, 2017). This kind of population growth, if left unchecked, can squeeze precious resources and lead to all sorts of problems. Even though Mason (2007) postulated that the demographic window in sub-Saharan Africa which opened around the year 2000 will remain open until 2050, but available indicators have not shown that Nigeria is prepared to take advantage of this demographic window in the next couple of decades and garner its benefits. The Nigerian economy is at the moment unable to cope with the social, infrastructural and environmental demands of the ever-growing population.

As noted above, there is evidence of decay in critical areas such as education, healthcare services, employment, transportation, energy and power, and information and communication technology that are required for the attainment of accelerated economic growth. The majority of the population is living below the poverty line currently put at 72 per cent. The large-scale poverty that pervades the country also subjects the citizens to a lack of access to improved health services, exposing them to hunger, starvation, and mental and physical problems that make it difficult to escape from the vicious cycle of poverty. The situation inhibits the ability of the individual family

to achieve the economic growth that is needed to transform the social fortunes that should have accrued from fertility reduction.

Even though some scholars have argued that population growth helps the economy by stimulating innovation and providing bigger markets (Bloom *et al.*, 2003; Rosenthal, 2012 and Akinnaso, 2012), however, some of these studies have equally pointed out that high fertility tends to slow economic growth and keep poor families poor. Therefore, to realize a demographic dividend, Nigeria needs to make strategic investments in some key areas. Such include those highlighted in the Nigeria Roadmap on harnessing the demographic (NPopC, 2017) which have been succinctly summarised to include (i) initiating demographic change by investing in family planning, child survival and education of girls (ii) improving people's health by addressing youth and adult health needs and (iii) implementing economic and governance policies that will foster job creation, support the expansion of infrastructure, and create a secure environment and incentives for foreign direct investment.

Corruption, bad governance, insurgencies and ethnic conflicts are some of the non-demographic factors that combine with high fertility and rapid population growth to militate against economic growth in Nigeria. As pointed out by Allison in the July 2012 edition of the Journal of Good Governance Africa, "*No matter how much bigger Nigeria's economy is on paper, corruption and lack of infrastructure still plague its development*" Majority of the citizens are living in abject poverty. The vicious cycle of poverty might be difficult to surmount if corruption is not arrested, thereby derailing the benefits of the demographic dividend even if fertility is reduced.

The spate of urban growth in Nigeria is typical of a developing nation. The proportion of the population living in urban areas rose from 39 per cent in 2003 to about 50 per cent in 2012 (PRB, 2013). The increasing proportion of the population living in urban areas may have a conflicting effect on fertility. Shortages of housing, cost of child education, urban unemployment, high crime rate and other challenges may make the realization of demographic dividend a mirage.

Unemployment which is regarded as the bane of poverty is widespread. The official unemployment rate has reached 24 per cent in the year 2012 (The World Bank, 2013), of which 38 per cent represents the rate for the youth. The situation is precarious and if left unchecked is considered as the time bomb for social, economic and political explosions. Evidence abounds indicating that the youth unemployment rate in Nigeria is very high. For example, each year, more than 100,000 university graduates enter the labour market alone, competing for very few available jobs. The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2013) in a recent report says the global youth unemployment rate in most countries, especially developing ones, is close to its crisis peak. It argued that the unemployment rate has reached 12 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa in 2013 and that 60 per cent of the unemployed are the youth (age 15-24). It is ironic to note that even many of those employed are underemployed or are engaged in irregular employment.

## **CONCLUSION**

One thing that is evident from all efforts to have sustainable development is that the Nigerian economy is at the moment unable to cope with the social, infrastructural and environmental demands of the ever-growing population. There is evidence of decay in the critical areas such as education, healthcare services, employment, transportation, energy and power, information and communication technology etc. that are required for the attainment of accelerated economic growth.

Again, Nigeria, like most of the developing countries is overburdened with the problem of overpopulation; the population is rising fast, far more than the wishes of couples, their resources, the local environment's capacity and the public services that are available. Even though slow, but steady changes are being observed among factors that affect fertility such as infant mortality rate, age at first marriage and stalled contraceptive utilization rate. The effects of these factors could be attributed to other extraneous factors rather than those articulated in the two population policies adopted by the country in 1988 and 2004 (FGN, 1988; 2004). For instance, the rise in age at first marriage may not have been caused by the law that prohibits marriage before age 18 but may probably be a function of the demand for education by women in their quest to improve their living conditions. The demand for women's education which is on the increase will consequently exert a strong influence on the number of children they will bear in the future. Also, the more educated a woman is, the higher the chances of the survival of her child, which is a critical factor in inducing couples to reduce their fertility.

Demographic dividends can only be achieved by a reduction in fertility in conjunction with sound social and economic policies. Therefore, as highlighted in the Nigerian RoadMap (Ghaji Bello, 2017), appropriate measures should be adopted to facilitate the achievement of demographic dividends in Nigeria. Among these measures are the:

### **Expansion in Family Planning Programme and Services**

The widespread shift in the developing world from large families to smaller families is arguably one of the most important social transformations of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Singh and Darroch, 2012). However, while many factors have had a role in this transformation in childbearing, one of the main mechanisms through which smaller family size has been achieved is the increased use of contraception. Recent economic indicators are suggesting that Nigeria is experiencing rapid national economic growth which many of its citizens assumed would end poverty. However, the unrelenting rapid population growth of more than 3 per cent per annum is jeopardizing the prospects for increasing the standard of living of the citizens. It is therefore imperative to accelerate the contraceptive uptake by Nigerian women in order to curtail the excessive population growth. The cultural barriers militating against the use of modern contraceptives should be addressed squarely.

In Nigerian societies, where the average family size is traditionally large and where the male input is very significant in determining family size, the change towards the small family norm depends on the adequacy of family planning education programmes targeted not only at the females but also at the males. Though the burden of childbearing falls on the females who consequently constitute the main targets of family planning practice, the males as breadwinners are also important targets that should be sufficiently recognized in family planning education.

### **Improvement in Child Health Programmes**

The high child and infant mortality rates that are found in Nigeria that were identified to be a factor inducing parents to opt for more children can be reduced by improving children's health. This can be achieved through effective maternal and child health programmes that include immunizations against child-killer diseases. The programmes shall include advocacy on child spacing, an increase in duration of breastfeeding and avoidance of teenage pregnancy. Investment in child health increases the chances of survival which will stimulate parents to prefer smaller family sizes.



### **Promotion Of Girl-Child Education**

The school enrolment ratio especially at the secondary and higher levels of education in most parts of the country favours the male child. The cultural, social and economic barriers that account for the disparity in school enrolment between boys and girls should be addressed. Education tends to delay the age at first marriage for both male and female. The longer a girl stays at school the less will be the number of children she will invariably bear in her lifetime. Educated women can be gainfully employed outside the homes thereby accelerating economic growth and improving their statuses and welfare which will have a bearing on the health of their children. By respecting, educating and empowering women in their reproductive rights and choices, population growth can be brought to the levels that are required to live in an ecologically and economically sustainable way.

### **Creating Labour Intensive Industries**

The primary sector activities dominated the economies of the country. To this end, productivity and employment can be increased by creating more labour-intensive industries in the midst of the many small and medium enterprises in the informal and rural economy. The youth restiveness, and ethnic and sectarian violence that pervade most of the regions are believed to have been caused by unemployment. Governments at all levels should promote strong industrial policies that will make manufacturing a key engine of growth that will generate mass employment for the teeming young population. They should initiate a range of measures that will revive the desolate labour-intensive industries like textiles, food and beverages, construction, iron and steel sectors.

### **Promotion Of Technical and Vocational Education**

There is a need to re-orient the educational curriculum towards technical and vocational education that will provide the highly technical enterprises with the appropriate labour force or that will make the youth engage in self-employed jobs. The traditional education systems which were tailored towards the needs of the civil service should be overhauled such that universities can equip graduates with skills in technical fields and agriculture.

Attempts have been made in this paper to show the linkages between demographic dividend, economy, and sustainable development. It is evident from available statistics that demographic transition is opening up a unique window of opportunity in Nigeria. The country is now experiencing declining infant and child mortality which often leads to a reduction in fertility. This however resorted to what is called a baby boom in the interim. But as this cohort moves into working ages, Nigeria finds itself with a potentially higher share of workers as compared with dependents which positions the country for increased productive potential by raising the economic support ratio. This development may be beneficial from the demographic dividends point of view. However, it must be noted that this process is not automatic. Thus, as Nigeria aspires to be among the 20 leading economies in the world by the year 2020, policy choices in the areas of good governance, macroeconomic management, trade, and investment in human capital formation can have significant effects on the realization of demographic dividend. Central to capturing the dividend is providing an economic environment in which the working-age population are productively engaged.

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# CHAPTER EIGHT

Governance. People. Rights. Opportunities.

APLS 2018  
(SIXTH EDITION)

By

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## OUTLINE

- WHAT IS GOVERNANCE?
- THE PEOPLE'S REPORT CARD
- INTERSECTIONS OF GOVERNANCE AND THE PEOPLE'S REPORTCARD
- RIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES: PROSPECTING HOPE FOR THE PEOPLE
- "MUST-DO" THAT THE PEOPLE'S LIVES MAY BE BETTER
- CONCLUDING REMARKS

## WHAT IS GOVERNANCE?



THE EXERCISE OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AUTHORITY TO MANAGE A COUNTRY'S AFFAIRS AT ALL LEVELS.

UNDP, 1997



THE MANNER IN WHICH A COUNTRY'S PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS ARE ADMINISTERED.



THE PROPER USE OF LEGITIMATE POWER AND AUTHORITY IN THE AFFAIRS OF A NATION

**METHOD THROUGH WHICH POWER IS EXERCISED IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A COUNTRY'S POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT.**

**COMPRISES THE MECHANISMS, PROCESSES AND INSTITUTIONS THROUGH WHICH CITIZENS AND GROUPS ARTICULATE THEIR INTERESTS, EXERCISE THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS, MEET THEIR OBLIGATIONS AND MEDIATE THEIR DIFFERENCES.**

**POWER+MECHANISMS/INSTITUTIONS+PROCESS**



### PILLARS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

**TRANSPARENCY**

- ACTIVITIES OF GOVERNMENT MUST BE TRANSPARENT

**PARTICIPATION**

- PEOPLE MUST BE CARRIED ALONG IN THE VARIOUS STAGES OF POLICY PLANNING, DECISION-MAKING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES.
- REASON WHY DEMOCRACY IS REGARDED AS *a sine qua non* FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

- ELECTED AND APPOINTED LEADERS ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE CITIZENRY.

*... from governance to good governance*

GOVERNANCE ≠ GOOD GOVERNANCE

GOOD GOVERNANCE IS PEOPLE -CENTRED

Desirable not as an end in itself but because it fosters social and economic development.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE ... a public good

- Defined as the exercise of authority through political and institutional processes that are transparent and accountable and encourage public participation.
- Entails sound public sector management (efficiency, effectiveness and economy), accountability, exchange and free flow of information (transparency), and a legal framework for development (justice, respect for human rights and liberties).
- People's participation in governance is fostered by democratic processes but must go beyond participation in elections. Effective participation rests on access to information, meaningful consultation and opportunities to take an active part in policymaking.

- Lack of information about government's activities leads to suspicions and distrust among the people. Public access to information raises awareness on human rights and social issues, sparks debates and enables informed social dialogue.
- Good governance encompasses full respect of human rights and the rule of law, effective participation, transparent and accountable processes and institutions, an efficient and effective public sector, access to knowledge, information and education, political empowerment of people.
- Requires that governments invest adequate time and resources in building robust legal, policy and institutional frameworks that provide mechanisms, processes and safeguards for citizen's participation.

## NIGERIA'S GOVERNANCE RANKING

### Good or poor standing?

In 2018, Nigeria was recently ranked 33 out of 54 countries in Africa in terms of governance with poor scorecard on 4 indicators:

- Safety and Rule of Law (46.4/100)
- Participation and Human Rights (53.2/100)
- Sustainable Economic Opportunity (43.5/100)
- Human Development ((48.7/100)

OVERALL SCORE: 47.9/100

• 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) ranking

## 2. THE PEOPLE'S REPORT CARD



Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and seventh globally.



Annual growth rate estimated at 3.75% resulting in a doubling of the population every 22 years.

## Population in history, trends and projections

- 1960: 45,140,000
- 1985: 91,178,000
- 2018: 198 million,
- 2070: 550 million

Growth rate is put at 2.61





## Factors implicated in Nigeria's population size

### RELIGION/CULTURAL BELIEFS AND VALUES

Practice of polygamy  
 Early and forced marriage  
 Hostility towards family planning as contracultural and/or ungodly  
 Traditional beliefs about children as sources of wealth  
 High infant and child mortality rates results in view of multiple births as safety net against childlessness

### NON-RECOGNITION OF REPRODUCTIVE SEXUAL RIGHTS

Limited legal recognition of reproductive and sexual health rights under the domestic legal framework  
 Non-protection of legally recognised rights  
 Gender inequality  
 Poor access to reproductive health services including family planning

### EDUCATION

Low level formal education  
 Low level of reproductive and sexual health education

## Population trend: a time bomb or an asset?



- Density of population creating challenges of access to land, driving high rates of rural-urban migration, compounded by environmental challenges and violent conflicts
- High cost of providing social infrastructure and services has resulted in slow progress in areas of:
  - Health
  - Housing
  - Education
  - Employment
  - Transportation
  - Public safety and security, etc.
- All of these have resulted severe poverty.

### • Poverty

World Poverty Clock data released in June 2018 shows that Nigeria now has more people living in extreme poverty than anywhere else in the world.

Forecast is that if current economic trends persist, between 2018 and 2030, real GDP Growth (2.15% per annum), will be unable to keep up with population growth, resulting in an average annual growth of GDP per capita less than zero.

### • Environmental degradation

Rise in population applies more pressure to the environment. The atmosphere gets more saturated with greenhouse gasses, forests and rivers shrink, water levels fall, fisheries collapse, and forests vanish.

NOTE: *The Global Footprint Network estimates that by 2030, the world will need two Earths to meet our demand for renewable resources.*

- **Inadequate social amenities**

High and rapid population growth without corresponding social and economic growth will lead to inadequate social services and pressure on social infrastructure such as housing, educational facilities, roads, health facilities, water supply, etc due to overuse. This is because use of these amenities will exceed their capacities and efforts at expansion and maintenance will strain unbuffered government budget.

- **Increase in cost of living**

Increase in demand without corresponding increase in production will bring about high cost of living. More people will demand the few goods available and this will lead to upward movement of prices of commodities and services.

## The People's Report Card

Comparison of Life Expectancy by age in selected countries (M/F)

Age	Nigeria	Ghana	Canada	Norway
• At birth	54.7/55.7	62.4/64.4	80.9/84.7	80.9/84.3
• 5 years	61.2/61.85	67.0/68.6	81.3/85.1	80.8/84.5
• 10 years	61.9/62.8	67.0/68.6	81.3/85.1	81.0/84.6
• 20 years	62.9/64.1	67.8/69.5	81.5/85.2	81.0/84.6
• 30 years	65.0/66.5	69.0/70.8	81.9/85.4	81.3/84.7
• 40 years	67.6/69.1	70.4/72.4	82.3/85.6	81.7/84.9
• 50 years	70.5/71.6	72.5/74.2	83.0/88.1	82.2/85.3
• 60 years	73.7/74.2	75.2/76.2	84.2/87.0	83.2/86.1
• 70 years	78.0/76.0	79.0/79.6	86.3/88.5	85.1/87.5
• 80 years	84.1/84.2	84.8/85.1	89.7/91.5	80.6/84.3

## - Major causes of death (ranked)

- Influenza & Pneumonia: 15.03%
- Diarrhoeal disease 9.16%
- Tuberculosis 8.62%
- HIV 8.31%
- Malaria 5.53%
- Low birth weight 4.30%
- Stroke 4.10%
- Birth trauma 4.01%
- Coronary heart disease 3.76%
- Maternal conditions 3.14%
- Malnutrition 2.0%
- Road Traffic 1.85%

NOTE: Striking fact is that most of the top ranked causes of death are communicable diseases that sound and well-implemented public health policies and programming would drastically reduce. Inversely, it would be correct to surmise that Nigerians die from these diseases only because of poor governance.

## INTERSECTIONS WITH GOVERNANCE

- Statistics presented are traceable to long-term poor governance
  - Absence of legal rights and context of constitutional bifurcation of human rights
  - Ill-conceptualized and ill-informed policies and programmes
  - Top-down, non-inclusive governance
  - Corruption
  - Weak institutions
  - Poor access to justice for promoting accountability

## Gender inequality plays out

- High Maternal Mortality and Morbidity rates
- High Child Mortality rates
- High Infant mortality rates
- HIV Prevalence and risk of infection
- High incidence levels of gender-based violence
- High incidence level of gender-based sexual violence

## OPPORTUNITIES & RIGHTS:

*Prospecting hope for the people*

- Long way from the time when public discussion of right to health was struck down as having no content; with little or no jurisprudence to support enforcement through the courts.
- Improved availability of data helps to demonstrate size and dimensions of problem which in turn helps to drive evidence-based advocacy.
- Increasing citizen demand for participation in governance and improving capacity to hold governments to accountability
- Improved collaboration between stakeholders

### More favourable policy and legal landscape

- International legal frameworks: ICESCR, CEDAW, ACHPR Protocol on Women's Rights in Africa, Convention on Rights of the Child, ACRWC
- Expanding national legal frameworks - CRA & CRLs, Domestic Violence Laws of various states, Criminal Laws of Lagos, Delta, Cross-River, Enugu States, etc. criminalise HTPs such as FGM and other forms of sexual violence, VAPP Act and VAPP Laws of states
- ICPD, Beijing PFA
- SDGs

- Growing judicial inclination towards liberal interpretation of constitutional and legal frameworks - positive for expanding scope of reproductive and sexual rights as legal rights

- ECOWAS CCJ decisions
  - ordering Nigerian government to pay N50M in case filed by Ms. Sunday for domestic violence.
  - ordering Nigerian government to pay N6m to 3 of the 4 plaintiffs in case of Dorothy Njemanze & 3 Ors v FRN
- Supreme Court of Nigeria decisions in *Ukeje v Ukeje*; *Anekwe v Nweke*

- Court of Appeal decisions (albeit ruled as obiter and so not constituting precedent) in *Muojekwu v Ejikeme*, *Mojekwu v Mojekwu*
- Osun State High Court decision in *AGF vs Ayan Olubumi* - shows improving judiciary's readiness to protect women against online GBV

- *Institutional and Programmatic Interventions*

- Rape Trauma Centres
- DSVRT in Lagos State - models government-civil society initiative to address the problem of domestic and sexual violence
  - Gender equality dictates providing services to male victims
- Establishment of Domestic and Sexual Offences Courts in Lagos State aimed at delivering access to justice in a more victim-responsive and sensitive manner.

- ... clarifying the human rights perspective

- By Article 2(1) of the ICESCR, *“Each State Party to the Covenant undertakes to take steps ... to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realisation of the rights recognized in the ... Covenant ...”*

- NOTE: Allowing for progressive implementation of economic and social rights because of the constraint of resources has been generally interpreted as excusing governments from immediate action to fulfill obligations to the fullest.

- Article 12 of ICESCR states that steps for the realization of the right to health include those that:

- reduce infant mortality and ensure the healthy development of the child;
- improve environmental and industrial hygiene;
- prevent, treat and control epidemic, endemic, occupational and other diseases; and
- create conditions to ensure access to health care for all.

- The UN CESCR, which monitors compliance with the ICESCR, adopted a General Comment on the Right to Health in 2000 sets out that the right to health extends not only to timely and appropriate health care but also to the underlying determinants of health, such as:
  - access to safe and potable water and adequate sanitation,
  - an adequate supply of safe food, nutrition and housing,
  - healthy occupational and environmental conditions, and
  - access to health-related education and information, including on sexual and reproductive health.

- The right to health means that governments must generate conditions in which everyone can be as healthy as possible.
- Such conditions range from ensuring availability of health services, healthy and safe working conditions, adequate housing and nutritious food.
- **Right to health may not mean the right to be healthy but respect of the right will foster being healthy.**

- According to the General Comment, the right to health contains four elements:
  - **Availability.** Functioning public health and health care facilities, goods and services, as well as programmes in sufficient quantity.
  - **Accessibility.** Health facilities, goods and services accessible to everyone, within the jurisdiction of the State party. Accessibility has four overlapping dimensions:
    - non-discrimination
    - physical accessibility
    - economical accessibility (affordability)
    - information accessibility

- **Acceptability.** All health facilities, goods and services must be respectful of medical ethics and culturally appropriate as well as sensitive to gender and life-cycle requirements.
- **Quality.** Health facilities, goods and services must be scientifically and medically appropriate and of good quality.

- The right to health, like all human rights, imposes on States Parties three types of obligations:
  - **Respect:** This means simply not to interfere with the enjoyment of the right to health.
  - **Protect:** This means ensuring that third parties (non-state actors) do not infringe upon the enjoyment of the right to health.
  - **Fulfil:** This means taking positive steps to realize the right to health.
- According to the General Comment, the right to health also has a "core content" referring to the minimum essential level of the right. Although this level cannot be determined in the abstract as it is a national task, key elements are set out to guide the priority setting process. Essential primary health care; minimum essential and nutritious food; sanitation; safe and potable water; and essential drugs are included in the core content

- Another core obligation is the **adoption and implementation of a national public health strategy and plan of action.** This must address the health concerns of the whole population; be devised, and periodically reviewed, on the basis of a participatory and transparent process; contain indicators and benchmarks by which progress can be closely monitored; and give particular attention to all vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- States Parties must take steps forward in conformity with the principle of progressive realization. This imposes **an obligation to move forward as expeditiously and effectively as possible, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, to the maximum of available resources.** In this context, it is important to distinguish the inability from the unwillingness of a State Party to comply with its right to health obligations.

- In many jurisdictions, the way out of the constitutional logjam has been found by the courts in treating civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights as one indivisible whole.
- In the Columbian case of *Diego Serna Gomez*, the applicant, an HIV/AIDS patient was refused medical treatment by both private and government hospitals alike on the ground of his indigence. He brought an application for the enforcement of his rights to health, and equality, among others. The Constitutional Court of Columbia invoked the *ordre public* to hold the state liable to provide medical care for persons suffering from HIV/AIDS.

- According to the Court: *The notion of ordre public includes health; accordingly, state authorities must take the measures necessary and sufficient for its preservation. (Const. art. 1). Since the AIDS epidemic has the potential to gravely affect ordre public, the State must react to the threat with effectiveness. The failure to adopt necessary and opportune measures could generate a public catastrophe, with responsibility imputable to the State by omission. Thus, the allocation of State resources to the health sector, and to the fight against AIDS in particular, must be given priority.*

- There is indication that Nigerian courts are prepared to entertain suits pertaining to ESC rights in the African Charter as can be inferred from the case of *Odafe & Ors v. A.G. Fed & Ors* where the Federal High Court in Port Harcourt expressly referred to article 16 of the African Charter (on right to health) in vindication of the applicant's rights to medical treatment.
  - Applicant was an HIV-positive awaiting trial prisoner. He was isolated by the prison authorities from the rest of the prisoners and was not being given any medical attention. He sued the federal government alleging a violation of his rights to dignity and freedom from discrimination, among others.



## Must-dos

- Increased priority on adolescents, especially very young adolescent girls, in national development policies and programmes, particularly increased availability of comprehensive sexuality education and sexual and reproductive health.
- Advancing gender equality, women's and girls' empowerment, and reproductive rights, including for the most vulnerable and marginalized women, adolescents and youth.
  - Needed to change discriminatory and perceptions that foster DSV

- Better implementation of the National Health Insurance Scheme:
  - Accessible and affordable health care is at the heart of any effort to secure rights, improve opportunities and check population growth.
  - NHIS is aimed at providing easy access to health care services for all Nigerians at an affordable cost. It is recommended that implementation of the scheme be more vigorously pursued across all sectors to achieve its aim.

## SPECIFIC LEGAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Constitutional entrenchment of the right to health is needed to facilitate a rights-based approach to health care delivery.
  - Clarifying the law - additional legislation AFFIRM RIGHTS OF YOUTHS TO HEALTH CARE
    - Need to elaborate CRA rights e.g. aged-appropriate sexuality education
    - Need to elaborate disability rights
- Strengthening judicial capacity for using the constitution and other legal instruments to strengthen the "right to health" using jurisprudence from the international law and other national jurisdictions. Funding should be provided for
  - Test cases
  - Declaratory actions

- Academic curriculum development that fosters interdisciplinary approaches to studies on health e.g. developing health law and policy within law degree programmes; opening more public health degree programmes to non-health or medical disciplines

- National Health Policy needs to be updated and a Strategic Framework for wholistic implementation should be developed.
- Governmental planning and programming to provide basic social amenities and infrastructure that are identified as critical determinants of health.
- Massive investment in youth development
  - Education, skills acquisition, job creation

- Government must rise up to the challenge of matching legal rights with rights in reality - take effective steps to ensure that constitutional rights are not trumped by custom and customary law
  - Develop modalities for translating legal rights into dominant rights regime at the local level -
- Disseminate information about what the law is and remain at the vanguard of protecting legal rights
- Scale up provision of services to facilitate improved access to reproductive health services especially for youths as of right

## 'Must-do's

- Criminalise, where absent, and enforce existing laws criminalizing early and forced marriage
- Increase provision and use of integrated sexual and reproductive health services (including family planning, maternal health and HIV) that are gender-responsive and meet human rights standards for quality of care and equity in access.
- Scale up federal and state interventions and programmes aimed at preventing domestic and sexual violence
- Address the problem of conflict-related forced and unwanted pregnancies
  - Addressing the situation of violent conflicts
  - Provide adequate reproductive and sexual health and rights education
  - Review restrictive legal policy on abortion to address problem of unsafe abortion

- Model of USAID PROGRAMME OF TRAINING OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS WITH GOVERNANCE MONITORING AND PARTICIPATION

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOSTERING GOOD GOVERNANCE



PUBLIC DISCUSSIONS



PUBLIC DEBATES



TOWN HALL MEETINGS



TAKING POLLS OF THE POPULATION

*TO ENGAGE PEOPLE EFFECTIVELY IN POLICY-MAKING, GOVERNMENTS MUST INVEST ADEQUATE TIME AND RESOURCES IN BUILDING ROBUST LEGAL, POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS.*

### Any opportunities in population growth?

- Yes but such potential opportunity can only be realized as educational and employment opportunities as well as other development indicators match the teeming population can be employed, and the population is well educated and healthy. If the Nigerian current rates of unemployment, illiteracy and lack of adequate healthcare facilities continue unchecked, the opportunity that could have been realized from its population growth would become another source of woes.

## CONCLUDING STATEMENT

Truly, we have the knowledge and technology to make life better. We only need the political will to translate our ability into action across all sectors.

## **Governance. People. Rights. Opportunities.**

Some of the major highlights from this presentation are as follows:

- Nigeria's population needs good governance and family planning.
- Family planning and population management generally are not just about life-saving interventions, but actually critical tools for economic and social development.
- Nigeria at this time is really in need of good governance which embraces Transparency, Participation and Accountability to achieve meaningful social and economic development.
- Government is not doing anybody a favour; government is a service to the people.
- While certain Religious, Cultural Beliefs and Values of the land impede on Nigeria's population service especially on access to modern family planning methods, the non-existence of any protective Law for reproductive and sexual rights of all is a minus to good governance.
- "For instance, nobody actually knows what the law is on abortion in Nigeria. We know what the law is on paper but we almost have no legal interpretation and we have not allowed the jurisprudence to unfold and so we do not know how far we can go"?
- Rights are contested issues and only good governance can be used to contest these rights. "For instance, we have the Child's Right Act which criminalizes early marriages, sex with a child under the age of 18 with no defense and there are so many other provisions that are supposed to safeguard this. "But it is one thing to have law and another to enforce law, The Law cannot be effective except we engage with it".
- "There is right to life, and I want the Nigerian Court to interpret that and extend it to protection of women, pregnant women and that women who died from maternity related complications, the state should answer for their deaths. "I want to make that argument, but I cannot make the argument except there is a case before the court".
- She therefore recommended a radical rights approach which enables citizens to engage in negotiation and demand for what is accruable to them under the law not as obligation by state. "So, we we[a]nt to hinge the demand for family planning services on the right to health and on the right to life of the people. "We want to hinge the right for education on the right to education and to be able to make informed decision. I cannot make decision unless I'm informed, and I cannot be informed unless I have information".

*[Culled from:2023 HealthStylePlus. ColorMag: [Https://healthstyle.plus](https://healthstyle.plus)> our-population-needs- good governance- family-planning]*

# CHAPTER NINE

## Nigeria's Population Issues: Harnessing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Innovations to Achieve Demographic Dividends

APLS 2019  
(SEVENTH EDITION)

By

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### **INTRODUCTION**

I thank the organizers for inviting me today to share my thoughts on the issue of population and development and what it holds for our great country, Nigeria. I am most grateful for this opportunity. Interestingly, this lecture is coming up at a time when we are celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Of course, the 1994 Cairo Conference was a watershed event and a great success. It changed the perspective of stakeholders on the way we look at population issues and how they relate to development. Since then, population issues have been brought to the front burner of development practice in the drive towards eliminating poverty and deprivation as well as enhancing the power and prosperity of nations. The agreement at the conference was that population trends and dynamics must be fully integrated into development planning and policymaking. Available evidence indicates that for African countries to become developed, their economies must experience structural transformation, and a key factor to this is population transformation.

Any discourse on population and development is usually very sentimental and controversial. Rev. Thomas Malthus, an influential English economist and demographer, predicted that if we allow the population to grow uncontrollably, it will eventually lead to disaster. He and his followers believe that rapid population growth when unchecked will lead to pestilence, war and famine and prevent countries from achieving economic development. However, there are at least two other strands of researchers who do not agree with this pessimistic view of population. The first of the strands are those who believe that population has a positive impact on development (Bloom and Finlay, 2009). The other strand comprises those who believe that there is no significant relationship between population and development. The implication is that population growth can

have different sources and that different sources can have different effects on economic growth (Canning, Raja, and Yazbeck, 2015).

Two global agendas and one national plan drive the country's present resolve towards prosperity. These are the African Union Agenda 2063 and the global agenda 2030, popularly known as the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable development strategies of developing countries will continue to give priority to human development, with the eradication of poverty as its central goal. Human development requires more attention to be directed towards quality issues as well as coherence at the national level. During the next 30 years, the first ten years will see progress towards achieving the SDGs. In fact, the SDGs emphasize that people are at the centre of sustainable development, echoing the ideals set forth in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development adopted in Cairo in 1994. The objective of this presentation is to discuss the issues and options surrounding population dynamics in Nigeria and on the basis of the discussion, explore important 21st century innovations that can be used to harness demographic dividends in the country. This lecture uses the concept of unholy trinity to discuss the issue of population dynamics in the country. The dictionary meaning of unholy trinity is a set of three antagonistic and closely associated people or things. In this context, Fertility, mortality and migration constitute an unholy trinity as the process of achieving the three simultaneously becomes an issue not just for the country but also for the whole world. This raises some specific issues which are described in the next section.

### **POPULATION ISSUES IN NIGERIA: An Interplay of Unholy Trinities**

Nigeria is a major contributor to the increase in population numbers in the world. With 201 million people in 2020, it is the most populated country in Africa and accounts for 2.6 per cent and 15 per cent of the world and African populations respectively. It has been estimated that between 2019 and 2050, the only country that will add more people to the world population than Nigeria is India. India is expected to add nearly 273 million people, while Nigeria will add 200 million people during the same period. Together, these two countries could account for 23 per cent of the global population increase in 2050 (UNFPA population prospects, 2019). In fact, the 2019 Population Prospects by the United Nations submits that more than half of the projected increase in global population towards 2050 will be concentrated in just nine countries and more than half of those countries are located in Africa. Ordered by an absolute increase in population, they are India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Indonesia, Egypt, and the United States of America. A rapidly increasing number of births will have tremendous implications for the ability of the country to achieve the SDGs. The population of Nigeria is projected to surpass that of the United States shortly before 2050, at which point it will become the third-largest country in the world.

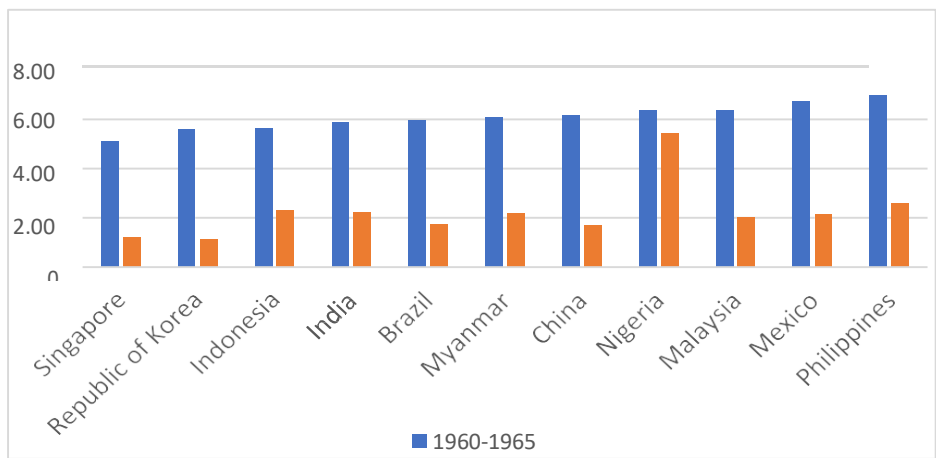
### **THE UNHOLY TRINITY OF POPULATION CHANGE: Fertility, Mortality and Migration**

This interaction between fertility, mortality and migration is the trinity of population change. These three variables can be referred to as the three musketeers of population dynamics. I will however refer to them as the unholy trinity driving population changes. Nigeria is currently experiencing some demographic changes. These changes occur as a result of the interaction between these three variables of population change – fertility, mortality and migration. The ensuing demographic transition must witness a decline in both fertility and mortality rates for it to significantly positively affect economic

development. With little levels of migration, and mortality beginning to fall, the main driver of population growth in Nigeria is the fertility rate. The growth of Nigeria will be unprecedented in the next 30 years during which an additional 200 million children will be born and the country will be the third most populated country in the world.

### Fertility

The fertility rate in Nigeria is one of the highest in the world and is not comparable to those of other developing countries or the developed world. Nigeria is one of the countries of the world that is yet to experience a broad-based fertility decline despite the fact that fertility has declined in most of the low- and middle-income countries, with total fertility rates (TFRs) converging toward replacement levels. Figure 1 shows that fertility declined in many countries which were at the same level as Nigeria in 1960. While many of the countries now referred to as the Asian Tigers have had substantial fertility decline, evidence suggests that fertility decline in Nigeria has stalled as TFR in Nigeria was still 5.3 in 2018 (National Population Commission, NPC, 2019). This is way above those of countries that were at the same level of development as well as the same level of TFR as Nigeria in 1960. By 2019, many of these countries had fertility rates of between 2 and 3. This is a clear departure from the trajectories followed by the other countries (Figures 1 and 2).



**Figure 1: Total Fertility Rates in Selected Countries**

Source: United Nations (2019)



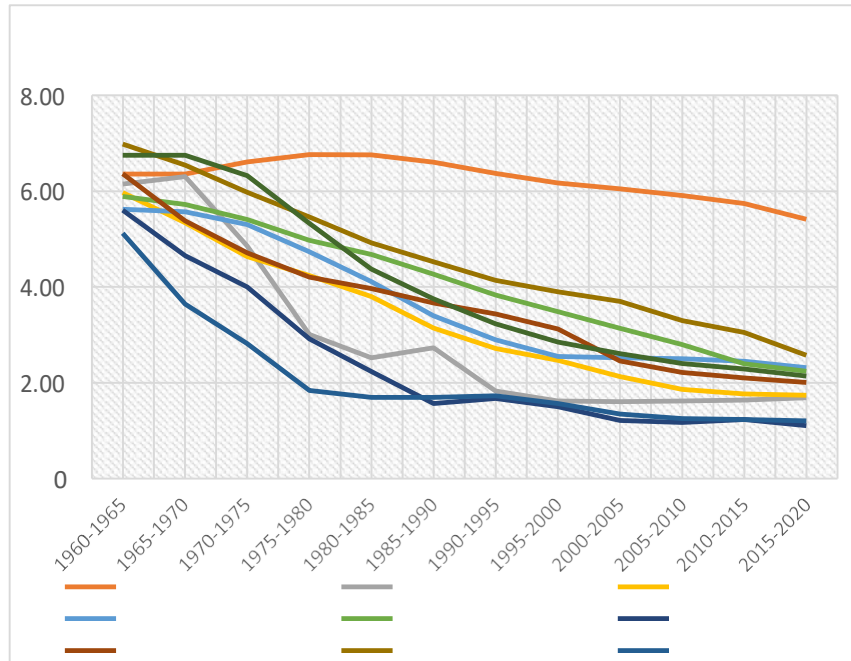
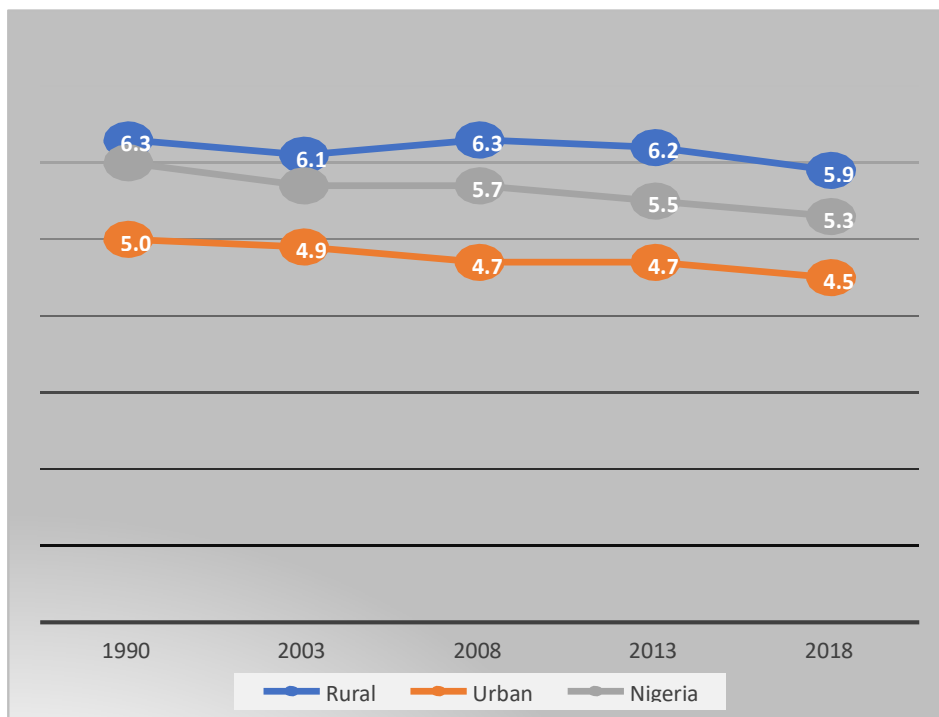


Figure 2: Total Fertility (live births per woman), Selected Countries, 1960 - 2020

Nigeria	China	Brazil
Indonesia	India	Republic of
Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore

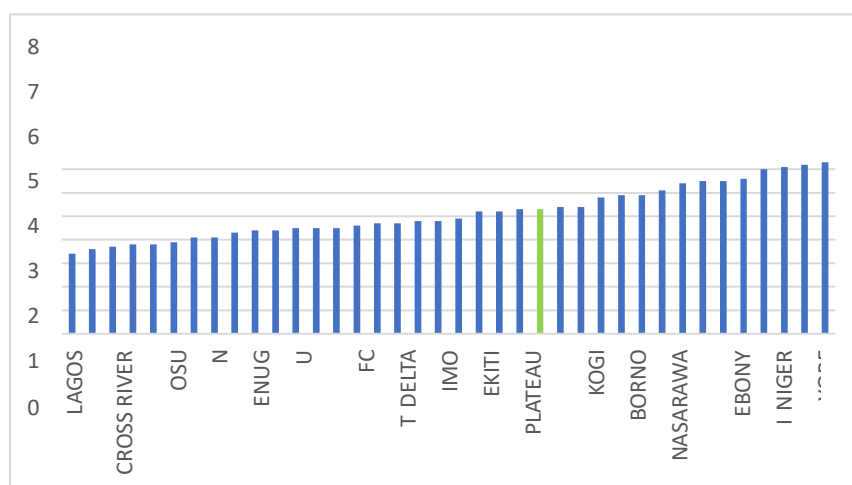
Source: United Nations (2019)

The fertility transition has stalled in Nigeria over the years. Evidence from various DHS data reveals that TFR only declined marginally from 6.0 in 1990 to 5.3 in 2018. Rural women consistently have higher TFR than their urban counterparts (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Fertility Rate in Nigeria**

Source: National Population Commission, NPC. (2004, 2009, 2019)



Source: National Population Commission, NPC. (2019)

**Figure 4: Total Fertility Rate in Nigeria by States, 2018**

Nigeria is not a homogenous country in terms of the nature, magnitude and trends of population. Fertility rates in Nigeria indicate wide disparities among the states of the federation. While some states have fertility rates around 3.5 children per woman others have rates above 6 children per woman (Figure 4). Fertility is driven by multiple factors of human development, including a reduction in child mortality; increased level of education, in particular for women and girls; increased urbanization; expanded access to reproductive health-care services including family planning; and women's empowerment and growing labour force participation. In addition, child marriage is highly prevalent in the country, with an estimated 6 million girls married by age 15 and 36 million girls

married by age 18. These figures however differ according to location. For example, while the median age of marriage is 15.2 in the Northwest, it is 22.8 in the Southeast. The implication is that more than half of the girls in the Northwest were married by age 15; 2015 estimates show that 78 per cent of girls in the Northeast and Northwest were married by age 18. This is not unconnected with the practice of polygyny in the country. The estimates also revealed that 27 per cent of the married girls were in polygamous marriages. Child marriage and adolescent fertility are some of the main drivers of high fertility in Nigeria. Levels of adolescent childbearing, which can have adverse health and social consequences both for the young mothers and for the children they bear, have fallen in most countries. According to the 2018 DHS (NPC, 2019), 19% of women aged 15-19 have begun childbearing. The proportion of teenagers who have begun childbearing rises rapidly with age, from 2% at age 15 to 37% at age 19. Also, rural teenagers tend to start childbearing earlier than urban teenagers (27% versus 8%).

The issue of birth control has always been fraught with problems. Experience has shown that [lack of?] birth control always has undesired consequences. Fertility is about responsibility; it is about mothers and fathers being responsible for the children they have. Parents should take responsibility for their children’s welfare, at least until they get to a productive age.

### Mortality

The story of population dynamics in Nigeria cannot be complete without the mortality profile in the country. Nigeria is far from making the projected progress towards the achievement of the SDGs, given the high mortality rates in the country. Infant and under-5 mortality have not declined substantially in Nigeria and the country still has one of the highest mortality rates in the world. Under-5 mortality in Nigeria is higher than 78 for the SSA average and 40 for the world average. The 2018 NDHS documents that childhood mortality rates have stagnated in the last 5 years (Figure 3). After declining from 201 deaths per 1,000 live births as recorded in the 2003 NDHS to 128 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2013, the overall under-5 mortality rate increased slightly to 132 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018. Going by current trends, mortality reduction is likely to still be a basic issue in Nigeria in the next 30 years.

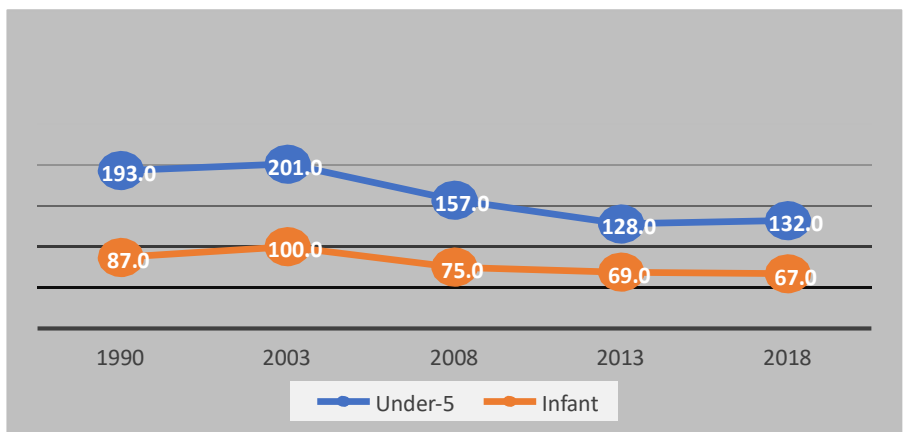


Figure 5: Childhood Mortality in Nigeria, 1990 - 2018

Source: National Population Commission, NPC. (2004, 2019)

Over the years, improvements in education and health have led to increased survival rates in many countries as well as improvements in life expectancy at birth (LE). However, Nigeria is one of just five countries in the world that still have a life expectancy at birth that was 55 or below as of 2020. Although many developing countries were at about the same level of life expectancy as Nigeria in 1960, many have made substantial improvements in their survival rates and made appreciable progress in their life expectancy. For example, India with an LE of 36 in 1950 had risen to 70 in 2020, while Nigeria still had an LE of 55, up from 33 in 1950. A person born in Nigeria will live 9 years less than someone born in South Africa, and 15 and 22 years less than someone born in India and China respectively (Figure 6).

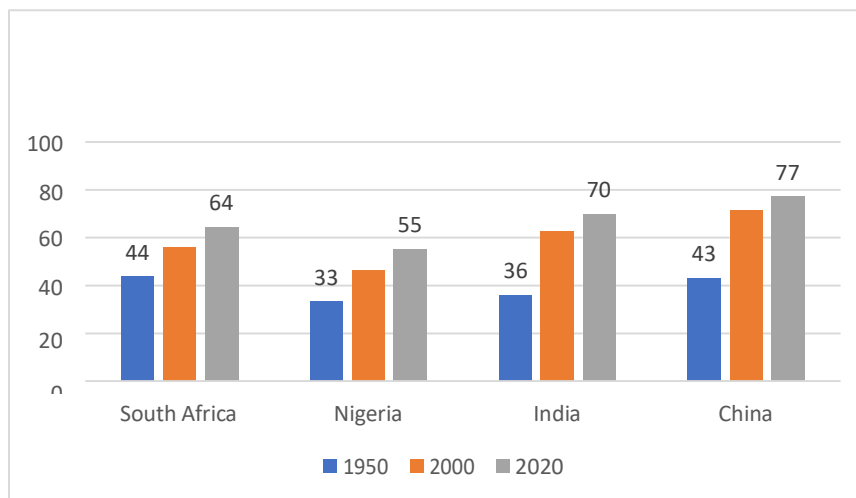


Figure 6: Life Expectancy at Birth (years), 1950 -2020

Source: United Nations (2019)

### Migration and Urbanization

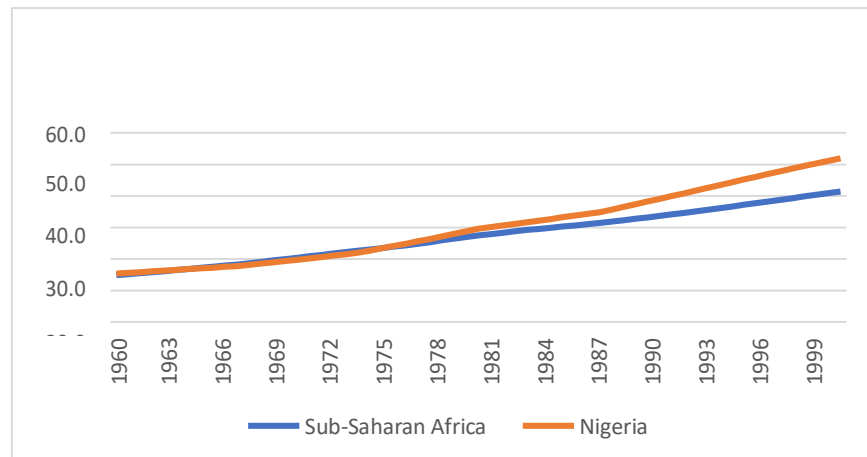
Given the structure of fertility and mortality in Nigeria, the country has one of the highest population growth rates in the world. This contributes to an increase in the population density of the world. As a result, there are incentives for migration. The basic question is whether Nigeria can gain from migration dividends. If this will happen, the net benefits of migrating must outweigh the costs of not migrating. Since the advent of oil in the 1970s, the country has experienced massive rural-urban migration. This has positive and negative effects on the population dynamics of the country.

International migration can be a transformative force, lifting millions of people out of poverty and contributing to sustainable development in both countries of origin and countries of destination. There are possibilities of reaping migration dividends. Facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration while reducing incentives for irregular migration is the best possible way to harness the full development potential of migration (SDGs 8, 10 and 16). (UN Prospect, 2019). Conversely, inappropriate international migration can lead to poverty, insecurity, and lack of decent work. This means that Nigeria could smartly position itself to send quality graduates to ageing countries, most of which are in Europe, America, and other developed countries so that she can adequately benefit from the remittances that can come from there. Unfortunately, many Nigerians are running away to these countries without assurance of decent work.

Net migration involves the movement of international migrants, including refugees. It reflects the number of immigrants less the number of emigrants over a period and thus

does not capture the total volume of migration flows (UN Population Prospects, 2019). Nigeria was a net sender of international migrants during 2010-2020. The estimated number of emigrants exceeded the number of immigrants by an annual average of 60,000 between 2010 and 2019. (UN Population Prospects, 2019). Nigeria can benefit from the migration dividend by assisting its youth to focus on countries with negative natural increases and assist these countries to maintain positive population growth as they struggle with decreasing population. Nigeria should not be apologetic about this but must hold its head high as being in a position to assist countries that are experiencing declines in their working-age population.

Nigeria's population dynamics has led to the structure of settlements in the country over the years. Nigeria has always been dominated by rural settlements, but over the years, the proportion of Nigerians living in urban settlements has increased rapidly. In 1950, only 9% of the population were in urban areas but this has increased over the years and, by 2018, half of the country's population were residing in urban areas. In fact, by the middle of 2020, more than 107 million Nigerians (or 52% of the population) were residing in urban settlements (see Figure 7). The urbanization rate in Nigeria is increasing. By 2020, more than half (52%) of Nigerians are now living in cities.



**Figure 7: Proportion of Nigerians living in Urban Settlements, 1950 - 2020**

As of 2019, 7 cities in Nigeria had populations above one million people. They are Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, Kaduna, Port Harcourt, Benin City and Maiduguri. The seven cities alone contribute about 13% of Nigeria's population. There are also 79 cities with a minimum population of 100,000. Urbanization has played a major role in the development of many developed countries. Urbanization has advantages and disadvantages for the development of countries. It contributes to market consumption and production. The structural transformation that comes with demographic transformation is still fuzzy. It is not clear whether rural-urban migration favours the development of a country. It has been suggested that if Africans stay within the context of the original role of agriculture, which is to feed the population, our context will be known; it is only after we have fed ourselves that we can deploy agriculture for export. This might not be mutually exclusive, but it is a received knowledge. Urbanization provides new jobs and new opportunities for millions of people in the world and has contributed to poverty eradication efforts worldwide as

it can also induce big markets that can drive economic growth. It also assists in improving utilities and services. But this can also have a downside in urban poverty and slums.

Urbanization can actually lead to inequality and different urban areas have reflected a classification of two economies within the cities. This is because when a large number of poor people move to urban areas, they create large urban slums. This therefore leads to cities that can become centres of extreme poverty in a context of profound cultural transition, combining traditions and modernity in a highly precarious situation. Urban slums and urban poor are defining the context of the country. The implication is that there is a new profile of Africans, the “urban poor”, who will need to be taken into account in order to model sustainable development, with populations who lack access to education, employment and basic services in slums and peri-urban areas.

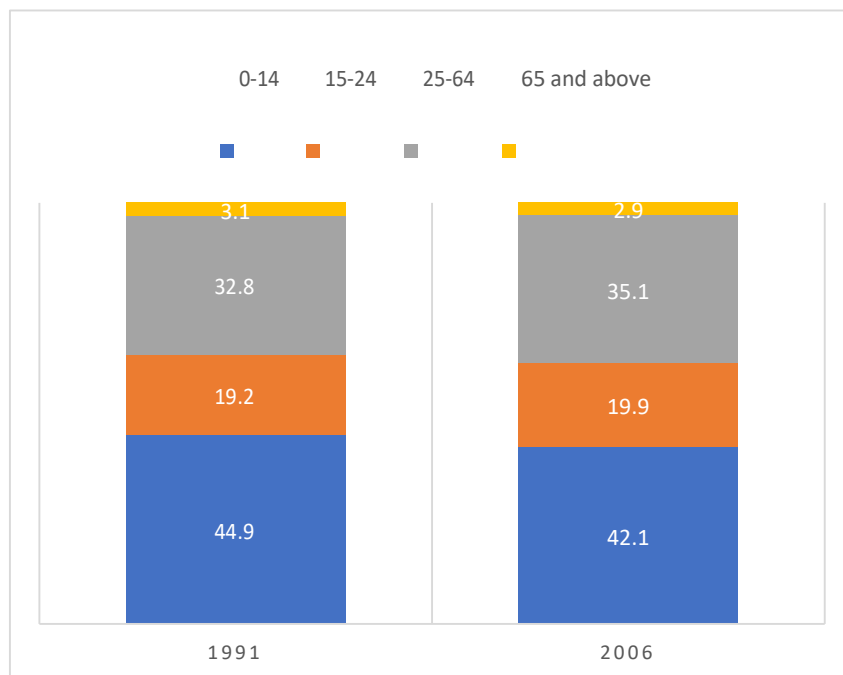
Interestingly, much of this urbanization is unplanned and chaotic. Rapid urbanization adds pressure to the resource base, and increases demand for energy, water, and sanitation, as well as for public services, education, and health care. Given the rate of depletion of the rural sector in the country, there are possibilities that the number of people living in slums might triple by 2050 if no policy framework is established to address this issue. Currently, in many cities including Abuja, Lagos, Kano, Ibadan, etc., access to public services (e.g., water, sanitation, electricity and health care) remains inadequate. Challenges to the institutional capacities for improving access to sound infrastructure, decent employment, and reducing vulnerability to pollution, natural disasters and other risks, loom large.

Migration and urbanization exert a lot of influence on the sustainability of our environment, and these explain the insecurity issues that the country is presently facing. When there is enough space for all, interaction is reduced, and security challenges become less. This is the root of the challenge of clashes between herders and farmers. The country is facing the challenge of the growth of population coupled with environmental degradation, which means that insecurity and insurgencies might be with us for some time.

## **The Unholy Trinity of Population Structure: Dependency Rates, Support Ratios And Demographic Dividends**

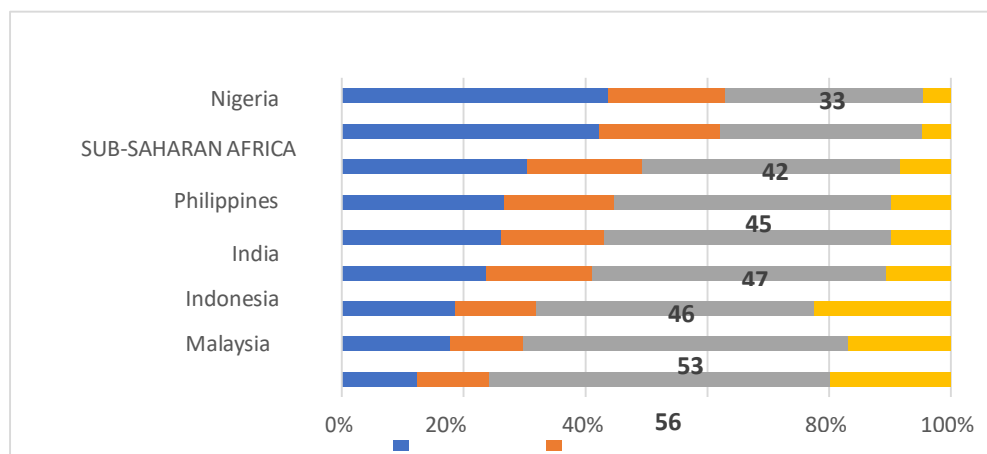
### **Dependency Rates**

The growth of Nigeria will be unprecedented in the next 30 years, by which time the country would be the third most populated country in the world. The size and growth of the country’s population will dictate its population dynamics. Population size is not as important as population age structure. While Nigeria’s population had increased rapidly, the real benefit of population on sustainable development of countries does not reside in the numbers but in the structure and quality of the human resources that form the population. This is determined by the human life cycle. The human life cycle is divided into three stages, viz. children, the working-age population, and the elderly. Both children and the elderly are dependants, and the large proportion increases the dependency rate of the country. The higher the working age of the country, the higher the support ratio in the country. Nigeria has one of the highest child dependency rates in the world (See Figure 9). The young nature of the population is a demographic challenge as the median age of the population is still around 18, which is lower than that of the ten most populous countries of the world. The transition from a high dependency rate to a low dependency rate must include a reduction in the fertility rate.



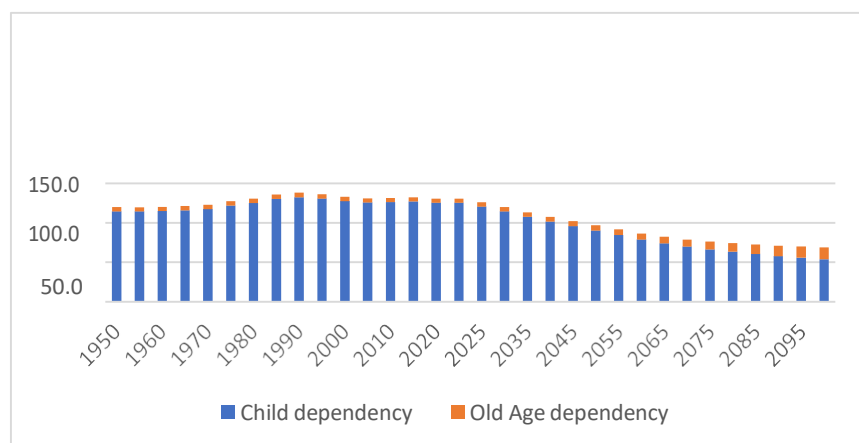
**FIGURE 9: Population Structure in Nigeria According to Last Two Censuses**

Figure 10 shows that only one-third of Nigerians are within the working age population in Nigeria compared to China and Singapore where the working age is more than 50%. The low proportion of the working age means a high dependency rate as well as a low support ratio in the country. The implication is that the low proportion employed can only generate a limited surplus to finance the consumption of everyone within the country.



**Figure 10: Age Structure of the Population of Nigeria and Some Selected Countries, 2019**

Source: United Nations (2019)



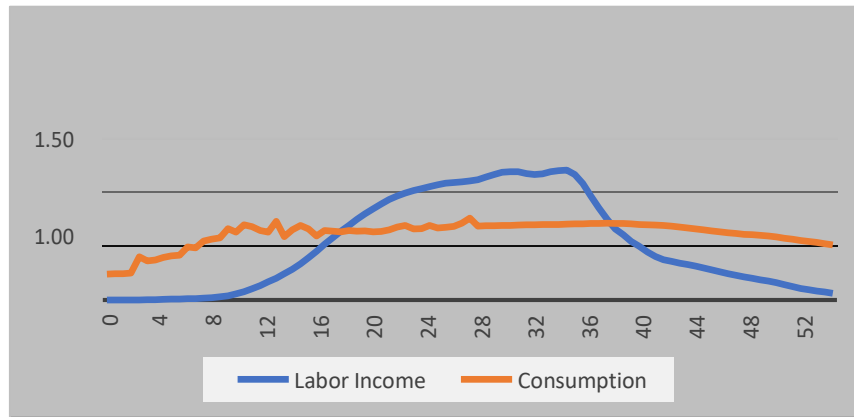
**Figure 11: Total Dependency Ratio (ratio of population of Children and Old Age per 100 working population) in Nigeria, 1950 - 2100**

*Source: United Nations (2019)*

Some studies have argued that demographic dividend occurs when the total dependency ratio is not higher than 67 dependants per 100 population of the working age, in which case, there are at least 3 people of working age for every 2 dependants. Figure 11 presents the dependency rates for Nigeria. When the population of the working age increases faster than the population of the dependants, a window of opportunity is opened as more people can work to support those who are dependent. This leads to a bulge in the working age group.

Many studies have argued about the relevance of using the dependency rate to demonstrate a window of opportunity. This is because of those who are out of the labour force as well as the unemployed. This reduces substantially the surplus available to support those who are not working. It is in this wise that this paper characterizes the life-cycle deficit in the country. An average person's life cycle goes through three stages. The first stage is the stage of childhood when the child is dependent. As the child grows, he enters the productive age where he can work and given his productivity, he earns some labour income. He eventually grows old and ceases to work, in which case the labour income declines substantially. Despite this, the person consumes throughout his life course. During the period when he does not work but consumes, he runs a deficit which turns positive as his labour income exceeds his consumption later in life. This scenario is presented in Figure 12.



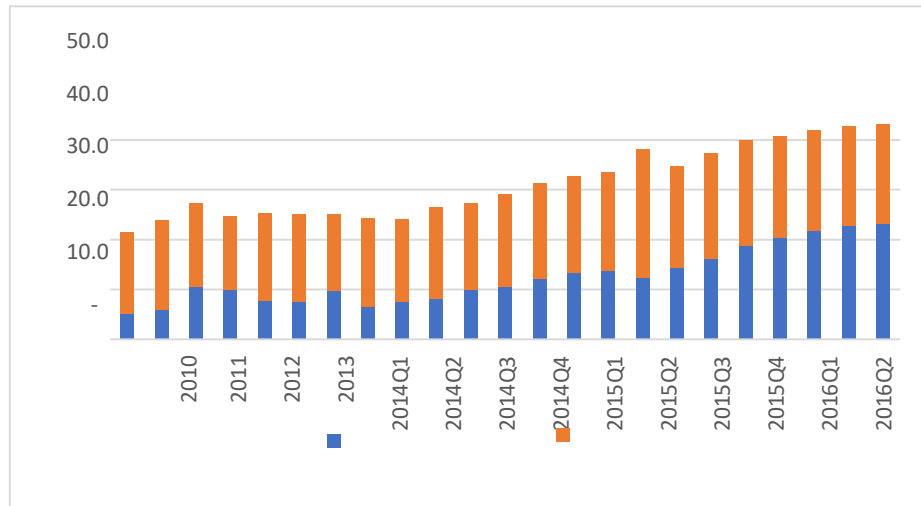


**Figure 12: Age Profile of Per capita Labour Income and Consumption in 2016 for ages 0 - 90 years old**

Source: Olaniyan et al. (2018)

The average years of surplus for Nigerians are between ages 28 and 62. This is revealed in the life-cycle deficit profile of the country. The surplus will only accrue to those with considerable human capital and who are able to get jobs and employment during their productive years. They can accrue the first demographic dividend where their labour income covers their consumption expenditure. However, the question with a poor-quality population within the working age is whether they will grow rich before they grow old. At old age and when people retire, they must have been able to invest wisely in their life-cycle surplus. This will lead to a transition from surplus arising from labour income into those from asset income. Countries that are aging must therefore grow rich before they grow old. If they grow rich during the productive years, when they grow old they can enjoy asset income sustainably. This is the second demographic dividend. In order to grow rich, the quality of children must improve, in terms of education, health and migration. Even when they have considerable human capital, they must be put in a productive position. If the working-age population is productive, the people must have the ability to invest their surplus through better macroeconomic management and policies. Investment returns must be guaranteed. To be better most of the investment must be in Africa so that it creates a multiplier effect of the jobs that we need and require. It is only then that a pension scheme will benefit everyone. Incidentally, the ability to generate the dividend rests on the productivity and employment status of the people. A high unemployment rate limits the ability of people to be productive and eventually grow rich before they grow old. Figure 13 presents the unemployment rates in Nigeria between 2012 and 2018

The population trend will continue to shape the structure of unemployment especially, youth unemployment. Every child who has acquired an education must have the opportunity to exhibit knowledge and contribute to the development of the country. Decent jobs must be a priority. Nigeria has a largely agrarian population. Unfortunately, the agriculture sector where most of Nigeria's labour force is employed is also the sector where most of the indecent jobs are found. The country will not generate the required life-cycle surplus that improves the quality of the economic support ratio in the country if decent jobs are still absent in the agriculture sector.



**Figure 13: Unemployment in Nigeria, 2010 – 2018**

Source: NBS, (2019)

The issue of youth bulge and the demographic dividend will be with Nigeria for some time. Every country that has developed has benefitted from the demographic dividend. When mortality declines and development increases, fertility drops and there is the possibility of a youth bulge. This brings a high proportion of the population within the working age. Every developed country has leveraged on this. No developed country has had a different situation. The window of opportunity leads to development. Demographic dividend occurs when fertility and mortality decline substantially. The experience of rapidly developing countries is that they were able to have the decline of both variables. However, when fertility stalls while mortality declines, it leads to rapid population growth with high dependency rates, and this can further stall the economic development of a country. The starting point for the window of opportunity is a reduction in fertility. There is no country in the world that has experienced broad-based development without a broad-based demographic transition led by fertility reduction.

### **Support Ratios**

The take-off of the support ratio in Nigeria has been slow and it came decades later than the growth of the support ratios of other countries. Figure 14 indicates that Nigeria’s rise in support ratio did not begin until the late 1990s, a period when many other countries had reached the peak of their support ratios. The demographic dividend (DD) indicates that this will only translate to development if investment in human capital is increased. But there will be a limit to the investment if fertility remains the same and every year, the population of primary school-age children continues to increase by millions. It remains an uphill task, especially when reality has begun to show that Nigeria is not as rich as many thoughts. There is no “*One cap fits all*” approach: Demographic dividend will be exploited but the nature and magnitude will be different depending on the zone.

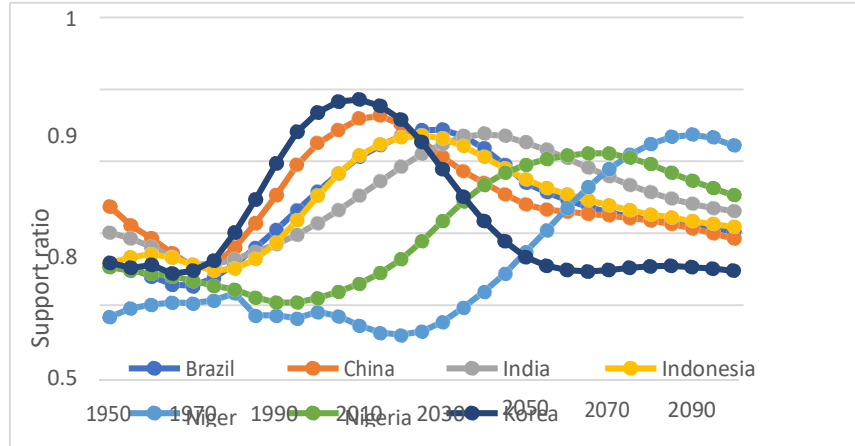


Figure 14: Support Ratio for Selected Countries, 1950 - 2100 Source: Lee and Mason (2013)

**Demographic Dividend**

The term demographic dividend was first used to describe the process that was followed by the Asian Tigers to achieve their present development (Bloom and Williamson, 1998; Bloom and Finlay, 2009). Of course, there was structural transformation of the countries, but we know that structural transformation is a combination of two transformations — Economic and demographic. There can be no development if one of the two is absent. At least, this has been the experience of all the countries that are currently developed. The process of generating the demographic dividend starts with a decline in fertility that reduces age dependency. This frees some resources to the household and the freed resources can be used to improve prosperity through an increase in savings and investment. This eventually leads to economic growth (Figure 15).

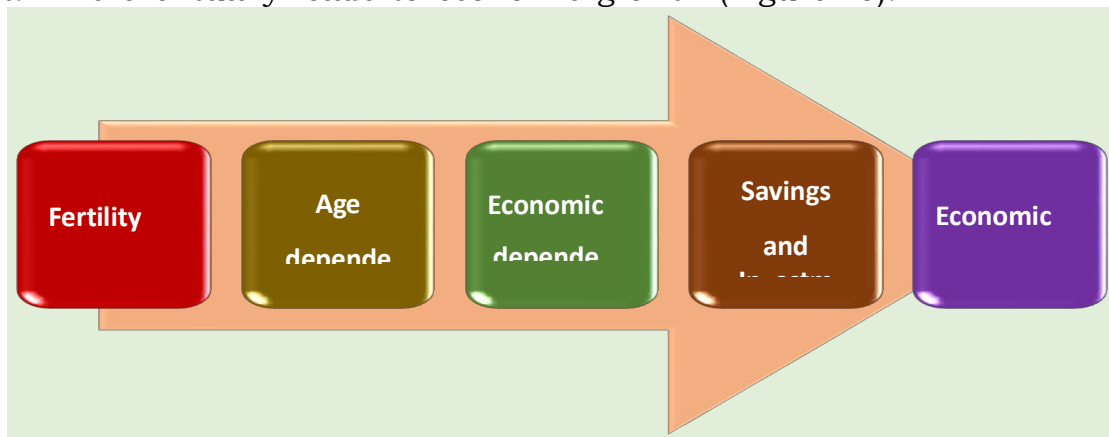


Figure 15: Process of generating the Demographic Dividend

Source: Olaniyan et al. (2018).

For countries to harness the demographic dividend, some very important decisions have to be made. If Nigeria makes these investments, the demographic dividend could generate exceptional economic growth (Olaniyan et al., 2017). The dividend is not automatic as investments are required to support the change in the structure of the population, help women’s empowerment, improve health – including sexual and reproductive health, and invest in education at all levels, especially for young girls. There is also the need to implement measures that will create productive and decent jobs; this is especially necessary, as well as good governance measures.

In fact, there are claims by some people that Nigeria is the poverty capital of the world. The arguments are there to support this claim. Nigeria's poor are more than the population of the second most populous country in Africa. Nigeria's poor are about equal to the population of the remaining West African countries put together. Since in the final analysis poverty is an individual thing, population drives it. The World Poverty Clock stated in 2018 that the number of poor was increasing by about six people per minute and that by the year 2030, about 120 million Nigerians will still be living below the poverty line. However, the number of babies born per minute in Nigeria is 9. This means that if fertility is reduced, poverty will also be reduced.

## **THE SEVEN COMMANDMENTS FOR ACHIEVING THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDENDS IN NIGERIA**

The most important factor that will determine the capacity of Nigeria to benefit from the changing age structure of her population is the country's capacity for innovation. Many 21<sup>st</sup> century innovations, like new seeds, new contraceptives, and vaccines, are multiplying the effects impact of the resources already being devoted to development. The necessary condition for any country to reduce poverty is to increase her GDP as reflected in economic growth. Most countries where economic growth occurs have achieved a reduction in poverty. But this is not always the case. Growth can take place without poverty reduction, in which case, there will be higher inequality; this growth is not inclusive. Nigeria thus needs to come up with innovative approaches to improve economic growth. The whole world has experienced tremendous growth over the years due to the increase in scientific and technological innovations. The solution to the population problems in Nigeria lies in harnessing the demographic dividend for the sustainable development of the country. In order to do this, I have proposed seven immutable commandments that Nigeria must follow.

### **Thou must create the demographic dividend.**

The first step lies in creating the window of opportunity that will lead to the demographic dividend. This rests squarely on rapid demographic transition led by fertility and child mortality reduction. Given the arguments stated earlier, the issue of fertility reduction and responsible fertility would be different from state to state. There is a massive family planning programme in the country, unfortunately, the contraceptive prevalence rate is still one of the lowest around the world. The argument for fertility control has neither been here nor there. In any case, there must be increased investments in family planning and other maternal and child health programmes. This should be complemented with behavioural change programmes that will make families realize the benefits of smaller family sizes.

Nigeria needs to plan for the needs of the millions of Nigerian women who cannot access reproductive health care today, as well as the millions of young women who will enter the reproductive age in the next few years. The implication of this is an increase in demand for reproductive health. Fertility decisions are both individual and family decisions which require a great deal of responsibility. When families and indeed women have children by choice and responsibly, they can make adequate investments in the children resulting in better human capital status in the country. This calls for innovations in reproductive health in a way that ensures that men and women are able to take responsibility and be responsible for the number of children they want within the resources that they have.

**Thou must build the quality of the human capital of children and youths so that they can participate and contribute to the economy of the country.**

Adequate provision of universal access to quality health as well as providing access to quality and relevant education at all levels is a necessity. Nigeria must prepare to build the human capital of the new 200 million that will be added to the country's population by the year 2050. Adequate preparation must be made for the next 67.7 million (6.8 million per year) children who will enter primary schools by 2030. It should be seen as their right and the trampoline that will propel the development of the country. Education quality, access and financing at all levels — primary, secondary and tertiary — are important for human capital development. How do we intend to plan for the next 200 million Nigerians? Education is key. These should not be half-baked but quality graduates. Policies matter if population dynamics will lead to development. The policies and practices must involve all stakeholders. The government must provide an enabling environment while the private sector provides collaboration and funding, and parents and the community provide moral and financial support. For example, recent experiences have shown that private sector engagement is always there for education and health. Many times, we do not think clearly about the implementation of the policies. One issue is the implementation of policies. Is the UBE implemented adequately? Is the National Health Act properly implemented? Governance is also an issue. Parents are not daft. Private schools are springing up due to the failure of government provision. The government says, 'Close illegal schools'. I think we should rather call them unregistered schools rather than illegal. For example, if all schools are closed, will the available government and private schools accommodate all children? No. The emphasis should be on the children and not the schools. If there are no schools, children can still be educated through other means. Recent technology and homeschooling experiences in many countries are already confirming this.

There must be sequencing with human capital. For Nigeria, it should start from hunger eradication, and progress to universal health coverage, fertility reduction and women's reproductive rights, and then education. There must be adequate investment in all these. The basic issue is how to cater for the next generation of millions of individuals who will enter the school system. Take tertiary education as an example; there is no year that up to 20% of applicants are admitted into the universities. The youth must be equipped to contribute to and benefit from the development process.

We keep talking about education and that all students must be enrolled in schools. Without proper planning and adequate consideration of the population, this remains a joke. Let me share a story of something that happened sometime in 2003 or 2004 when Lagos State wanted to close down all unregistered schools in the state. The unregistered schools formed a union and pressured the government. When the state insisted, the schools went on strike and asked parents to keep their children at home for one day. This generated a crisis as many parents had problems keeping their children while they had to go to work. It was then realised that one basic issue was that the number of schools were grossly inadequate to accommodate all the children of school-going age. Today, the government keeps closing illegal schools. Unfortunately, however, virtually none of the states in the country has enough schools if all the children in their state were to go to school. In addition, many of the available government-owned schools are in bad shape and could never pass any registration criteria. Economics tells us that you cannot close schools and have universal access to education. Illegal schools will continue

to exist as long as the government cannot provide schools for every child and parents will continue to send their children to such schools.

The DD report on Nigeria indicates that there are more than 14.6 million out-of-school children in Nigeria (Olaniyan et al., 2018). With the standard of 40 children per class as proposed by the National Policy on Education, this translates to a shortfall of about 360,000 classrooms or an average of 10,000 classrooms per state to accommodate them. The reality and practical situation of the country is that the country does not have enough classrooms to accommodate all its children of school-going age. Imagine the benefits to the country if these children were in school. It would translate to the employment of an additional 360,000 teachers with the attendant multiplier effects on employment and poverty reduction in the country. My submission is that the blanket closure of illegal schools is a bad development practice. Some of these schools are registrable, and there are others that can be regarded as assisting the government to improve its enrolment status. What is needed is to have a system that ensures that every child has access to quality education. Where the government has failed to do this, it has no moral right to close unregistered private schools for the assistance being rendered in achieving SDG4.

Students exiting the education system must be graduates with skills that reflect what the country actually needs. This is about the relevance of our education system. Presently, technical colleges are gone while teacher training colleges and agricultural colleges are struggling. This conclusion is based on employment fundamentals. The issue of enforcing entrepreneurship as a course in the university system is still fraught with misplaced priorities. The way it is taught and learnt may never lead to the acquisition of any entrepreneurial skills.

The relevance of the curriculum in the country is also a problem. In the University system, for example, most curricula, as structured in the Basic Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS), do not meet international standards for the specific courses and programmes. The main problem is that the basic minimum would give the universities leeway to create a niche for themselves and portray themselves as innovative institutions. They are forced to implement a unified basic curriculum rather than have a minimum basic for which individual universities can then innovatively engage the students for sustainable development of the students and their country.

Universities are supposed to be centres of excellence in innovation. Well-established structures and universities can spur investment in innovation. The way research is conducted, and the structure teaching and learning process as well as community engagement of universities can spur “high priority” sectors and meet certain research and development investment benchmarks. This can further lead to the establishment of innovation parks and be at the core of our technology strategy. In essence, innovation should contain home-grown components and should involve all stakeholders including government, universities, and industry. Incidentally, stakeholders have been working in silos with many of them being decentralized, very loosely organized, and highly entrepreneurial.

Furthermore, it should be recognized that innovation is essential in building human capital. These include specific innovations in ensuring universal health care as well as equality and relevant education to all citizens, especially basic education. For example, the quality of health has increased through various innovations that have occurred. For

example, the recent ebola and malaria vaccines could change the growth profile of many SSA countries, including Nigeria. Looking at our educational and health systems, many have argued for more budget spending on infrastructure, institution building, and education, but a closer look at the country reveals that the country cannot provide all the necessary infrastructure in the short run. We can however use technology, especially 21<sup>st</sup> century technology, to provide these services. The *Hole in the Wall* project is an example. The Internet can be used, and children will get the required education. Furthermore, in the educational system, disruptive innovation is happening with many private schools now serving the underserved poor communities. They provide a personalized education system. Given the advancement in technology, the traditional educational system is becoming more pronounced with the advent of massive open online courses (MOOCs) and personalized learning. In the case of health, drones can be used to distribute drugs and medicines to hard-to-reach areas.

**Thou must empower the youths and women to contribute to, and benefit from the development process of the country.**

The process of harnessing the demographic dividend is hinged on having a productive youth base. It is important to provide support for entrepreneurship and skills development that can lead to a successful self-employment economy. Every citizen must be able to contribute to economic activity. This calls for adequate female empowerment through the provision of economic opportunities for the female citizens. This starts with the provision of more schooling and education for the girl child, otherwise, the country will end up with unhealthy women, drug-abused women and vulnerable citizens. There should be an avenue for preparing for the needs of the millions of Nigerian girls and women who are discriminated against.

In addition, millions of young women will enter the reproductive age in the next ten years and beyond but might not be able to access reproductive health care. Concrete programmes and policies must therefore be enacted to deal with incidences of child brides, and adolescent marriages, as well as comprehensive adolescent reproductive health and child mothers.

Thou must make sure that the productive population of the country grow rich before they grow old

In order to properly harness the demographic dividend, efforts should be made to provide decent jobs and quality employment for all employable adults without discrimination. This will depend on the implementation of good macroeconomic policies and sustainable development programmes. The largest employer of labour in Nigeria will continue to be the services and agriculture sector. Over the years, the agricultural sector has been the major employer. Come what may, innovation is important for improving employment in the sector, specially making sure that based on our comparative advantage, policies and programmes are made to ensure sustainable integrated rural development for the country. Since agriculture is the mainstay of the country, innovation is needed in our agricultural practices. Better seeds for crops will assist the poor in raising their labour income and increasing the prosperity of lifecycle surplus. It can also reduce hunger and poverty. There can be no reaping of the demographic dividend if the people are hungry.

After production, the major bane of agriculture in Nigeria is post-harvest loss. Innovations on preservation must be exploited. In addition, farmers in poor countries lack the tools to get the most out of their lands, so their yields are very low compared to those in rich

countries. But innovation can close that gap. The key issue is that the present way in which agriculture is practised may not lead to DD. There can be no agricultural development in Nigeria without decent jobs in the agriculture sector. Innovation is required to process raw outputs; Farmers need to be given adequate education that would sufficiently equip them for the labour market as they are in vulnerable employment. They should not be locked in a situation of permanent underemployment in the informal sector, where productivity and wages are low. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), between 2000 and 2008, some 73 million jobs were created in Africa, but only 13 million were for 15-24-year-olds. This accounts for the high unemployment rates in Africa.

The biggest innovation is telecommunications. Mobile telephony is increasing rapidly. Millions of mobile phones are in use and the rate is expected to increase. Internet penetration is also increasing. The implication of this is that it will create wealth. Telecommunication combined with urbanization will increase the rate at which wealth can be created in the country. The real driver of growth will be ICT and we know that after the rebasing of the economy, ICT and Nollywood became important contributors to GDP. Telecommunication is bridging development gaps in many states of the federation. It contributes to the development of other sectors including health, education, agriculture, etc. By May 2019, there were 122 million Internet users in Nigeria with 33.13 per cent broadband penetration in the country. This was in addition to the 174 million active telephone lines.

Nigeria needs innovation to develop and catch up with her peers. The country may have to go beyond the simple innovation approach to a disruptive innovation approach.

Disruptive innovation is the process in which a smaller company, usually with fewer resources, is able to challenge an established business (often called an “incumbent”) by entering at the bottom of the market and continuing to move up-market. Nigeria can tap into this model as a country with fewer resources and can enter the bottom of the world market and continue to move up. Disruptive innovation is an innovation that helps create a new market and value network and eventually goes on to disrupt an existing market and value network. The theory goes that a smaller company with fewer resources can unseat an established, successful business by targeting segments of the market that have been neglected by the incumbent, typically because it is focusing on more profitable areas. This can be used to provide employment. For example, Nollywood has been able to thrive precisely because it is a disruptive innovation targeted at the average Nigerian citizen unable to purchase, watch, and perhaps relate to Hollywood movies. The innovators in Nollywood have keyed into the vast non-consumption of movies in Nigeria, and Africa, and have created relevant and relatable movies that have given birth to a booming industry. Governments should support entrepreneurs whose business models are targeted at non-consumption. By doing this, jobs will inevitably be created for many people. Industries such as Nollywood, ICT event planning and tourism are providing disruptive innovation in a way that is bringing prosperity to the country.

### **Thou must ensure old age welfare and social protection.**

The growing proportion of the elderly means that Nigeria must prepare for tens of millions of the elderly that we will have by 2030. The second demographic dividend is about the elderly having a quality life and relying more on asset returns in financing their consumption as well as making transfers to younger generations. The second dividend is a



consequence of population ageing, the accumulation of wealth needs to occur early, in anticipation of ageing, as does the implementation of appropriate economic policies.

For dividends to occur, individuals must grow rich before they grow old. During the surplus years, they must have the ability, capacity and opportunities to acquire assets that will fund their consumption later in life when they are retired and/or become part of the elderly population. Innovation in the financial industry to make sure that the lifecycle surpluses that are earned are invested such that in old age, Nigerians can safely change the structure of their income from labour income to asset income. Macroeconomic conditions and policies must also be right. As the demographic transition progresses, there will be increasing old-age dependency. This has implications for the retirement age. It brings out policies for the elderly. If large proportions of the population are young, then the retirement age has to be reduced. Conversely, when large proportions are old, then the retirement age should be extended. Population policies also have to be region-specific.

Old age is often associated with increased health challenges, hence policies for the promotion of quality healthcare provision, particularly for conditions associated with old age, should be implemented. In order to reduce the financial burden, there is a need to build up social security systems as a combination of state pensions, employment pensions, and private savings. If individuals are to have enough assets during old age, policies must be designed to promote private savings as a means for old age security by incentivizing economic policies. Since there is a likelihood of people retiring before the official age of 60 years, government and private sector organizations should organize post-retirement skill acquisition for the elderly. Such programmes will assist these adults to gain new skills and switch or down-shift care.

**Thou must ensure good governance and accountability** Governance and accountability are issues that are relevant to all aspects of the demographic dividend. The necessary steps for reaping the benefits of the demographic dividend include strengthening the rule of law, improving the efficiency of government operations, reducing corruption, and guaranteeing contract enforcement.

One of the primary functions of government is to ensure adequate security of lives and property to support human capital building and security of savings and investments. Demographic and population issues have to be integrated into the development plans and visions of the different levels of government. This should be done in the context of the country level, regional level and the global development agenda. When this is done, it has to be followed up with adequate implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the Demographic Dividend Roadmap in the country.

Governance is key to harnessing the dividend. There should be demographic dividend budgeting as well as DD monitoring and evaluation. If you do not know where you are going, anywhere leads to everywhere. This is why the African Union designed the demographic dividend roadmap and suggested that every African country should also develop its own in the context of each country's development agenda. It is on this basis that Nigeria developed her demographic dividend roadmap. The roadmap has five thematic pillars which are the basis on which the country can harness the demographic dividend. Since Nigeria is a federal country, many states are also beginning to prepare their own road maps for harnessing the demographic dividend.

## Thematic Pillars in the Nigerian Demographic Dividend Roadmap



### **Thou Must Have a Credible Population Data**

The starting point in thinking about how to harness the positive dynamics of the population is having up-to-date information on the population of the country. Accurate planning and development cannot take place in the absence of quality data. There are strong data challenges with regard to population issues in Nigeria. There are political and social interests in the quality and availability of statistics for management, programme design and the monitoring and evaluation of performance. The country must ensure the collection of quality population data and not rest on whims and caprices. There is the need to ensure the availability of correct and adequate population data. The government must take the commanding heights in the financing of the census. Must we rely on donors for the big data despite the African Union Agenda 2063? Incidentally, given the federal structure and the importance of population in the allocation of revenue to the different tiers of government, population statistics become a victim of circumstance. The most important data collection for the population is the population census. Timely and accurate population estimates and projections allow governments to anticipate future demographic trends and to incorporate that information into development policies and planning.

Last June, there were arguments on what exactly is the size of the Nigerian population. This was brought to the fore after the United Nations Population Prospects, 2019 revision put the Nigerian population at 201 million people. The NPopC also released its figure which was not statistically different from the one released by the United Nations, especially since both figures were based on estimates of projections. The problem with the projections of the population from the National Population Commission is that it assumes that the

structure of the population will remain the same as it used the same growth rates for all the age groups, which might not necessarily be correct.

The country conducted its last population census in 2006 and globally, every country is expected to hold a census every 10 years. It is sad that despite having ten years to plan for every census, Nigeria has a tradition of not conducting censuses. Getting a credible census has always been an issue in Nigeria. For example, the 1962 census was cancelled as being fraudulent and another one was conducted in 1963. The only time Nigeria was on schedule for conducting a census after ten years was in 1973, ten years after the 1963 census. However, the 1973 census was rejected for not being reflective of the country's population and cancelled. It would take another 18 years before another census was conducted in 1991 and another 14 years to have another one in 2006. It is now more than 13 years down the line, and we are still planning for a census that no one knows when it will actually be conducted.

The problem in my view is not financial but that of lack of political will. During this period, we have had four national elections that were more expensive than what it would cost to conduct the population census. For the records, the 2019 budget proposed ₦242.45bn (equivalent to \$672.35m at the official exchange rate) to the National Assembly for the 2019 general elections. This is an increase of 50 million US dollars over the amount that was spent for the 2015 elections, which was \$625m, according to data prepared by the National Institute for Legislative Studies (NILS) in 2015. Interestingly, the Director General of the National Population Commission sometime early this year submitted that the commission needs about ₦220 billion to conduct the next population and housing census, but the DG recently said the amount was estimated as of 2018 and is no longer realistic in view of currency value fluctuations over time.

There are no indications that the 2020 budget had made enough provision for the conduct of a census in the country. In the past, the National Population Commission has rested on the support of development partners to be able to have a credible census. While this may have been permissible in the past, the African Agenda 2063 argues that Africans must take their destiny into their own hands. Is Nigeria ready to conduct a credible census next year? Do we have the financial and resource capacity to do it? This is a challenge. Development practitioners and other actors have noted that deficiencies in statistical information hamper Africa's development and transformation processes.

One of the reasons why Nigeria has this delay in conducting a census is that we have not put the conduct of censuses as a key issue for development practice in the country. The Act establishing the National Population Commission is silent on the periodic conduct of censuses, a loophole that has provided the basis for the Federal Government to postpone it at will. To hold a population census, the president must make a proclamation on it before the Commission can go ahead with it, including fixing the relevant dates. It is therefore important for the President Muhammadu Buhari to make the proclamation for the country to hold the next census. Sir, the declaration has to be made as soon as possible so that the census can hold before the next election in 2023. As usual, this will not only pave the way for having a credible figure on our population size and structure but also open ways for foreign donors to support the process to augment the funds that the federal government would provide.

This is the way to go. Technology is now well developed to have innovations in big data collection and storage in a way that will not cause rancour in the country. This will include having a biometric census rather than political population figures that many suggested are prevalent in the country. Advances in information and communication technologies are being leveraged to improve efficiency in the collection, processing and dissemination of census data. A census involves the complete enumeration of the population while recording the basic characteristics of individuals and households. It is important to utilize this innovation to ensure the quality and integrity of the census figures. This is because Nigeria will only get it right if the census figures are right. Information gathered through a population census is critical for national planning purposes. For this reason, the United Nations recommends that national governments commit to taking a census at least once per decade (United Nations, 2017a).

## **CONCLUSION**

Population trends observed over the past few decades point to substantial progress so far made towards several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Examples include reduced mortality, particularly among children, as well as increased access to sexual and reproductive health care and enhanced gender equality that have empowered women to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children. Demographic transition will eventually happen, whether we like it or not, the pace may only be slow. Even then, Nigeria is not homogenous; it is large and complex. The pace and patterns of the transition will differ in different geopolitical zones and even in different states of the federation.

We should not be defined by the sensationalism of how bad the Nigerian population is. People can see challenges, but I also see opportunities. Where others see problems, I see solutions. Indeed, every population structure is a problem. You only need to choose the appropriate solution for your own. Of course, Nigeria is struggling between different narratives. There is the narrative of a rising Africa and indeed a rising Nigeria — the largest economy in Africa, the most productive people, a country that is one of the largest exporters of oil and many agricultural products, the country with the largest number of doctors in Europe and America, a great nation. There is also another narrative of the country faced with low infrastructure that can spur growth and development, insecurity problems, Boko Haram terrorists' activities, kidnapping, corruption, and inefficient public sector. While these narratives are dominant, my perception and belief is that the main narrative should be about our population. It should be about changing the age structure of our population. It should be about putting them to work and making sure that the political and macroeconomic environment are in the right condition to support the productive ability of an average Nigerian. The corrective narrative is that there is a window of opportunity that can be opened for the country. This window will open at different times in different regions of the country, giving us the benefit of a longer time for the window to open. The narrative should be about developing human capital such that the average person in the country has the ability to contribute to the country's development process as well as benefit from the development process.

Nigeria has a very young population. Others may see it as a problem, but we will do well to view it from a solution angle. While some might see this as a great challenge, it is important to note that challenges are also opportunities. An additional 200 million vibrant Nigerians that will be produced in the next 30 years is not a joke. It represents an enormous opportunity that can translate into development. This calls for stronger institutions if the

population is to translate into development. The role of stronger and capable national and subnational planning agencies and personnel is paramount in ensuring that the various sectors work together to ensure that the three dimensions of sustainable development are reflected in all aspects of development programming. Population is about people and quality people translates to quality development. Nigeria must position herself to create and harness the demographic dividend that a large ratio of the youthful population can offer. Different countries, different population structures, different opportunities, and different solutions.

The question is: What is wrong with the Nigerian population? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. The problem with Nigerian youths is that they are a bunch of talents. These talents must be prevented from wasting and rotting away. They must be engaged. They must be part of our development process and outcome. They must contribute enormously to the development process and in the end, they must reflect the quality of Nigerian development. Credible development policies and practices through the enhancement of human capital is an investment that must be made. Another missing gap in Nigeria is the absence of an updated National Policy on Population as well as census figures. A national census must be conducted without further delay. I want to conclude with a message of hope. In their absence, the National Roadmap for Harnessing the Demographic Dividend can be religiously implemented. The road map has five pillars that can assist in leading the country towards sustainable development.

The condition of our country is not where it should be. Our peers have left us behind. We can definitely catch up. We can do a lot better. The future can be brighter. It surely is bright. The best kind of innovation that we need in Nigeria is innovation in thinking. That is a fundamental shift in the way we think about development, as this will provide amazing opportunities. The way we think about Nigeria will shape how it develops. How many of us are thinking of Nigeria? How many believe in Nigerian goods, the Nigerian factory, and the Nigerian way of doing things? An additional 200 million vibrant Nigerians in the next 30 years represents an enormous opportunity. The driving force in demographic dividend is an offshoot of this demographic window of opportunity. It is an opportunity that Nigeria cannot afford to forgo.

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# CHAPTER TEN

## Gender-Based Violence and Family Planning in Times of Emergency

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By

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Gender-based violence (GBV) or violation of human rights based on gender is an emergency issue at all times of human existence. It has existed since the beginning of time throughout the world. GBV comes in different forms such as rape, sexual intimidation, incest, pornography, coercion, blackmail, psychological abuse- controlling, wilfully placing a person in fear of physical injuries, offensive conduct, taking undue advantage of a person living with disability, genital mutilation, wife battery, frustrating investigation and abuse by state actors, harmful traditional practices as of widowhood, beatings, and killing in various ways. It involves economic blackmail including forceful ejection from homes, stalking, forced isolation or separation from family and friends, abandonment of spouse, children and other dependents without sustenance depriving a person of his or her liberty, damage to property with intent to cause distress, deprivation of right to inheritance. Gender-based violence also involves killing an unwanted female child, sexual abuse of babies and children and women, sex trafficking, neglect, forced labour and other multiple forms of discrimination which each many have either perpetrated or suffered. From choosing male over female children, economic, and domestic violence which results in physical, sexual and psychological suffering, dehumanizing circumcision of females for the simple reason of depriving them of sexual pleasure to forced marriages and widowhood practices. Women are at the heart of this problem deriving largely from a natural attitudinal drive to discriminate and dominate them. Thus, from birth to death, this constituency of women is a life's journey of torture, of human rights abuses. Abuses come in illegal content from pornhubs that coerce both children and women into an illegal market.

Forced marriages and forced relationships which keep women stuck into unwanted, abusive relationships result in unwanted pregnancies and children who end up in the streets as fodder for any emergency.

Today we are called upon to look at gender-based violence and family planning in times of emergency. Gender-based violence often affects persons of a particular gender



disproportionately though we are aware it is not limited to males or females but largely affects girls and women. For example, a boy does not get pregnant in a case of rape. Girls in prisons and IDP camps as well as terrorist camps are producing children that come as a result of abuse but while sexual abuse and resultant childbirth are common in these areas, the family is often largely seen as responsible for populating the earth.

A family consists of a father/man and mother/woman who bear children. Husbands as heads of families often dictate the size of the family and insist on their wives getting permission for child spacing. Large families are a common phenomenon in Nigeria going back to tradition when farming was the mainstay of the economy. It was common practice to see women bear twelve children. This often came with a prize in Igbo land. Very often more children were born in search of a preferred boy child for the husband. A wife who cautions her husband could get beaten as well as made to give room for a second wife. These spousal abuses are currently listed under the VAPP bill including the rape of infants by paedophiles, defiling of children even by biological fathers and relatives, rape of teenagers, and gang rape of victims from young to old women. Other forces of violence include forceful ejection of women from homes, depriving a person of liberty, damage to property with the intent to cause distress, deprivation of rights to inheritance, forced financial dependence, forced isolation or separation from family and friends, emotional, verbal and psychological abuse, harmful widowhood practices, attack with harmful substances, administering a substance with intent to commit a sex offence, incest, and sexual blackmail. The rampant cases of rape and violation of women all attest to the rot in society which need to be addressed.

But the greatest challenge is implementation, especially by security agencies that tag victims as prostitutes or such abuses as domestic issues and ask the abused woman to go sort it out at home. This is a great emerging moral/ethical problem as children are forming a large population of mothers around the country making nonsense of both family and child spacing.

Family planning is a decision by a couple to have children they are able to cater for; that is, provide a home, feed, protect, guide and give affordable education or skills for lifetime sustenance. In normal times a couple plan their family according to their economic strength as this determines how well they cater for their children. The woman must also have a voice and must be listened to if planning a family is to be effective. Accumulation of wives without planning is an emergency waiting to ignite. When we talk about street children, this is where we must begin. Unemployed youth will occupy themselves with robbery, kidnapping, internet fraud and vandalization of both government and private properties. Economic downturn, lack of a planned community, lack of jobs, and lack of markets are emergencies that will generate gender-based violence and lead to unplanned population growth. War is an emergency we are familiar with physically or in books we read daily. Wars are responsible for displaced families, loss of values and failure of nations. At war time we encounter hideous crimes of abduction of women as slaves who work and bear children they cannot cater for and whose fathers they do not know. Sudden infections and diseases such as HIV and the COVID-19 pandemic are also emergencies that have resulted in gender-based violence and rampant childbirth within the period.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Systemic Failure: We must get the system working. There is the cultural difficulty in speaking out on allegations of sexual misconduct against perpetrators. An example is the Ayo Ajani case in the Petra Christian Centre in May 2020. The three abused sisters spoke though the church was only forced to step down the pastor which was good because people have to hold systems accountable. Systemic failure is an emergency that is ruining families and killing women and girls and there is a need to wake up. No day passes without a series of abuses in families with the wives often kicked out. Parents kick out their girl children who get pregnant through rape at times by family members. (There are, of course, many teenage girls pregnant out of promiscuity too and not just rape) The government must build a string of support systems for women. The few safe houses where abused women can take shelter are owned by NGOs. With the exception of Abuja, states have no government-safe houses. During the COVID-19 pandemic, countries converted hotels into isolation centres. The Nigerian government seized houses of corrupt officials, and such could be converted to a shelter for abused women. Instead of NGOs burning out their resources on safe houses, the government should budget for women and girls and women should track the budget. USAID support to Nigeria is over \$2bn annually and has donated eight operational centres across Nigeria. The money should be put in the right places – sheltering abused women and training them with skills. If donors pull the plug on HIV/AIDs treatment and care, we will have another epidemic on our hands. Global fund supports HIV, and malaria 90%. Funnily there is no counterpart funding for farming especially in states like Benue where whole families are engaged in farming for their livelihood. A lot of SGBV projects in various states have been abandoned after development partners left. Why? Did we put in our own bit? During one of the Family Planning Summits, \$4m was pledged for family planning. Families are threatened for reporting rapes of 3 and 4-year-olds and refusing to collect money to withdraw the cases. WACOL, an NGO is following up on a case of a five -year old that was raped in Enugu, and a man that used his teeth to bite a chunk of his twenty-one-year-old niece's breast. This girl was also breastfeeding a set of nine-month-old twins. With pressure from the NGOs, these men were arrested but got bail.

Voices must demand responsibility from public office holders in Nigeria. Citizens need to ask their elected officials why they are silent on cases of gender violence at times by public officials. Poor educational institutions far from home, and lack of secure buses to take these children to school are also responsible for the rape of minors. Elected officials are not ignorant of the rights of citizens as they travel around the world and have their children in foreign institutions. With the necessary infrastructure in place communities will plan effectively to provide the necessary infrastructure that would give opportunities to members, both men and women will get or create jobs for themselves and their grown children. There would be industries and markets for their products. A community that fails to provide needed infrastructure for its growing population is waiting to turn against itself; A community without a market will depend on other communities to buy and sell and looting will be the reaction from its street children and unemployed youth.

## **STATE OF EMERGENCY ON SGBV**

What does it mean practically for states? What should the state governments do? A system should not pay lip service as it is being done now.

- States should provide funds for SGBV programming.
- Domestication of VAPP law in states. AKS has led the way immediately as the 1st state to pass the VAPP after the Governors agreed to the State of Emergency.
- Setting up of SGBV Response teams made up of service providers (state and non-state).
- Setting up of at least ONE SHELTER in each state with officials trained in Shelter Management
- Setting up of at least ONE SARC in each state with trained officials to run them.
- Massive and aggressive community sensitization
- The Police setting up Family Support Units, FSUs in ALL AREA COMMANDS in states.
- Dedicated police officers trained and equipped with the necessary logistics to respond to cases.
- Trained Social Welfare Workers (not just job seekers) to run the Social Welfare Department in states so that they are responsive to cases of child abuse. Also funding for them.
- Appointment of passionate, committed persons as State Commissioners for Women and adequate funding for the Ministry.

In some states, the Ministry of Gender/Women Affairs and Social Development are not funded. Their budgets are not released from year to year, and they can do nothing about it.

## **THE ECONOMY**

Poverty is a serious economic problem because poor people are largely not productive and as such they have to depend on others for means of livelihood and this has actually reduced some citizens below the level of human decency.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is instructive to note that poverty is perhaps the only singular phenomenon whose presentation and consequences are patently multifaceted. Poverty represents a status of insufficiency which replicates itself in several ways including non-possession of material requirements for comfortable living. There is poverty arising from a lack of awareness, there is moral and intellectual poverty. In fact, when totally aggregated, poverty presents an image of absolute need level, where possession is very little or nothing, a sorry state, ill health, scanty, unproductive and by all indications a pitiable condition.

May Nwoye rightly notes that our people were cultured away from being inward-looking and given a false sense of contentment by producing primary products and basic raw materials for industries of Europe. Thereafter, spirited but at times, contextually fortuitous, attempts at economic regeneration were initiated with the central focus on poverty alleviation.

One of the early attempts came in 1972 when Gen. Yakubu Gowon, the then Head of State, established the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) and the Nigerian Agricultural Co-operative Bank, which was devoted to entirely funding agriculture.

In 1979 General Olusegun Obasanjo introduced the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) programme, which was designed to encourage food production and good security in an economy that had become increasingly dependent on oil.

Again, on assumption of office as Civilian President, Alhaji Shehu Shagari established the Green Revolution Programme. The aim of this programme, like the one before it, was primarily to provide more food for the increasing Nigerian population. The hallmark of the programme was to curtail food importation and boost crop and fiber production.

But as the notable writer, Chinua Achebe, summed up, these food programmes gave us more food for thought than food for the stomach.

Gen. Muhammed Buhari's government had no specific agenda for fighting poverty, but, he determined that many of the country's woes had a lot to do with corruption and indiscipline. He introduced War Against Indiscipline and desperately sought to discipline Nigerians as a disciplined man would raise a disciplined family and by extension a disciplined and less corrupt community.

In the 1980s, the IMF-World Bank sponsored the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which were foisted on the country and opened a Pandora's box of contradictory policies. The introduction of NAPEP was the high point of the administration. The desire to empower the populace has continued to re-echo with state-based initiatives and from a multiplicity of NGOs. These have all failed because of a missing link which is that stakeholders including governments, NGOs, educational institutions, lending agencies and the private sector have been unable to work together and explore synergies, initiate and sustain a movement for poverty alleviation.

Again in 2015, Buhari resurrected his campaign against corruption but was less effective in a democratic set up which has led to a demand for more palliatives with job opportunities in the organized private sector shrinking and the government facing a critical economic situation, the COVID-19 pandemic and instability of the youth. The informal sector too has been unable to provide sustainable jobs as a result of poor road network and infrastructure. The alarming rate of unemployment and poverty among a growing population of illiterate unemployable youth as well as unemployed graduate youth in particular has put our country under tremendous pressure to critically look at family planning as well as design and implement effective self-reliance programs to sustain the needs of families. Poverty or lack of economic means could lead to poor health, lack of money to have contraceptives, and maternal care, etc.

## **WARTIME**

Ladies and gentlemen, we are familiar with what mothers go through in wartime and Mother's Day is celebrated in honour of mothers. The honour is in view of mothers whose human rights are grossly violated in times of crises sadly by security forces. Congo (DRC) is a typical example where the conflict was synonymous with sexual violence and unwanted pregnancies. In war situations, women are enemies on both sides of the divide. In spite of the risks associated with childbearing, armed groups as well as men who use physical strength to oppress women, see no need to protect women to satisfy sexual urges. Literature best exemplifies the situation of women in wartime. Talk about rape as a weapon of war!

There is a huge literature that captures the sufferings of women in crises such as the Nigeria war of 1967-71 but a few examples will suffice. Buchi Emecheta, Nigeria's popular novelist, gives us a sorrowful picture of women during the Nigerian war. Women were targeted as enemies by both the Nigerian and Biafran soldiers for sex. In her novel *Destination Biafra*, the protagonist, Debbie on her way to settle the two warring leaders she knew so well is rapped by soldiers. They could not tolerate the woman with an air of importance. Debbie also had to adopt a child whose mother was killed. In Akachie Ezeigbo's

Roses and Bullets (2011), the protagonist, a medical doctor married to a well-known family is drugged and raped by soldiers. She gets pregnant as a result and rather than sympathy, she is molested by in-laws. Many war children are among us, a few like the one in Destination Biafra found people who helped them into adulthood while many ended up on the streets and crime.

The Boko Haram emergency is a complicated war the government is finding hard to control basically because of the involvement of unlikely in-house sponsors. An Abu Dhabi High Court recently convicted six Nigerians, one of them a government official over alleged funding of the Boko Haram. The Boko Haram is a war crisis that targets women as sex objects. Hellon Habila's Chibok Girls and Ben Ubiri's collection of poems on the Chibok kidnap best exemplifies the

situation. Thousands of camps set up for refugees are breeding grounds for children whose child mothers are raped by both male workers and those who offer them food as the camps do not meet the basic requirements to sustain them. The social media is awash with naked men caught with little girls from IDP camps, some begging not to be handed over to security operatives, not because they will face the law but for lack of money to bribe their way out. The system is waiting for these accidental children to move into the streets.

## **HEALTH EMERGENCIES**

Ebola and HIV/AIDS have their own stories, but a most recent emergency is the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in a lockdown. The lockdown kept people indoors from work and shut down businesses. Pictures of pregnant women trended on social media for months following the lockdown. Hospitals will soon begin a record of births which resulted from couples locked in from their daily businesses. Reports of beatings of women were also rampant. Constriction exposed women to demands by their husbands that led to violence. These became a subject of concern as well as jokes in the social media. It was tagged as COVID-19 and the virus of Domestic violence against women The Dailies were awash with stories of rape of minors in all states of the federation and writers noted that this was not new, but the frequency pointed to the lockdown. A coalition of NGOs in May 2020 called on the government to declare a state of emergency on sexual gender violence when a postgraduate student of UI in hijab was raped and killed in her apartment after a Uniben girl in a dress was raped and killed in a church in Benin. Four masked men jumped the fence and raped a 12year old girl in Ajah, Lagos while playing alone in her compound around 2 pm. She was left bleeding from injuries in her privates. A 90-year-old woman was raped in Lagos. A man in Karu was in the habit of offering lifts to schoolgirls whom he raped. One opened up and four others confessed he had done it to them. The wife went to the victim's aunt to beg for her husband to be released from custody.

ActionAid captured 80 cases of reported rape within the period but there were more, hundreds of unreported cases, many with medical conditions. May June was a nightmare for the Feminist Coalition who marched to Police Headquarters asking why women were so hated. A woman from Juwa, an Abuja suburb who also joined the coalition to the Police Headquarters said rape in her village occurred daily and had become a 'normal.' NAPTIP had to open a National Sexual Offenders Database and declared that it was neither the girls' dressing, location, age, attitude nor appearance that warranted rape. The problem is

with the rapists. A register is a repository for the pain and vulnerability as well as the resilience of the women. The social media reports of gender-based violence in homes with a display of gruesome pictures of damaged women and children were traumatic. The perpetrators often went unpunished and with the exception of those handled by feminist groups and FIDA, the police and the courts did not address these abuses. The escalation of such criminal behaviours and dehumanizing acts has succinctly placed a query on the laws of the land and the visible lacuna evident in the existing laws have been exposed.

VVF is a common phenomenon in Nigeria. Thousands of women abused as child brides are fighting stigma and pursuing surgeries to repair their damaged bodies, a few with support from feminist groups and not from the men responsible as the system/government maintains silence. Like poor boys, girls also get stranded for transport reasons and try to find convenient shelter under bridges, trees, and near houses amongst others. Very often it is the girls that are arrested for 'prostitution,' taken to corners and abused by security operatives. When these women are released they are faced with unplanned pregnancies, the psychological trauma of silence in the face of a cultural and social perspective where talking about women's bodies is taboo.

Nigerian literature captures the abuse of women in families which appears to many as normal. Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* (1966), first Nigerian female novelist captures her heroine in a marriage where her husband abandons her for the city. The young woman is described by all as a good woman. Buchi Emecheta's protagonist in *The Joys of Motherhood* is beaten and kicked out for not having a baby. She remarries and has eight children for a man who could not cater for the children. Her joy is she has proved her motherhood. She dies by the roadside in the village.

Zainab Alkali's main character in *The Still Born* is also abandoned but she goes to get an education, actualizes herself and returns to look after her abuser who is now disabled. Garba, the bastard son of a prostitute in the same novel is a drunkard, gambler and womanizer and married with nine children. In Akachi Ezeigbo's *The Last of the Strong Ones*, she creates women who fight for their abused female folk and advocate for women's self-determination. In Chimamanda's Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, the woman who miscarries several pregnancies as a result of beatings becomes traumatized and poisons her husband, a warning to abusive husbands. The writers are pointing to confrontations in the home and a system that accepts a violent culture against women. It is here that women's rights must be embedded in national law and policy firmly anchored in international human rights standards as stipulated in the 2014 document. The lives of women in the domestic realm is on the top list of this discuss.

We note in conclusion that gender-based violence is not limited to women but it largely affects women and girls. The family is the main hub of society where morally and ethically children are raised. There are several types of abuses in the homes, on street corners, on farms, in prison, abduction, and IDPs which lead to unplanned childbirth. However, the family records a high degree of violence against women in families (monogamous/polygamous) including abused minors leading to unplanned children. Abuses come in types and are frequently captured by anthropologists and literary artists in times of emergencies such as systemic failure, economic, war and health issues including COVID-19. The situation calls for the government in various states to sign into law the

SGBV and VAPP bills as the situation cannot be left in the hands of NGOs/SBOs. The question remains, is birth control a family issue or only a woman's issue? This becomes imperative when the government limits the number of children, not to the family but to the woman.

### **THE WAY FORWARD**

The system must protect its women through stiff law enforcement and the right punishment for abusers. The culture of silence where families tolerate the rape of their children in place of honour must be re-visited. Nigeria could borrow a leaf from Asian countries in controlling childbirth. It is a family issue, not a woman issue.

The Goodluck Jonathan presidency signed into law in 2015 the VAPP bill but because it was Federal, it is applicable to the FCT, and states need to key into it. At the moment only fifteen (15) states have signed it into law. It is the single law in place that transcends the criminal and penal code in guaranteeing justice and protecting the rights and properties of victims of gender-based violence by its expansion of the definition of rape, domestic offences, incest and several forms of violence. It seeks to proffer stiff penalties for offenders who consciously cause others harm. The obnoxious widowhood practices in some states where widows are made to drink water from a washed corpse must be stopped as stipulated by the law. The states need to be committed to ensuring the emergency outlook for SGBV. In states where SGBV is not being well funded for effective advocacy, health and legal representation, the commissioners should do the needful.

## [SECOND PAPER]

### Gender-Based Violence and Family Planning in Times of Emergency

By

HRH, Alhaji (Dr) Aliyu Oga Onawo, OON,  
Andoma of Doma  
Nassarawa State, Nigeria

#### **(PROTOCOLS)**

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with a great sense of responsibility that I accept this privilege to share my thoughts on the topic, "Gender-Based Violence and Family Planning During Emergencies".

Gender-based violence (GBV) is the most pervasive, yet least visible human rights violation in the world and is a major health risk, especially for women. In nearly every modern day conflict and disaster women and children are the most vulnerable to violence and inhuman treatment. Across the world, social imbalances in our society continue to manifest in diverse ways; violence against women is now widely recognized as a serious human rights abuse and an important public health problem with substantial consequences on physical, mental, sexual, and reproductive health.

Global response through Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 3 and 5 has a combined objective to promote health and wellbeing and eliminate GBV, increasing gender equity (United Nations, 2017).

Within the last two decades, Nigeria has experienced a number of disasters and emergencies ranging from the protracted Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, community/ethnic, farmer/herder clashes in North Central, kidnappings and banditry in other parts of the country, have led to abduction, rape, unplanned pregnancies, unsafe-abortions and loss of lives of thousands of Gender-based violence violates universal and fundamental human rights; the right to life; the right to personal security; the right to equal protection under the law; and the right to freedom from torture and other cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment.

The recent global COVID-19 pandemic, which made stay-at-home orders the new normal, introduced the world to another global surge: violence against women and girls. The Lockdowns mean that women and girls may be trapped in places with their abusers, the underreported reality of this crisis is likely far graver. GBV is reported to have significantly increased since the COVID-19 lockdown began on 30 March 2020 in the three most



affected areas (Lagos, FCT and Ogun States). The WHO record GBV increased to 149% in 23 out of 36 states.

There is an urgent need for proper coordination amongst key stakeholders, viz: Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), and Women's Civil Society Organizations and other International Development Partners to ensure implementation of institutional and legal frameworks in order to mitigate GBV during emergencies. These will further harmonize, promote and protect the rights of affected populations (especially women and girls); intervene when those rights are violated; provide services and assistance to both meet the needs of and realize the rights of those who have experienced violence; and make family planning health service available and accessible during emergencies.

The government should factor women in their responsive plan for the COVID-19 Pandemic and humanitarian services.

# CHAPTER ELEVEN

## Population, Rights and Peace in Nigeria: Addressing Insecurity and Gender-Based Violence

APLS 2021  
(NINTH EDITION)

By

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria is confronting a number of critical social and political challenges that are raising serious questions about its identity and survival as a democratic Federal Republic. First, there is a dramatic breakdown in security provisioning that has created a climate of disillusion in the State as a protector for citizens. Secondly, there is a serious crisis of the breakdown of social cohesion in Nigeria with stress lines emerging at the levels of the family, gender, community, identities, livelihoods and educational system. Thirdly, there is a significant rise and expansion of sectarian conflicts, both ethnic and religious, fuelled in part by massive disinformation and hate speech in both traditional and social media. Finally, Nigeria's elite consensus on federalism and the federal character principle as a guarantee against group discrimination and marginalisation is badly shaken. The risk therefore is that even if the drift towards disintegration is the worst possible outcome, the country is being pushed towards that direction. At this point, all hands must be on deck to stop the drift and seek pathways to re-establish confidence in the nation-building project.

The Nigerian State is undergoing a three-dimensional crisis. The first one affects the political economy and is generated mainly by public corruption over the past four decades that has created a run on the treasury at the national and state levels threatening to consume the goose that lays the golden egg. The second one is the crisis of citizenship symbolised by ethno-regionalism, gender relations, the Boko Haram insurgency, farmer-herder killings, agitations for Biafra, militancy in the Niger Delta and indigene/settler conflicts. The third element relates to the frustration of the country's democratic aspirations in a context in which the citizenry believes in "true democracy" confronted with a reckless political class that is corrupt, self-serving and manipulative. These issues have largely broken the social pact between citizens and the State. That is why today, Nigerians find themselves in a moment of doubt about their nationhood. It is similar to the two earlier moments of doubt the country has experienced, 1962-1970 when we went through a terrible civil war and the early 1990s when prolonged military rule created another round of challenges to the National Project. Nigeria survived those two moments and my concern in this lecture is to engage along the path of addressing the current crisis as an opportunity to

surge forward in fixing Nigeria. The first challenge is that of population dynamics in the country, a subject that almost has a taboo status in public discourse.

### **Population Dynamics**

I agree with Bode Augusto that the popular saying that: “Nigeria’s population is a strength”, Is false. “Population is only a strength if it is well educated, healthy, the economy has the capacity to provide them with employment and households have enough income to buy goods and services produced by businesses.” He adds correctly, that one of Nigeria’s biggest problems is uncontrolled population growth: “Every year, we add 5 million people to our population. This is roughly the size of Liberia or Montenegro. According to [www.populationpyramid.net](http://www.populationpyramid.net), in 1960, the population of the UK was 52 million while that of Nigeria was 46 million, by 2015 the The UK was 62 million while Nigeria was 185 million and by 2070, Nigeria will be 550 million while the UK will be only 80 million! This means that over a period of 110 years, Nigeria will add over 500 million to her population whilst the UK would add only 30 million and the UK was coming from a higher base. This is frightening!”

The population growth rate is a problem because Nigeria has been characterized as the poverty capital of the world, with 93.9 people currently living below the poverty line says the Managing Director, Financial Derivatives Company (FDC) Limited and a member of President Muhammadu Buhari’s Economic Advisory Council (EAC), Mr. Bismarck Rewane. In a presentation to the Lagos Business School, he stated that seven million Nigerians fell into extreme poverty in 2020. Nigeria, he says, with its 200 million plus population, was first declared the world’s poverty capital in 2018 in a report by the Brookings Institution, knocking off India from the position. According to the report, the number of Nigerians in extreme poverty increases by six people every minute. The Brookings Institution’s report had stated in 2018 that: “At the end of May 2018, our trajectories suggest that Nigeria had about 87 million people in extreme poverty, compared with India’s 73 million. What is more, extreme poverty in Nigeria is growing by six people every minute, while poverty in India continues to fall.”

Rewane also points out that our new star legislation, the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA), which is in the process of being implemented, would have minimal impact on new investments in the downstream sector of the Nigerian oil and gas industry. He based his projection on the fact that the petrol subsidy was still in existence, despite the deregulation of the downstream sector by the PIA, coupled with investors’ ongoing transition towards investments in renewable and clean energy. The EAC member said, “Implementation of the PIA to continue but subsidies will remain. Minimal impact on new investments in the downstream sector as investors’ transition towards investments in renewable and clean energy.”

Although, deregulation of the downstream petroleum sector is among the provisions in the PIA, the federal government has ruled out immediate removal of petrol subsidy pending when an alternative to petrol is made available, which means that the public finance deficit would continue to grow and the country’s finances would deepen its dependence on loans. No regime in Nigeria’s history has borrowed as extensively as the Buhari Administration.

According to Dr. Doyin Salami, the Chair of the Economic Advisory Council to the President, Nigeria's current debt stock is unsustainable with a service to revenue ratio of 98% and increasing, even if the debt-to-GDP ratio is a relatively low 35%.<sup>4</sup> We have been borrowing massively to pay for recurrent budget expenditure while revenues have not been reducing rather than growing. The main concern is the high rate of growth of the debt stock. Data from the Debt Management Office indicates that total government debt – federal and state, grew 7.75 per cent from N32.916 trillion in December 2020 to 36.465 trillion by 30th June 2021.

Meanwhile, expenditure has grown 102 per cent from N5 trillion at the beginning of the Buhari Administration in 2015 to N10.1 trillion in 2020; while revenue over the period grew by only 15 per cent. States and local governments in Nigeria control about half of the nation's revenue and are responsible for the provision of basic services (such as education, healthcare, water and sanitation, rural infrastructure, and community services). The high degree of autonomy provides states an opportunity to move ahead on their own. This autonomy, however, also poses a challenge to building a national consensus across different levels of government, including in the areas of macroeconomic stability, prioritizing public resource allocation, and meeting minimal national standards in service delivery.

In Nigeria, the public sector is not organized to provide public services to the people. The level of public expenditure on services such as health and education is much lower than in other African countries. Budget figures are a poor indicator of public expenditure because the amounts allocated are virtually never released in totality or even in significant percentages so knowing real expenditures is a challenge. Lack of accountability further erodes institutions' capacity to deliver services. The design of policies is more influenced by bargaining among elites than by public accountability mechanisms. The lack of public information at national and subnational levels (e.g., on budget allocations, expenditures, and development outcomes) impedes civil society organizations and media from supervising the government's policies, financial management and effectiveness in delivering public services. Moreover, oil revenues further disincentive the provision of accountability mechanisms from the part of the state as it does not depend on citizens to raise funds.

### **The Challenge of Precarity**

Poverty in Nigeria is not evenly spread. The number of people living in poverty in the northern region has been increasing since 2011 and in 2016, it represented 87 per cent of all poor in Nigeria. In contrast, the South is achieving greater progress, with around 12 per cent of its population living in poverty in 2016.<sup>9</sup> In general, inequality has increased in recent years, as indicated by the Gini coefficient increase from 0.36 to 0.42 between 2011 and 2016.<sup>10</sup> a situation that fuels instability and conflicts which is our concern in this report. The most important contemporary problem for Nigeria is the lack of opportunity for the youth. The country has developed a huge youth bulge that has been growing rapidly. This is happening at a time in which formal opportunities for employment are declining and having a job has become a minority experience. The North is the most affected region in the country in this regard. The North, especially the Northeast and

Northwest are the most backward regions of Nigeria in all social sectors. It has the highest birth rate in the contemporary world, the lowest level of economic development, the least access to education and the poorest network of health facilities and staff. The population of the North is growing at a higher rate than the rest of the country thereby deepening poverty rates.

In Nigeria, the fertility age bracket for women is between ages 15 to 49 years. Age specific fertility rate, in turn, is the number of births given to by women of a specific age group per 1,000 women in that age group. In 2015, the total fertility rate was 5.5 births per woman but increased in 2016 to 5.8 (NDHS, 2013). This means that women in Nigeria will have on average 5.8 children each during their entire childbearing years. The Figure below shows the fertility rate by State.

It clearly shows that the North has higher fertility rates than the rest of the country with Jigawa State

recording the highest fertility rate of 8.5 and Kano 7.7 according to the 2016 survey conducted by the National Bureau of Statistics. The problem is located in very large family sizes that has led to the persistent trend of sending boys off to Almajiranci and girls into child marriage in the Northeast and Northwest. The practice is often justified on religious grounds. The pressure of feeding large families with lots of children is significant and might very well play a push factor role in getting these children out of the family responsibility in their early teens. If it is not a poverty issue, why do elite families from the same zone not send their children on almajiranci and early marriage?

For too long, the rate of economic growth in the country has been lower than the rate of population growth, which means the average Nigerian becomes poorer every year. This unfolding scenario is one of demographic explosion due to the time bomb of the growing population. Part of the solution is to reduce the population growth rate. China's one-child policy has been the most drastic and most successful attempt to reduce the population growth rate and accelerate economic development. I doubt that any other country in the world can successfully implement such a drastic policy. Nigeria's most feasible policy option is to begin to engage in public education about the advantages of smaller families where resources to educate and maintain the children are more available.

Nonetheless, cultural resistance to such a policy might be very high. By simply keeping girls in school until they are at least 18 years old, there would be a significant reduction in the fertility rate. As Famoroti has argued: "Education is the least invasive contraceptive".<sup>12</sup> He also points out that historically, female empowerment has been even more essential in bringing down birth rates. Empowering women in and outside the home – in the workplace, politics, religious institutions etc will lead them to make different decisions regarding bearing and raising children. Cultural modifications of this kind are capable of acting as a counter against impending demographic changes. According to Henrik Urdel, a review of population dynamics worldwide, between the years 1950 and 2000 shows that high fertility rates produce a youth bulge, which in turn is a precursor to domestic armed conflict.

### **The State and Insecurity in Nigeria**

The state of insecurity in Nigeria has reached an unprecedented level. On a daily basis, well-coordinated commando-like operations by gunmen are organised against rural communities where people are kidnapped for ransom, their houses burnt, and their

property looted. Similar attacks are also conducted against the army and police. These attacks are now occurring in virtually all geopolitical zones in the country. According to Governor Bello Matawalle of Zamfara State, (Nation, 3 April 2021) there are no fewer than 30,000 gunmen spread across more than 100 camps in and around the state. He said such is the grip of bandits on the state that they collected N970 million as ransom from the families of their victims in the eight years between 2011 and 2019. During the same period, the bandits killed 2,619 people and kidnapped 1,190 others. For some years now, a significant proportion of farmers cannot go to their farms out of fear, so food insecurity is on the horizon. Given the seriousness of the situation, his approach was to negotiate with the outlaws. The dialogue led to the suspension of attacks and kidnapping and the negotiation process was replaced by military action directed at suppressing their activities without much success.

General Abdulsalam Abubakar, Chairman of the National Peace Committee, told Nigeria in April this year six million weapons are circulating in the hands of non-state actors in Nigeria, and they are using them. The death toll, he estimates is 80,000 while about three million people are internally displaced.<sup>14</sup> The country finds itself at a point in our national trajectory where young Nigerians feel sufficiently marginalized from the STATE and SOCIETY to procure arms and engage in self-help which they define variously as banditry, scorched earth attacks on innocent village communities accompanied by mass rape and other forms of sexual violence, in addition to killing security agents, and even declaring an Islamic Caliphate in Nigeria. There are too many groups that have discovered that obtaining an AK47 can be their pathway to wealth because they are not in Government where you can be wealthy by stealing without arms. Given the number of these disaffected young persons, the precariat, who are arming themselves to find solutions to their problems, the risk of anarchy has never been this high. According to the Inspector General of Police, 20 police officers were killed in March this year. In October last year, during the EndSARS protests, 205 police stations all over the country were attacked and 22 police officers were killed. All over the country, the police are being hunted and killed.<sup>15</sup> Increasingly, the precariat is defining law enforcement officers as the enemy that must be eliminated.

The question today is do we still have a State? It was the German political sociologist, Max Weber, who defined the state as that "human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of violence within a given territory." The monopoly is justified on the basis that the state, through its security agencies, protects members of the society from external aggression and the internal violation of the rights of citizens. They have the role of protectors of citizens and the community. One of the major principles of political science is that although force is a central element in political systems, it cannot on its own sustain a polity. Rousseau reminds us that even the strongest is never strong enough to remain the master unless he is capable of transforming force into law and obedience into duty. It is important to recall that in Nigerian history, the colonial security apparatus was established to control and extort the people and not to protect them. Not surprisingly, the security culture that developed within the traditional actors was one of repression with an emphasis on coercion and a general lack of civility towards the civilian population. The result has been corruption within the services and an attitude of serving the power elite rather than the people.

Following independence, this terrible tradition has been maintained.

For too long, national security has been equated to state security, and state security is viewed as the security of those who occupy public office. Rarely is national security viewed as the welfare and happiness of the citizens, neither is security viewed as 'community security', 'societal security' or securing the 'common good', defined in the most generic way. In other words, security is viewed in purely state-centric and military terms and not in social and developmental terms; it is perceived as the maintenance of state sovereignty, not in the context of common humanity and promoting the welfare of the people. In these circumstances, national security often undermines the security of citizens.

Normally, the state should protect, rather than denude the citizen of his or her rights. The Nigerian citizen has for too long endured a culture of intimidation by the country's security forces. Law enforcement agents have since colonial times developed a culture of reckless disregard for the rights of the people. The legal framework has not helped matters given our colonial heritage of laws against vagrancy, illegal assembly, wandering, and illegal procession. The state is constructed as an edifice against citizens who are assumed to have a natural tendency to break laws and must therefore be controlled, patrolled, and constantly surveyed. Not surprisingly, citizens learn to fear and avoid law enforcement agents.

The ordinary Nigerian sees security agents as potential violators of their security rather than providers of their security. The reality of state security for ordinary people then becomes the perception of insecurity.

Today, Nigerians have had enough in terms of their fear of security agencies. They are fighting back. The problem however is that the fightback is anarchic. The real fight should be for the reform of our security agencies so that they are able to provide the framework that guarantees that the ordinary people are free from external aggression by enemies of the community and internal subversion that can ruin their lives. This means that state security must strive to protect the ordinary people not just those who occupy positions of power or wealth. The democratic imperative in Nigeria therefore requires Security Sector Reform that would enhance the human security of all citizens rather than limiting itself to the interests of the political class. Human security involves not just national security but also the promotion of economic development and the human rights of citizens. There is no choice between human rights and security operations. All legitimate security operations in a democracy should strive to protect the human rights of citizens. That they are neutral in their operations and do not act on the basis of political considerations.

The state of the Nigerian State is serious and each day we appear to be sinking deeper into the abyss. The State as we know it from political science literature does three things. First, it extracts resources from citizens through various forms of taxation. This assumes that the State knows all those who reside in its territory and is able to track them and make them fulfil their fiduciary obligations. Many within the younger generation will be surprised to learn that there was a time when the Nigerian State tracked and monitored each adult to ensure they pay their tax. They also tracked each nomad and made them pay tax, jangali as it was called, on every cow, sheep and goat they owned. In addition, people were made to produce cash crops – cocoa, palm oil and groundnuts, and State institutions called

marketing boards bought the produce cheaply, sold it abroad and put the profit in State coffers.

The second role the State plays is that of using the resources it has extracted from residents and citizens to provide public goods such as security, social services and infrastructure for the welfare of inhabitants. In States where taxes are extracted from the people, there were usually demands and pressure on the State to deliver because citizens have paid their taxes and expect their resources to be used for their benefit. The available resources were not very much but they were used more effectively to deliver public goods.

The third role the State plays is that of regulation, making laws for the good governance of the country and sanctioning those who breach the laws through the judiciary and law enforcement agencies. Thanks to the colonial legacy and thirty years of military rule, the objective of the laws was to oppress and control the people. The laws however did not apply to the ruling class, as impunity became the

order of the day. Mega corruption by the ruling class was fine but it became criminal for journalists to expose what the ruling class was doing. Our Constitution defines the purpose of the state as the protection of the security of Nigerians and the pursuit of their welfare. Nigerians however know that they have to pay for their own security guards and even the bulk of the Nigerian police personnel are used to provide security, not for the people, but for individuals who can afford to pay for their services. Nigerian citizens are forced to provide their own electricity with millions of generators they purchase to power their houses and pollute the atmosphere. Nigerians go to the stream to fetch water or buy it from water vendors. The water is not potable and poisons families through waterborne diseases. The elite is able to pay for personal boreholes in their houses and the result is that they wipe out underground water sources for future generations while surface water is not captured and treated but is left to flow into the sea. Of course, health and education have largely been private, and the state is completely disdainful of Chapter Two of our Constitution which directs it to provide for the welfare of citizens. We must work hard on rebuilding state capacity. Ungoverned Spaces State crisis is symbolised by the fact that rural Nigeria is characterized by the absence of the State and its security agencies, and it is therefore not surprising that the blight of armed banditry has spread and impacted negatively on lives and livelihoods. The massive proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the

Nigerian hinterland has provided the means for agency in the spread of violence.

The phenomenon has dramatized the expansion of ungoverned spaces in the country. There are contending narratives as to the reasons and character of the crisis of armed banditry in Nigeria and in the wider sub-region. Apart from the history of decades of expansion of ungoverned spaces, the debilitating effects of conflict resulting from climate change cannot be overlooked. Specifically, waning

amounts of rainfall takes its toll on the growth of shrubs and vegetation useful for not only farm purposes but also for the grazing needs of herds. The impact of climate change has been more variable as certain places experience significant reductions of rainfall while others suffer from excessive flooding.

Nigeria has also experienced significant population increase over the past decades leading to a huge expansion of farming. The pressure on land has worsened the phenomenon of contests over access to land between pastoralists and farmers leading to the growth of violent confrontations between the two groups.



There are many factors that contribute to the growth of the phenomenon of rural banditry. One of the most important is poor governance and the virtual collapse of institutions of governance. Deep-seated corruption has eroded the capacity of institutions to perform their functions. Nigeria's borders are porous and there has been decades of freelance smuggling of small arms and light weapons which have provided the means for the escalation of the violence. Many of the arms found their way into Nigeria through the Maghreb following the uprisings in North Africa and countries of the Sahel, including State collapse in post-Ghaddafi Libya. Nigeria also has a youth bulge characterized by a lack of job opportunities for the growing population of men and women. Various violent non-state actors have relied on the advantage offered by ungoverned spaces to perpetrate multiple violent attacks and crimes in these areas. Unarguably, the challenge posed by some of these non-state actors is not limited to Nigeria. The gap between the centre and the periphery has been widening in most African states since their independence. This ever-expanding chasm has led to a deficit in governance that political scientists refer to as the ungoverned space. States tend to devote most of their resources to high-return areas, an excuse for allocating resources to certain places on the basis of ethnic nepotism, to the exclusion of others. This practice has led to the creation of pockets of long-standing disenfranchisement across Africa, making them a fertile breeding ground for radicalization and the subtle spread of religious ideologies.

Two major zones of ungoverned spaces have emerged in Nigeria in relation to the phenomenon of armed banditry. The first is the Sahel region of Northern Nigeria which specifically covers dry lands in Zamfara, Katsina, Sokoto, Kebbi, Bornu, Yobe and Adamawa States. The second consists of the swamps and forest regions of the Niger-Delta characterized by rivers, creeks and lakes in the States of Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, Abia and Ondo. The government has watched and allowed these ungoverned spaces to consolidate. One central element in the Northwest zone that favours armed banditry is the existence of large, protected forests bordering the rural areas. Zamfara State for instance is mostly surrounded by forests, (with little or no government presence), from where bandits launch their attacks on outlying towns, highways, and villages. The problem arose due to a crisis of pastoralism.

### **Crisis of Pastoralism**

The other dimension of state crisis is the rise of pastoralists-farmers conflicts in Nigeria which has grown, spread and intensified over the past decade and today poses the greatest threat to the country's national integrity. Bands of criminal gangs associated with Fulani herders have emerged and engaged in mass killings, banditry, kidnapping and arson. For many reasons, many farming communities believe that the herders are out to kill them and take their land. Government policy over the past five years, including the cattle colony and RUGA policies have been understood by many communities as tacit, if not direct alignment with the alleged herders' agenda of killing people and taking over their land. The Federal Government must undergo a Mea Culpa stating clearly that it is not sectional in its approach to tackling the crisis of pastoralism. Spokespersons for the affected community must do likewise.

Virtually the entire country is today affected by growing conflicts between pastoralists and sedentary communities. The six zones of Nigeria are all affected. These conflicts have been

ongoing for five decades but there has been a dramatic escalation in the past decade. Prior to the 20th century, the Fulani were mainly concentrated in the semi-arid zone of Northern Nigeria, mostly due to the presence of trypanosomes and other diseases that made cattle rearing in more humid environments in the South impossible without significant losses to the herds. The growth and spread of herders'-farmers' conflicts have since transformed into communal clashes that are developing logic of their own.

Nigeria is today confronted with a rising spate of violent communal conflicts between herdsmen and host communities. The conflicts initially arose when grazing cattle are not properly controlled and consequently graze on cultivated plants like cassava, maize etc. in the farms of host communities. As traditional modes of conflict resolution between herdsmen and farmers break down, the destruction of crops lead increasingly to communal conflicts between the two groups. Host communities tend to register their grievances by placing restrictions on the movement and grazing of cattle in designated areas and enforcing compliance through coercive measures decreed by the host community vigilante groups which may take the shape of killing stray cattle or arresting and prosecuting defaulters. As these conflicts aggravate, the Fulani herdsmen who are losing more and more of their cattle and sometimes their lives also resort to violence by attacking such communities. Many reports indicate that Fulani herdsmen normally attack their target communities at the time they are most susceptible such as midnight or prayer days, when they are in their churches, incessantly killing people with sophisticated weapons, looting properties and burning houses. Nigeria has about 20 million cattle much of it in the hands of pastoralists and we need to seek solutions to the problem of pastoralism while resolving the problem of insecurity that has arisen. The problem is that Nigeria's population has grown from 33 million in 1950 to over 200 million today. This phenomenal increase of the population has put enormous pressure on land and water resources used by farmers and pastoralists.

One of the outcomes of this process has been the blockage of transhumance routes and the loss of grazing land to agricultural expansion and the increased southward movement of pastoralists has led to increased conflict with local communities. The conflicts primarily involve Fulani pastoralists and local farming communities. As violence between herdsmen and farmers has grown and developed into criminality and rural banditry, popular narratives in the form of hate speech have exacerbated the crisis.

It is clear that Nigeria and indeed Africa have to plan towards the transformation of pastoralism into settled forms of animal husbandry. The establishment of grazing reserves provides the opportunity for practising a more limited form of pastoralism and is therefore a pathway towards a more settled form of animal husbandry. Nigeria has a total of 417 grazing reserves out of which only about 113 have been gazetted. Whether we support or oppose pastoralism, it is clear that at least in the short and medium term, many herds must continue to practice seasonal migration between dry and wet season grazing areas. Ultimately, there is a need for permanent settlement of pastoralists. A new policy framework on the farmers-pastoralists crisis should be developed that is both comprehensive and mutually beneficial to both groups. An inter-ministerial committee should be constituted with experts and stakeholder membership to draw up the framework. There must be a consultative process that listens to the concerns of all stakeholders in developing the new framework so that the outcome would have national ownership.

Pastoralism is not sustainable in Nigeria over the long term due to high population growth rate, expansion of farming and loss of pasture and cattle routes. At the same time, pastoralism cannot end or be prohibited in the short term, as there are strong cultural and political-economy reasons for its existence. The new policy should develop a plan for a transitional period during which new systems would be put in place. The framework should map out the duration, strategy and timelines for the transition plan. Finally, a comprehensive approach to address the growing crisis associated with violence affecting pastoralism and farmers in Nigeria is necessary.

### **State Responses to Insecurity**

The Nigerian State has become increasingly reliant on the armed forces for Internal Security. Constitutionally, however, Nigeria's internal security infrastructure is composed of the National Police Force as the lead agency for law enforcement and the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps protecting critical national infrastructure and handling related disaster management. The capacity of

Nigerian police and other official but non-military security forces have eroded over time due to severe resource constraints and an orientation away from civilian protection to VIP protection. The military has sought or been assigned to fill the gaps, Nigerian society has in effect been militarized and has lost the habits of civilian-led security provision. The military now is engaged in internal operations in almost all of Nigeria's 36 states, seeking to quell not only the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast, but also rural banditry and mass kidnapping in the Northwest, the Biafra resurgence in the South East, ethnonationalism in the South West farmer-herder conflicts in the North Central and the militancy in the Niger Delta.

The Nigeria Police, under normal circumstances, has the primary responsibility of maintaining law and order in Nigeria, but it is no longer the first responder when violence breaks out or civil unrest arises. A case in point emerged in the Judicial Commission of Inquiry into the December 2015 clash between the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) and the Nigerian Army.<sup>16</sup> The Commission found the

Nigeria Police were aware of the excesses of the IMN, including instances of murder that were reported to the force, but it failed to prosecute cases or even make arrests. Nigeria's thirty years of military rule created a climate in which the police did not receive sufficient resources for its development. Police credibility also dropped as it resorted to "shortcut" methods based on brutality to citizens rather than painstaking investigation and adherence to the rule of law. According to Mike Okiro, the former Chairman of the Police Service Commission (PSC), Nigeria has about 400,000 police officers. However, a good proportion of these officers are not available for routine police work because more than 150,000 of them are assigned to guard VIPs and others who ordinarily wouldn't qualify for police protection. Other officials say the real picture is even more bleak. The Assistant Inspector-General of Police (AIG) for Zone 5 in Benin City in southern Nigeria, Rasheed Akintunde, said only 20 per cent of police officers are engaged in core duties of protecting lives and ensuring peace in the country. "The remaining 80 per cent are just busy providing personal security to some prominent people.

The way forward for the police has been extensively mapped by three police reform panels that have done extensive work on what needs to be done to improve performance. They are the Obasanjo regime's Dan Madami Commission (2006), the Yar'Adua government's M. D Yusuf assessment (2009) and the Jonathan administration's Parry Osayande study (2012). All these initiatives reported the same core problems: Insufficient personnel and funding for operations; poor training; dilapidated training institutions and barracks; limited firearms skills, leading to frequent shooting mishaps; and the demeaning obligation for officers to pay for their own uniforms. Perhaps the most important factor they emphasized is the deep culture of corruption that resulted in salaries being unpaid because they are diverted elsewhere.

The Senate Committee Chair on the Army, Mohammed Ali Ndume is categorical "We are at war in this country in the North-East and we are at war with criminals and bandits in the North-West, we are also at war with herdsmen that are attacking and we have security challenges in the North-Central as a result of tribal and religious conflicts that have overwhelmed the police and soldiers need to be drafted." The result, he explains, is that the Nigerian Army is deployed in active operations in 33 of 36 states in the country. The problem according to him, and few will disagree is that our armed forces do not have the numbers, arms and equipment to cope with the demands on them. He adds that: "In a country of over 200 ... the 2020 national budget of N13 trillion, and you are budgeting a paltry N27 billion for the Army in a period of war, that does not show seriousness."<sup>20</sup> It has therefore been difficult to buy sufficient arms and ammunition, trucks, and kit personnel as well as pay for operational cost.

Nigeria is confronted with numerous asymmetrical wars in which relatively small groups of armed combatants attack communities and security personnel. The Nigerian armed forces however by their training and orientation are engaged in conventional warfare. The Boko Haram insurgency for example, in its second phase developed from a conventional mode of direct military action aimed at carving out an Islamic Caliphate into a very mobile hit-and-run tactics of small groups attacking unarmed civilians or military formations. In other words, they were boxed into the use of standard asymmetrical warfare tactics. Initially, the success of the insurgency had been based on the lack of political will on the part of former President Goodluck Jonathan's Administration to resolutely tackle the insurgency.

For whatever reason, the former regime believed that the insurgency was a political conspiracy against them. They neither armed the military adequately nor had the motivation to fight them with vigour. In that context, Boko Haram carried out assaults on symbols of Nigerian sovereignty, such as the sacking of army barracks, taking territory and raising Boko Haram flags over such seized territories. The inception of the Buhari Administration led to a new determination to crush the insurgency and in the first two years, virtually all the territory seized by Boko Haram was recaptured by the military. The symbolic moment in the turn of the tide was the capture of Camp Zero, the insurgents' headquarters in Sambisa Forest, in December 2016.

When a Boko Haram stronghold is attacked, many insurgents are killed and captured but some of them escape and resort to attacking soft targets. The watch word of the insurgents has been flexible. Following the recapture of most of the territory held by the insurgents

and the degrading of their fighting capability, they resorted to the use of suicide bombers, often using young girls. The insurgents' tactics are therefore constantly evolving in unpredictable ways, and the insurgents have remained a menace for over a decade. The military then resorted to establishing super camps, huge, barricaded camps in major towns and local government headquarters where the civilian population is congregated for their safety. Boko Haram has been able to sustain attacks on these camps over the years, sometimes with success, opening access to the capture of arms from the military. This approach however opens the countryside to control of the rural population that has not moved to the super camps. They are then recruited by the insurgents or made to farm or pay taxes to sustain the insurgency.

Central to the limited success of the Nigerian military in the war against the insurgency has been the lack of trust and close collaboration between civilians and security agencies. At the beginning of the conflict, a lot of distrust and sometimes antagonism developed between the two. Some communities still have bitter memories about their youth being unjustly categorised as insurgents and killed, maimed, or arrested. Some of the harmful treatment being meted out to civilians includes sexual violence on the part of the security services, including the Civilian JTF. This compounds the general ethos of sexual violence perpetrated by Boko Haram with regard to women and girls in affected communities and feeds an environment where sexual violence by community members becomes more of a norm. On the front of the war against rural banditry, cattle rustling and mass kidnapping for ransom in the Northwest, the approach of the military has not been more effective than in the Northeast. From September 2021 for example, a major military offensive was launched against bandits and terrorists in Zamfara State.

There has been some success and from reports, hundreds of them have been killed through aerial bombardments and some of those running away are being mopped up by ground forces. We must congratulate our troops for the success so far and urge them to do more. Nonetheless, although the heat is on and the terrorists and bandits are in disarray, the tipping point in the battle against them has not yet arrived. The ongoing offensive in Zamfara has resulted in the killing of hundreds of bandits but both the State government and experts believe that there are over 30,000 armed bandits in that State alone so killing a few hundred is not a significant achievement. Close observers have said many of them moved out immediately after the government announced the offensive and closed down telephone access. There is no doubt about it, they will return when the coast is clear. To remind us all that they are very much alive, they have been attacking villagers in surrounding States such as Katsina and Kaduna. No one is safe as witnessed by the abduction of the Emir of Bungudu in September. Schools, military formations, towns and cities are still being attacked so there has been no significant shift in the dynamics.

The fact of the matter is that the bandits and terrorists are not really feeling the pinch. They are mobile groups, well-armed, and now, wealthy from the ransom money they have been collecting. When large offensives are announced, they duck. When petrol sales are restricted, they bribe massively to procure necessary supplies. When the GSM network is switched off, they buy Thuraya satellite phones or buy SIM cards from neighbouring countries. In other words, the conventional approach our armed forces are using against

them have been ineffective. They appear to be ahead of the military on the thinking curve. That has been the situation for a long time. In September, the Katsina State Governor, Aminu Masari has said that with the benefit of hindsight, his government should never have negotiated with bandits, let alone grant them amnesty. Today, he has realized that: “They are not pushing for any ideological view; they are not pushing for any religious view. They are simply bandits, criminals and thieves.” Yes, indeed and they are making so much money from their criminal activities that State governments simply do not have enough financial resources to compensate them for their proceeds of crime. Analysts have said that from the very beginning but many State governors believed they could placate them. The real question is not why they are discovering this, years after, with hindsight while they refused to listen to those with foresight that had tried to advise them.

The armed forces need to change its approach. Large military operations, announced in advance and focused on one State at a time has not been working and simply cannot work. It requires large budgets which the army command would want to control, and the resources simply do not get to the fighting soldiers. Both bandits and terrorists are engaged in a war of movement based on small mobile groups. The armed forces must follow the same tactic. Hundreds of small mobile army units should be established based on the intelligence of where the bands of terrorists and bandits are. There should be a clear definition of success – every attack by bandits and terrorists must be followed by hot pursuit conducted by local units of our armed forces. When they start getting casualties for each and every operation, the fear in them will start to emerge. Currently, they operate with impunity for most of their operations, so they have nothing to fear really. They are so confident today that they even steal cattle which they take away on foot with the knowledge that no one will come after them. It would be easy to track their movements by drones and ensure they do not enjoy the booty. That will be the tipping point when the insecurity will start reducing dramatically. The establishment of a new security paradigm to address the growing insecurity in the country is imperative. Rural Nigeria has a pattern of settlements that are very scattered and often scattered isolated houses are the norm. This physical distribution leaves settlements highly vulnerable to hit-and-run attacks. In such a context, conventional war approaches cannot be very effective. There is an urgent need for continuous and more effective intelligence gathering on communities and insurgents/terrorists/bandits. Where are they, which communities are they likely to attack and how can mobile units to monitor and checkmate their actions be used? Communication systems need to be developed and security agencies need to educate communities on the best methods of getting quick responses and interventions. Continuous research and investigations will also be required to follow and understand the changing nature and forms of radicalisation into violent extremism and the changing dynamics of the precariat.

### **Gender-Based Violence**

Despite the increasing advocacy and protection of human rights all over the world, Gender-based violence, (GBV), is one phenomenon that has not only refused to go away in Nigeria but is in fact increasing with the growing phenomenon of violent extremism. GBV has been defined as: “Any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person’s will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females.”<sup>22</sup> Women are the

major victims of such violence due to their vulnerability in a patriarchal society that is dominated by men. Gender-based violence therefore consists of abhorrent human rights violations, with detrimental impacts on victims, survivors, families, communities and societies. The types of violence encompassed by GBV include sexual violence, physical violence, emotional and psychological violence, child marriage, femicide, trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), domestic violence and rape.<sup>23</sup> Globally, it is estimated that one in three women experience either physical or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence in their lifetime. These figures are mirrored in Nigeria, with 30 per cent of girls and women aged between 15 and 49 reported to have experienced sexual abuse.<sup>24</sup> While women and girls are disproportionately affected by GBV, sexual violence against men and boys also occurs, particularly in conflict-affected contexts. Service providers in the Northeast, for instance, have observed incidents of sexual violence towards men and boys. However, male survivors are less likely than women to report an incident of sexual violence.

GBV is manifested through a multitude of actions, including the forced marriage of young girls, trafficking in persons, female genital mutilation, rape and attempted rape, violence directed at individuals with different sexual orientations, sexual violence, verbal abuse and laws and regulations that limit women's and girls' rights and access to services in relation to men. These practices are not only violations of the human rights of the individuals affected but are also an instrumentalist approach to sustaining the status quo and the hierarchy of gender identities. Women living in poverty are particularly vulnerable, as they face high levels of structural violence, including difficulty accessing health and legal services needed to address the effects of interpersonal GBV.

There are many factors that have contributed to sustaining the high prevalence of GBV in Nigeria. One of the most concerning factors is the cultural silence about the phenomenon. Many of the victims remain silent about what has happened to them.

There is a culture of shame but even more important is the implications of speaking out. The fear of further violence and retribution for speaking out is real. There are very few safe houses for women in abusive relationships. For victims of rape and sexual violence, there is the fear of diminished future prospects for marriage due to societal attitudes. Many women are also economically dependent on their current relationships and fear the implications of breaking out. The silence associated with GBV has therefore been an important factor in sustaining an unending circle of abuse and violence. The stigma that comes with being a victim of any form of GBV also forces women who are abused in one form or another to continue to suffer as they sometimes blame themselves for their situation while society also blames them. In a more enlightened society, the abuser ought to be shamed for his action, it is the victim that suffers the shame instead.

According to the same 2018 Demography and Health Survey, 31 per cent of women in Nigeria between ages 15 and 49 have been a victim of GBV at one point or another. This includes the 9 per cent of them who have been victims of sexual violence and 6 per cent of them who have been victims of physical violence during violence. In the same Survey, it is reported that 36 per cent of women who have ever been married have experienced violence from their partner. This violence includes physical abuse such as slapping and punching, sexual abuse such as forced sexual intercourse when they are not in the mood and emotional abuse such as deliberately talking down at. The injuries some of the women sustained during their physical abuse include cuts and bruises, fractures and dislocation.

Some women pay the ultimate price as they are killed by their partners. Many women also suffer irredeemable low self-esteem because their husbands constantly insult and demean them.

The rise of violent extremism in Nigeria over the last 12 years has accelerated and intensified gender-based violence in Nigeria. The Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast has been a vector for the perpetrators of sexual violence in the zone from multiple angles – the insurgents, the security forces and even the community vigilante groups established to protect the people. Women and girls in camps and informal settlements, as well as in host communities, face sexual violence while collecting firewood, fetching water, and using toilets and showers. Members of the military, community self-help militias, and community members have raped women and girls, and engaged in other forms of sexual violence.<sup>28</sup> The story of violent extremism in Nigeria is very much one of gendered security harms in many women are by far the largest proportion of victims even if they are not the only ones. It is a narrative of rape, exchanging sex for money or food to hungry women and other forms of sexual exploitation.

The theatre of war is also of spectacular in dramatizing gender-based violence. On April 14, 2014, 276 schoolgirls from the Federal Government Girls Secondary Schools in Chibok were abducted en masse by Boko Haram members dressed in military fatigues. This was in implementation of the pledge by the Islamist insurgent group, Boko Haram, whose leader had said in a video message that: Girls should stay at home since Western education was sinful. He went further to declare, “In Islam, it is permissible to abduct infidel women. Next, we will start abducting women and selling [them] in the marketplace” Since then, Boko Haram had been kidnapping hundreds of other women and girls. Boko Haram has also frequently used women as suicide bombers. Between April 2011 and May 2017, for instance, women and girls carried out most of the suicide bombings in the Lake Chad region—174 out of 216. This approach of using girls as cannon fodder was in response to effective and increased state surveillance and counter-insurgency action. Such abductions or “woman grabbing,” is a form of action in Boko Haram’s repertoire that adds to the capture of territory. Their use of girls and women in suicide bombings was for such men a graphic display of the power of men over women, a key element in their ideological postulations. As Charmaine Pereira shows in her study, in the *Shadow of the Spectacular*<sup>32</sup> the less visible reality is that abductions of women and girls by Boko Haram have taken place daily, before 2014. Between 2011 and 2014, for instance, Boko Haram abducted three thousand women and girls from seven local government authorities in Borno State. Such abductions have generally taken place in less dramatic form than the mass abduction of the Chibok girls, typically in smaller groups, but the cumulative human loss is greater. Of course, men and boys have also been abducted and killed regularly throughout the twelve years of the insurgency.

On February 25, 2014, Boko Haram invaded Buni Yadi, the only coeducational school in Yobe State killing fifty-nine students. Their message after all has been to abolish modern education.

As indicated above, over the past five years, there has been a significant spread of violence, abductions and kidnapping for ransom in Northwest Nigeria especially in the states of



Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina and Niger. Currently, the phenomenon is spreading to other parts of the country. Let us also not forget that for decades, Nigerian society has been deeply militarized. The end of military rule in 1999 did not coincide with the withdrawal of the military from the public sphere. Since 2014 the military has been deployed in thirty-three of the federation's thirty-six states. The lack of police capacity to address rising criminality in the form of kidnapping, murder, armed banditry, communal clashes, and theft has been dealt with by sending in troops to beleaguered communities. Yet the military have not been trained to deal with traditional policing duties and their responses have been typically heavy handed, if not brutal. Not only has the military presence and occupation within the country now become the new "normal," but the militarization of society more generally has proceeded at an astonishing rate. The existence of a civilian government does not in itself change the character of the military or of governance, or even of the political culture. It is imperative that we reconceptualize security to be about the safety of women and men living as equals in a world that valorises freedom from violence.

When viewed from a gender lens, the Boko Haram story is complex. The organisation has for example been popular with many young women because they encouraged marriage within the sect through inexpensive, quick weddings, thereby solving an existential problem. They also pay the bride price to the bride, not her family. It is for this reason that Pereira calls for a more balanced view. A few women and girls within Boko Haram have carried out a range of activities, indirectly and directly linked to the use of violence. Women have been engaged in logistics, conveying money and weapons to terrorist cells, and as recruiters, seeking new members and sifting through grassroots volunteers, usually by working through family ties or other personal relationships. Some women have persuaded family members to join, been responsible for recruiting members outside their families, and taught new girls and women what was expected of them. Women are also recruited into the organization as informants, cashiers, and those responsible for domestic chores, such as cooking and fetching firewood and water.

The majority of women are however forced, coerced or drugged into doing this for Boko Haram. It is important to note that several women and girls abducted by Boko Haram have become pregnant and given birth to children as a consequence of their "marriages" to insurgents and/or sexual slavery. When the women and girls return to their communities, they and their children are viewed with great suspicion, many fearing that they have been indoctrinated and radicalized by Boko Haram.

Many women therefore suffer high levels of trauma and severe psychological distress after witnessing the killing of their husbands and/or children, being raped, sometimes to the view of their families or being forced into sexual slavery.

The evidence is clear that gender-based violence has been doing a lot of harm to women and society in general. It is important that ongoing advocacy work to address the problem be intensified. Raising the level of understanding among women is an important step. Women must be educated to know that no form of GBV is a justifiable act. Men must be inducted from their childhood into the knowledge that domineering behaviour, battering women or forcing them to do your bidding is unacceptable behaviour. After that, there is a need for further advocacy for women's rights. Women should be enlightened about their rights so that GBV cases are taken seriously. Although many women are now standing up to the occasion, more still needs to be done in dealing with violence against women. Women

need to encourage one another to champion this fight. It will not be an easy task in a patriarchal society, but it is better than doing nothing. The system of law enforcement needs to be trained and equipped to take B\GBV seriously. A man battering his wife or partner is not an internal family affair, it is a criminal act. Reports from women who have suffered sexual violence must be

taken seriously and there should be no assumption that they are lying. Such women should be treated with dignity and respect so that women can develop the confidence that law enforcement works for them, not against them as is often the case. Many of our laws also need to be reviewed to ensure that they cover adequately all forms of violence against women and that punishments for culprits are adequate.

Also, there is a need for women to be empowered. That starts from ensuring that they were educated to the level where they could recognise their inalienable rights and strive to have them entrenched. After that, women should be supported to have a considerable level of economic freedom so that when they are abused, they would have the strength to walk away without suffering severe economic implications. In addition to this is the need to enforce stricter penalties for people who are guilty of GBV so it could serve as a deterrent to others who feel their victims are helpless against them. Every man needs to know that when he commits any form of violence against women, there is a punishment waiting for him.

Lastly, all societal and religious norms that support violence against women should be contested as religions are about peace and love not violence and domination. Cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation and early/forced marriage should be legislated against across the federation.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### The FP 2030 Agenda in Nigeria and the Imperatives of a Successful 2023 Population and Housing Census

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

Nigeria, with a projected population of 216 million in 2022<sup>1</sup>, is the most populous nation in Africa and the sixth most populous country in the world. By some estimates, the country's population could reach 400 million by 2050, potentially making it the third most populated nation in the world after India and China<sup>2</sup>. Major contributors to Nigeria's population growth are high fertility rates with limited access and uptake of Family Planning (FP) services – the Total fertility Rate (TFR) is 5.3 and only 12% of married women are using a modern method of contraception.

However, the country's population and health policies have indicated government recognition of family planning as a key intervention. Efforts have been ongoing to ensure that contraceptives are available to women in Nigeria, although gaps still exist with about 19% of married women having an unmet need for family planning. Notwithstanding, Nigeria's commitment to the FP 2020 and, subsequently, to the FP 2030 Agenda signals renewed commitment to improving the FP situation in the country. Local surveys indicate that the pattern in contraception use is changing all over the country, and the 2023 Population and Housing Census can provide comprehensive national data to help governments and Partners ensure that women and girls are guaranteed access to modern contraceptives in Nigeria.

#### **The Family Planning 2030 Agenda in Nigeria**

FP2030 is a global initiative that provides a central platform for family planning, providing an unparalleled space for stakeholders to convene, align, share knowledge, broker resources, and advance the field<sup>5</sup>. It is the main global partnership that is centred solely on family planning. The singular focus of the agenda allows for collaboration among the widest possible range of partners across disciplines and sectors while situating family planning at the crossroads of the global health, development, and gender equality agendas.

Nigeria has been a commitment maker since 2012. The government has been working with key stakeholders to address issues around the availability of, and access to services and commodities, and to slow the rate of its population growth thereby setting the country on the path to a healthier future for women and families. The commitment in Nigeria is geared towards ensuring sustainable financing for the National Family Planning program and improving the availability of FP services and commodities in the country. Family Planning has been prioritized in both the 2014 -2020 and the 2020–2024 Family Planning Blueprints as part of an overall strategy to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity and manage the nation’s population growth rate.



Fig 1: Timeline of key events in Nigeria FP2020 & FP2030 Commitments

## JUSTIFICATION

As earlier noted, with a TFR of 5.3, Nigeria’s population is increasing rapidly and is on track to be one of the highest in the world by 2050. Low-level uptake of Family Planning has been identified as a major factor in keeping fertility high and accentuating rapid population growth. This justifies the need to strongly call for a clear strategy for the improvement of the uptake of FP services in all parts of the country. The Nigerian government has demonstrated interest in addressing issues around FP in the country as evidenced in the commitment to the F2020 Plan and prioritizing FP in the 2014 -2020 and the 2020–2024 Family Planning Blueprints. However, with a CPR of 18% and mCPR of 13% for all women and CPR and mCPR of 17% and 12% among married women respectively, improved and updated strategies as articulated in the Nigeria Fp2030 plan are needed.

Additionally, given that providing access to essential health services, especially family planning, requires sustained financial commitment, the inability of Nigeria to meet its commitment for allocation and full releases for FP in 2017, 2019 and 2021, as well as the fact that there is no budget line for FP in the 2022 budget and the massive cut by donors to FP funding<sup>7</sup>, signals a critical need to provide a platform to foster collaboration to ensure sustainable financing for the national Family Planning program and improve the availability of FP services and commodities in the country. The F2030 provides this platform that

strengthens result-oriented partnerships with the private sector, stakeholders and experts and facilitates the process of addressing obstacles that impede the advancement of commitments made by the government towards FP with the overall goal of ensuring women and girls in Nigeria live healthy lives and make informed choices on contraceptive use.

## **KEY FEATURES**

The Nigeria FP2030 Agenda envisions a country where everyone including adolescents, young people, populations affected by crisis and other vulnerable populations are able to make informed choices, have equitable and affordable access to quality family planning and participate as equals in society's development. The Agenda features;

- Nigeria's commitment objectives are organized under broad focus areas.
- Clearly stated objective statements in each focus area including targets.
- Rationale for each objective statement, including data points for context.
- Strategies for achieving the objectives.
- Timeline of activities to work towards meeting targets.

The agenda also includes approaches to accountability and outlines core commitment principles which include:

- Aligning with the country's other partnerships
- Being grounded in available data and evidence
- Addressing FP2030's 5 focus areas
  - i. policy
  - ii. data
  - iii. financing
  - iv. gender norms
  - v. system responsiveness
- Being developed and validated through an inclusive, equitable, and transparent process.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The eight core objective statements of the Nigeria FP2030 agenda include:

- Strengthen integration of FP into Nigeria's socioeconomic development frameworks and plans.
- Increase FP access and choice by scaling up evidence-based, high-impact practices.
- Strengthen the national FP supply chain, reducing stock out rates, increasing end-to-end data visibility and enhancing national capacity.
- Improve financing for FP by leveraging both existing and additional innovative domestic mechanisms.
- Strengthen the national and sub-national multi-stakeholder accountability mechanisms.
- Establish sustainable systems at national, state and local government area levels to address sexual and reproductive health needs.

- Reduce social and gender norms hindering autonomy and access to rights-based FP information and services.
- Reinforce the use of data to inform evidence-based policy actions and program strategies at all levels.

## **LINKAGES BETWEEN THE FP 2030 AGENDA, DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND, AND THE SDGS IN NIGERIA**

### **DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND**

Demographic dividend refers to the opportunity for accelerated economic growth that results from changes in a country's age structure combined with favourable social and economic policies. Countries with the greatest demographic opportunity for development are those entering a period in which the working-age population has good health, quality education, decent employment, and a lower proportion of young dependents<sup>9</sup>. Smaller numbers of children per household generally lead to larger investments per child, more freedom for women to enter the formal workforce and more household savings. When this happens, the national economic payoff can be substantial. For instance, a 2013 policy brief by the African Union noted that a reduction in fertility of one child per woman in Nigeria would lead to a 13% increase in GDP per capita in 20 years, and 25% in 50 years.

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a global initiative to put an end to poverty, secure the planet and ensure that everyone enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030. Many of the 17 SDGs and 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda are related to women's and girl's empowerment, gender equality and health. While family planning is important to attain most of the goals, specific references to family planning are included in Goal 3 on guaranteeing good health and well-being for all and in Goal 5 on promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Specifically, SDG indicator 3.7.1 which is "Proportion of women who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods", captures the family planning component of SDG target 3.7. which aims to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes.

### **FP2030, DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND AND SUSTAINABLE DEMOGRAPHIC GOALS**

The Family Planning Agenda 2030, the SDGs and the concept of demographic dividend are inextricably linked. Demographic dividend, for instance, has been widely employed to advocate improving access to family planning, and sustainable development cannot be achieved without assuring that all women and men, and girls and boys, enjoy the dignity and human rights to expand their capabilities, secure their reproductive health and rights, find decent work, and contribute to economic growth. Taken together, the major economic benefits of consciously and properly managing demographic changes through targeted interventions such as family planning occasions improved well-being for families and

societies. Thus, in implementing its FP2030 commitment, Nigeria positions itself to enjoy demographic dividend and meet the global SDG targets on health and economic well-being.

This linkage is significant and measurable. A 2018 study that estimated the fertility changes and associated economic benefits that would result from reaching the target of the FP2020 Initiative, using India and Nigeria as case studies is instructive<sup>11</sup>. The study compared the total consumption for selected years from 2015 through 2030 under two different scenarios of population growth and changes in age structure—one based on the projection of current contraceptive use patterns and the other based on gradually meeting all unmet needs for contraception by 2030.

Modelling from the study indicates that meeting the FP2020 target would have implied on average, that the number of children that need to be supported by every 100 working-age people would have decreased by 11 persons in Nigeria in 2020 and the associated reduction would have increased to 14 persons by 2030 under the SDG 3.7. Additionally, meeting the FP2020 target would have yielded a saving of US\$2.5 billion in consumption expenditures for children and youth in the year 2020 alone, and that would increase to \$12.9 billion by 2030. These benefits could potentially be larger when modelled under the FP2030 commitments and the SDG target. Table 1 shows total consumption and consumption savings through gradually eliminating unmet needs by 2030.

Table 1: Estimated present discounted value (PDV) of total consumption and consumption savings through gradually eliminating unmet needs by 2030 (in billions of US\$, discounted to 2014).

Country	Year	Without FP2020 and SDG influences		Under FP2020 and SDG			
		Youth dependency ratio	Total consumption	Youth dependency ratio	Total consumption	Averted consumption	Averted consumption (%)
India	2015	43.4	2,520.00	38.8	2,518.20	1.8	0.07
	2020	43.2	2,962.90	34.9	2,944.70	18.2	0.62
	2025	40.7	3,451.60	36.4	3,403.10	48.5	1.4
	2030	38.8	3,986.40	31.3	3,896.70	89.7	2.25
Nigeria	2015	84.8	225.4	81.7	225.2	0.3	0.11
	2020	84.3	258.2	73.8	255.6	2.5	0.98
	2025	84.2	294.4	76.8	287.6	6.9	2.34
	2030	80.4	334.2	66	321.3	12.9	3.86

It is however critical to note that the window of opportunity presented by the demographic dividend is short and will close over the next 10 to 20 years for most developing countries<sup>13</sup>. Countries must enable fertility decline through strong investments in family planning to see the economic benefits of a demographic dividend. Consequently, to properly exploit these linkages and achieve its full potential for economic growth, Nigeria will need to manage its

extremely young age structure through investments in infrastructural development, education, and health, in conjunction with a robust family planning strategy that will contribute to smaller and healthier families. The country's Agenda 2030 commitment can help achieve this.

## **DATA AVAILABILITY, DATA QUALITY AND DATA RELIABILITY**

Data is the lifeblood of sound decision-making and an important input in the drive for accountability. It is the foundation of development policy and the effective implementation of programs. Data is critical for economic and sectoral policymaking and for planning, implementation, monitoring, targeting, and administration of policies and programs. Much research on development issues relies on data. The availability of reliable data thus impacts decision-making and has direct implications for the life and well-being of people. This is especially more so in the health and development sector where the availability of reliable data has an outsized influence on the quality of life-saving care or intervention that people receive. Thus, the importance of data in terms of quality, frequency, timeliness, appropriateness and comprehensiveness in development planning and implementation cannot be overemphasized.

## **DATA AVAILABILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF FP2030 AND OTHER PROGRAMMES**

Availability of data is an integral consideration in the effort towards the realization of Nigeria's FP2030 commitment. Data is one of the core focus areas of the agenda and is central to setting realistic targets and consistent use of tools and processes to track progress toward achieving the targets and the overall goal of the initiative. Nigeria's pledge to reinforce the use of data to inform evidence-based policy actions and program strategies at all levels necessarily requires the availability of quality data for utilization. The routine information systems of the FMOH have been providing information on service utilization and logistics that informs managers at the operational level, although the system must be further strengthened to make it more efficient. For informing planning and policy formulation, surveys, and census, will be a major source of robust information for the agenda, just as it has been a base for planning and implementation of development interventions. The Population and Housing Census and the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS), all to be conducted in 2023 will provide accurate, comprehensive, and disaggregated data to gauge its performance, identify inequalities between social groups and geographic areas, and allocate scarce resources in a meaningful way towards making progress in the realization of FP2030 and other development programs. Some of the key indicators to be generated from these 2 major statistical activities are discussed in Section 5.3.

### **Data Quality and Reliability**

While data is central to development planning and decision-making, it is important to be mindful of the quality and source of the data. Data is only useful and reliable if it is of high



quality. As it is often said, “bad data is worse than no data at all.” Utilization of improperly sourced and sub-optimal data in planning for programmes, including the FP2030, risks jeopardizing the conception, planning, and monitoring process for the programme. It is therefore imperative that the data to be used in the FP2030 be of high quality to ensure that targets are realistic, and reviews reflects the true situation of things on the ground. High-quality data are characterized by the following dimensions:

- Accuracy
- Completeness
- Reliability
- Relevance
- Timeliness

Details on the different dimensions of data are presented in Table 2.

Characteristic	Description/Measure
Accuracy	Is the information correct in every detail?
Completeness	How comprehensive is the information?
Reliability	Does the information contradict other trusted resources?
Relevance	Is this information really needed?
Timeliness	How up-to-date is the information? Can the data be used for real-time reporting?

Table 2: Dimensions of data quality

All data sources and data collected for the implementation of targets towards FP2030 should be interrogated against these dimensions. This should be an important consideration given the issues documented around routine health data quality in Sub-Saharan Africa. Evidence has shown that routine health data of acceptable quality are usually unavailable and underutilized<sup>14</sup>, and these concerns have undermined data utilization for decision-making in the health sector<sup>15</sup>. The challenges are compounded by human, health system and infrastructure factors. Effective systems to monitor quality and standards guidance to measure data quality should be enforced, not only to provide quality data for the FP2030 but also to ensure that interventions in other areas are being driven by accurate and reliable data.

## **THE 2023 POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS AND DATA NEEDS FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA**

Nigeria is preparing for the conduct of a Population and Housing Census in April 2023. The planned Census is an especially important one for the country, given that it has been 16 years since the last Count. In line with the United Nations' recommendations for the conduct of the 2020 round of censuses that countries should leverage on digital tools for the conduct of Censuses, the 2023 Nigeria Population and Housing Census will be Nigeria's first Digital Census and will employ innovative tools and procedures to improve the census-taking process. Data from the Census will be the most comprehensive and richest set of data available for planning towards the achievement of the country's commitments to global goals and plans including the SDG, FP2030, Agenda 2063 and others.

### **The Census Process So Far**

The National Population Commission has been conducting key preliminary activities and setting up critical processes for the Census. These key activities have provided the impetus for the successful delivery of the project.

### **Enumeration Area Demarcation**

The Enumeration Area Demarcation was the first major activity conducted for the Census. The process is foundational to the success of any census. It entailed dividing the entire country into smaller units with clearly defined and identifiable boundaries, called Enumeration Areas (EAs). This was done in such a manner that there was no overlap or gap between them. The EAs so produced will become the assignment map which determines the enumerator's workload during the 2023 Censuses and other surveys. The process was firmly undergirded by technology and innovation. A customized software was developed and used for the exercise, and this provided improved GIS data capture and processing.

Beyond the use in census and surveys, the product from the exercise has potential use in many other areas including in the health sector. The dataset from EAD includes geolocation of health infrastructures and their distribution by wards, localities, LGAs and States, providing an important input in interventions towards meeting the country's health goals.

### **Tools and Instrument Finalization and Testing**

In recognition of the fact that a Census is only as good as the instruments with which it is implemented, instruments and tools developed for the 2023 Population and Housing Census have been rigorously tested. At all stages where consequential improvements have been made to the instruments to bring the instruments in line with the standard recommended by the United Nations Recommendation for the conduct of Censuses, the tools and instruments have undergone tests to re-validate them. Overall, the tools have undergone about 6 levels of testing including two pretests, a validation and verification exercise, a Trial Census, and a re-validation exercise after updates to the questionnaire. All this has been to ensure that the data produced from the exercise will be accurate, reliable, and fit for use in planning for the country.

## **Data Quality Management System for the 2023 PHC**

An innovative Data Quality Management (DQM) System has been developed for the 2023 PHC. The DQM is an essential part of the multi-pronged approach to ensuring data quality through checks and facilitation of remedial action while data collection is still ongoing (in real-time) during the Census. The DQM system will ensure data accuracy, completeness, consistency, and timeliness by managing the four critical components of the census operations which include the EA frame, personnel, software, & hardware. The DQMs will monitor the enumeration dashboards, manage field applications, and interface with field functionaries on issues around data quality. This layer of quality management is designed to further facilitate the achievement of the Census goal of counting everyone in the country.

Other processes have also been set and activities conducted to towards ensuring the quality of the data collected during the Census. These include:

- Set up a robust Monitoring & Evaluation system for the Census.
- Identification and mapping of special populations to ensure that everyone is properly captured during the Census no matter where they may be.

## **SYSTEMATIC COMPILATION OF HISTORICAL EVENTS TO AID THE COLLECTION OF ACCURATE AGE DATA DURING THE CENSUS**

### **Collaboration with Stakeholders**

Planning for the 2023 Population and Housing Census has benefited extensively from collaboration with partners and stakeholders at all levels. The active engagement of the stakeholders in the process has broadened the support base for the project, opening up a rich network of collaborative structures that will be leveraged to deliver on the important national exercise. Some of the engagements over the course of the preparation for the Census include:

- Convening of a National Stakeholder's Conference where Mr President presented the 2023 PHC strategic document to partners.
- Convening of a Donor's Breakfast Meeting in collaboration with UNFPA to mobilize resources for the 2023 PHC.
- Convening of a Stakeholders' Forum in all the states to mobilize support for the Census.
- Conduct of a finalization of the Census Instruments Workshop to bring present the census tools to partners and stakeholders for comments and input.

- Conduct of Compendium of Locality Workshops across the states to present EAD products to stakeholders.
- Set up an International Relations Unit to interface with international visitors and organizations on issues related to the 2023 PHC.

### **Trial Census**

A Trial Census has been conducted as an extensive “dress rehearsal” to fully assess the level of preparedness to conduct a Population and Housing Census in 2023.

The activity provided the opportunity to assess the appropriateness and suitability of developed tools and the workability of planned methods and procedures for a census. The Trial Census tested all aspects of the census process under different field scenarios – riverine EAs, large EAs, difficult terrain etc. Six LGAs were selected for a full population enumeration, and 45 EAs in nine LGAs across three senatorial districts of each state were selected for the exercise. As expected, critical lessons – from recruitment to data analysis – were learnt and incorporated into the planning process for the main 2023 PHC.

### **Trial PES**

The Post Enumeration Survey (PES) is one of the layers of the 6-tier Quality Assurance Strategy for the 2023 PHC. The Trial PES was undertaken to measure the content and coverage error of the Trial Census - overcounts and undercounts:

- to ensure the quality and accuracy of the outcome of the Trial Census and ultimately the 2023 PHC exercise. The Trial PES was planned and fully implemented by a team outside of the core main Trial Census process to assure independence.

### **Adoption of Digital Technology in the 2023 Population and Housing Census**

Being a fully digital Census, digital and innovative technologies have been deployed to drive the activity. The overarching goal in the use of digital tools is to ensure total coverage of the country during the Census and for assuring that data from the exercise will be of high quality, reliable and will be made available for use in a timely manner. Some of the key areas where technology has been deployed include the areas of Census mapping, data collection, recruitment and fieldwork monitoring.

#### **Digital Census Mapping**

Mapping for the 2023 PHC has been firmly anchored on technology. The customized EAD Pad developed and used for the Enumeration Area Demarcation provided improved GIS data capture and processing. The QA Pad also developed for the exercise provided a technology-based approach to ensuring real-time quality assurance of the EAD process.

#### **Hybrid Data Collection Tool**

A hybrid digital tool has been developed for the collection of data during the census. One half of the hybrid system is the Census Pad which handles the Geo-spatial component of

the system and is used for building numbering and household listing. The Census and Survey Processing (CSPro) application is adopted as the second component of the hybrid program for the 2023 PHC. The strength of its form centric CSEntry system allows for big data collection, processing and application of robust edit specifications. Interoperability between the two systems have been ensured and subjected to testing and validation. A monitoring application has also been developed to facilitate seamless monitoring of the fieldwork by supervisors, Quality Assurance Officers, Monitoring and Evaluation Officers and other monitors. Key applications developed for the Census are shown in Table 3.

Application	Project	Role
EADPad	Census Mapping	Demarcation of the country into enumeration is as for the census enumeration.
QAPad	Census Mapping	Used for quality checking of census mapping data.
CensusPAD	Building Numbering and Household Listing	Handles the spatial data component of the Census fieldwork. Used together with CS Entry as a hybrid tool for the 2023 PHC
CSEntry	Persons Enumeration	Use for collecting data during the enumeration component of the Census fieldwork. Used together with Census Pad as a hybrid tool for the 2023 PHC
Monitor app	Both Household Listing and Enumeration	To Monitor coverage by fieldworkers, monitor selected indicators

Table 3: Key applications developed for 2023 PHC

## **e-Recruitment Portal**

The recruitment system for the 2023 PHC is fully digital. The recruitment system for the Census is designed to ensure an effective and efficient distribution of functionaries down to the locality levels to allow for representation and inclusiveness in the entire process. The recruitment is currently open for applications towards the Census and will remain open through December 28, 2022 (portal address - <https://2023censusadhocreruitment.nationalpopulation.gov.ng/>).

## **Listing and Enumeration Dashboards**

Listing and enumeration dashboards have been developed for the monitoring of the 2023 PHC. The real-time enumeration tracking dashboard is designed for assessing the live output from the field by different categories of monitors with varying levels of access. It is one of the tiers of the 5-tier quality assurance component for the 2023 PHC. The dashboards will help ensure that full coverage is achieved during the Census and that potential issues in the Census data are identified and resolved before fieldwork is completed.

## **2023 Census Data and Development Data Needs**

The 2023 Census questionnaires contain abundant indicators across the areas of health, demographic, social, and economic well-being of the population as well as their housing characteristics. The Census data will provide information on:

- Household and social characteristics of the population
- Marital status
- Literacy and education characteristics
- Economic characteristics
- Internal and international characteristics
- Information and Communication Technology
- Fertility and child survival
- Survival status of parents

Specifically on fertility, the two sets of core questions about fertility as advised in the Principles and Recommendations on the conduct of Census is captured: the children ever born alive for lifetime fertility, and the question on date of birth of last child born alive to collect information about recent fertility<sup>16</sup>. Questions on age, date, or duration of first marriage as advised for consideration in countries where birth rates are high among adolescents and a sizeable proportion of women who are married before age 18 are also considered. Using the core questions on fertility in the 2023 Census questionnaires, the following measures of fertility which are important in answering important reproductive health and development questions can be achieved:

- Number of births: Count of live births occurring in a given reference period.

- Crude birth rate (CBR): Number of births occurring in a year divided by the population at midyear times 1,000.
- General fertility rate: Number of births in a year per 1,000 women aged 15 to 49 at midyear.
- Age-specific fertility rates (ASFR): Births to women in a 5-year age group during a time divided by the midperiod population of women in that age group. This measure indicates the age pattern of fertility in a population.
- Total fertility rate (TFR): The average number of children a woman would have in her lifetime if she experienced the prevailing fertility rates at each age of her reproductive life.
- Gross reproduction rate (GRR): The average number of daughters a woman would have in her lifetime if she experienced the prevailing fertility rates at each age of her reproductive life.
- Average parity/children ever born: Parity refers to the number of children born alive to a woman so far. Average parity refers to the average number of children ever born alive per woman by age group.
- Parity distributions: Number of women in each age group by number of children they have born.
- Child-woman ratio (CWR): Number of living children aged 0–4 divided by number of women of reproductive age (15–49).
- Outstanding Issues and Challenges in the 2023 PHC

Activities are continuing in full gear towards the conduct of the 2023 Population and Housing Census. Recruitment has commenced and is running smoothly, and the necessary tools needed for the exercise are being procured. However, considering the scope of the project, which is the largest peacetime mobilization of people and resources, some challenges persist. Some of these include:

**Resources:** The government has committed massive resources to ensure that the country is at this stage of readiness for the 2023 PHC. The amount committed to the Census has facilitated the conduct of critical activities that will ensure the success of the count. However, the resources available is still below the total required for the Census. The support of partners will need to augment government efforts in the provision of resources for the Census.

**Security:** The 2023 PCH is faced with prevailing and potential security challenges in some parts of the country. Strong collaboration and support will be required from the security apparatus and the public in the country to help secure personnel and materials.

## **ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

It is acknowledged that there is still more to be for the actualization of the 2023 Nigeria PHC, and the continued support of development partners and stakeholders will be crucial for the realization of the goal of providing Nigeria a reliable and acceptable Population and Housing data in 2023. In addition to organization-specific ways that Development Partners and stakeholders intend to support the Census, they can also:

- Intensify support – in cash or kind – for the 2023 Nigeria PHC.
- Collaborate with the Commission to support high-level advocacy among leaders from both public and private sectors towards the Census.
- Incorporate Census messaging in their programs at the state, LGA and community level
- Facilitate and open up capacity development opportunities for key Commission personnel on successful implementation of the digital census process.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

By 2030, Nigeria has committed through the FP2030 Agenda to be a country where everyone including adolescents, young people, populations affected by crisis and other vulnerable populations are able to make informed choices, have equitable and affordable access to quality family planning and participate as equals in society's development. This is in line with the SDGs' agenda of ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services which will include effective family planning, information, and education (CSE), and the integration of reproductive health into national development strategies and programs.

To meet this goal, the active participation of, and collaboration between all relevant stakeholders at national and sub-national levels will be needed to guide action in driving Family Planning knowledge and uptake. Crucially, data will be needed to track progress and to assess the areas where intervention is required to facilitate the achievement of this goal. The upcoming 2023 Population and the housing Census will serve as an important source of quality, reliable and up-to-date data for meeting Nigeria's commitment to the FP2030 and in the Sustainable Development Goals.

To further strengthen Nigeria's position in achieving its F2030 and SDG goals, and also reap potential demographic dividends, the following is recommended:

- The Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) should continue providing guidance and leadership in driving collaborative action towards meeting the targets outlined in the country's F2030 commitment.



- The Government, through the FMOH, should resume the allocation of dedicated budget lines at the national level to family planning activities to guarantee the realization of its benefits in gender equity, poverty reduction, and national development.
- The National Population Commission (NPC) should intensify efforts in coordinating collaborative action towards the successful implementation of the 2023 Population and Housing Census to provide data for tracking progress towards F2030, SDGs and other development goals.
- The NPC should further strengthen its vital registration system to provide complementary data for development planning.

Development partners and stakeholders should sustain their support for reproductive health-care services in the country including in effective family planning, information, and education. Development partners and stakeholders should scale up their support for the 2023 Nigeria PHC, and surveys like the upcoming 2023 NDHS to provide data for monitoring the FP2030 commitments and other important health indicators in the country.

There should be a harmonization of the different data sources for health data to facilitate effective monitoring of health and development indicators in the country.

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# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

## Conclusion

The various themes and contents of the 10 keynote papers presented through the first decade of the APLS succeeded in drawing attention and also generating discussions on the critical realities of Nigeria's rapidly growing population, what needs to be done, the potential outcomes of well-managed population as well as the challenges that constrain the nation's efforts towards demographic transition, sustainable development and improved quality of lives. The calls for actions and the recommendations proffered by the presenters speak to the need for Nigeria to prioritize population studies, policy and management as a key strategy to attaining its aspirations and goal of emerging as a foremost country in socio-economic development and in the global agenda; a country that prides itself as a giant of Africa not by the quantity (numbers) but much more by the quality (investments - Capital) of these numbers.

Whilst the global population was reported as having reached 8 billion on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 and could grow to around 8.5 billion in the next 8 years; become 9.7 billion in 2050 and 10.4 billion in 2100, aligning Nigeria's population growth path with this trend means that Nigeria's population which is currently estimated at 223.8 million (by the National Population Commission), and driven by current total fertility rate of 5.3 per Nigerian woman, would reach 263 million by 2030. In addition, the nation's population will continue to increase until 2050 and beyond, propelled by momentum of past growth to reach 400 million by 2050 and 733 million in 2100. In addition, Nigeria's population is youthful and is growing, with those under the age of 30 constituting over 70 percent of the entire population, almost 50 percent of the female population are in their reproductive age bracket (15-49 years); while 19 percent of adolescent girls (age 15-19 years), have commenced childbearing.

The rapidity of Nigeria's population growth with large content of dependents outstripping available resources is a major setback on Nigeria's prospects towards development. Nigeria, therefore, should as a matter of urgency look beyond the numbers and growth rates and shift focus to harnessing the potentials of the youth pool as socio-economic capital, promoting rights and choices and improving the quality of lives of each of the 223.8 million people.

The numbers could represent Nigeria's assets, strength, and pride. However, for the numbers to make meaning to our existence and contribute to Nigeria's development, we must emphasize investing in quality education (that responds to requirements of future jobs); permit affordable and equitable access to quality health care services at all levels and provide decent jobs that pay sustainable income to the working population as well as accord attention to prevailing and prospective age structure of our population and reducing fertility to slow down the growth rate by investing more towards universal access to health care and improving access to quality family planning/childbirth spacing services.

The presentations have also shown that investing in people, in their rights and choices, tow the path to enduring peace, prosperity and progress that all citizens yearn for and deserve. When the people, particularly women and young people, have equitable access to adequate and timely information, they will be empowered to realize their full potentials and make

informed choices on when to marry, when to start having children, how to space their pregnancies, how many children they can comfortably care for and when to exercise their rights and responsibilities. Then, they can navigate risks, emerge as more useful citizens and contribute more positively to the development of the nation.

The Government's launch and adoption of the new National Policy on Population and Development and the Human Capital Development Strategy document and Programme in 2022 was therefore timely. These serve as good expressions of commitment to advancing national and sub-national investments in human capital development, healthcare, nutrition, quality education, skills, and jobs to improve the quality of lives, living standards and livelihoods of the people.

Furthermore, the National Population Policy for Sustainable Development serves as the compass for Nigeria to create sustainable pathways to initiating a rapid decline in our fertility rates, achieve a significant demographic transition that will enhance Nigeria's opportunities to experience population management and sustainable development. All the key stakeholders, partners enabled with strong commitment, leadership and adequate funding from government at all levels, should work in close collaboration to move from rhetoric to evidence-based decision making and actions that would accelerate the change the nation envisions; accelerating human capital development that will transform quantity (numbers) to quality (capital) and from liability to assets that promote rapid economic growth and development. In achieving this, Nigeria needs to address the norms that are against women and girls and create a society that upholds everyone's rights and choices.

Finally, the APLS continues to be an agenda that supports focused and evidence-based discourse for strategic policies and actions to attain the necessary improvements in national population management. The past decade of dialogue has firmly established the foundation for consensus building and very vibrant discourse among stakeholders. It is hoped that the next decade of the APLS would be more dynamic and more involved in population-based knowledge management and research to further strengthen current advocacy efforts for the change from the psychology of numbers to improved quality of lives and sustainable development.