

Empirical Studies in Communication for Development in Nigeria: The Global View

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Communication is a vital catalyst for development, especially amidst global societal changes specifically in Nigeria. Engaging individuals actively becomes crucial for societal advancement, necessitating their awareness, involvement, and capacity-building for effective development programs. Establishing robust communication channels between the populace and the government is imperative. This paper examines empirical studies on communication for development within Nigeria and globally, emphasizing its pivotal role in progress and its impact on Nigeria's socio-economic growth. It explores global perspectives on communication's inherent advantages in fostering development and highlights challenges hindering the government's use of communication for national development. Additionally, it analyzes communication for development's influence on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), exploring communication tools used and barriers to their optimal achievement within set time frames.

Design/Methodology & Approach: Using comprehensive contextual analysis, this study rigorously reviews publications, textbooks, and pertinent online resources.

Findings: Communication significantly contributes to MDGs but faces persistent challenges such as insurgencies, insecurity, literacy gaps, ethnic diversity, and inadequate political will. Addressing these hurdles is crucial for maximizing communication's developmental benefits.

Implications: Neglecting these challenges and failing to fully embrace communication for development in Nigeria will impede anticipated national progress.

Originality/Value: This paper underscores communication's critical role in Nigeria and global development, essential for rapid societal advancement.

Paper Type: Conceptual research.

Keywords: Communication, Development, Communication for Development in Nigeria, Global View.

INTRODUCTION

People's participation in societal development necessitates effective communication, acknowledging that development's true success relies on shared knowledge, technology, and the populace's commitment. Communication becomes central in various aspects; involving people in program formulation, empowering them as principal actors, and fostering a sense of identity and participation. It aims to serve without manipulation, fostering conscientization for positive societal change (Bajracharya, 2018).

Development encompasses gradual progress and societal change, extending beyond mere economic growth

to include better living standards, human development, education, health, and environmental well-being. National development reflects socio-cultural, socioeconomic, and political improvements through science, technology, and mathematics (Akinfeleye, 2008).

Scholars offer diverse definitions of “development”. Sen’s “capability approach” emphasizes enabling freedom of action, while Nussbaum’s “abilities approach” highlights gender issues and women’s empowerment (Sen, A. 2011; Nussbaum, M.C. 2011). Development fundamentally aims at improving people’s well-being within a defined area, necessitating their active participation and effective communication for sustainable progress globally and particularly in Nigeria.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is defined as the transmission of information, ideas, and attitudes between individuals, emphasizes dialogue, mutual influence, and participatory decision-making rather than a mechanical exchange of facts (Mele, Pels, & Polese, 2010; Moemeka, 1997). It mobilizes communities, facilitating problem-solving insights and confidence (Frazer & Restrepo-Estrada, 1998). Fundamentally, communication is the art, science, and technology of routing messages to elicit a discriminating response and desired action. It relies on feedback to refine communication offerings and develop strategies to meet societal needs (Okoro, 2019). Human involvement is pivotal in development; scientific and material inputs matter less than the active participation, awareness, and skills of the people involved. Communication serves as the vital thread binding individuals together in the fabric of development.

Communication operates both as spontaneous dialogue during social change and as a deliberate intervention for socio-economic transformations. It unveils attitudes, fosters adaptation, spreads knowledge and facilitates social change. The use of communication for development hinges not solely on technology availability but on policymakers’ decisions to exploit its potential beyond political or commercial interests (UNDP, 1993).

Development

Interpreting “development” varies widely, focusing on individual variables like self-reliance and adaptive capacity to societal changes. Rogers, (1996) defines it as a participatory social change for greater equality and material advancement, emphasizing people’s control over their environments. The ultimate goal is not solely economic (GNP), but acquiring new knowledge, consciousness, and confidence (Kleinjans, 1975). The United Nations views development as multidimensional, aiming for a high quality of life for all (Moemeka, 1997). Pearson, (1992) describes it as qualitative and quantitative improvements using available resources, encompassing various strategies for socio-economic and environmental transformation.

Also, development is defined as a process involving growth, positive change, and the addition of physical, economic, social, and demographic components. Economic growth does not guarantee improved life quality globally, necessitating specific policies for social and economic mobility (Sid Israel, 2021). Sachs and Collier, (2007) view development through the lenses of mechanisms preventing progress and causing prolonged poverty, like civil war, resource mismanagement, and poverty itself, requiring constant interaction via communication to identify and resolve these hindrances. Hence this study unravels the term development through the various perspectives of its concept.

CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT

The term “development” has various meanings to different people and can be explained in different

contexts. For example, the development needs of a starving population must be different from those, where there is sufficient nutrition (Matowanyka, 1991). Development has often been confused with economic growth as measured solely in terms of annual increases in per-capita income or gross national product, regardless of its distribution and the degree of people's participation in effective growth (Mahmoud, 1991). According to Pearson, (1992), development involves either qualitative and quantitative improvement or either of them in the use of available resources. Pearson asserted that development does not refer to one particular perspective on social, political, and economic betterment. Instead, it is a hybrid term for a myriad of strategies adopted for socio-economic and environmental transformation from current states to desired ones.

Sid Israel, (2021) buttressed Pearson's assertion by defining development as a process that creates growth, progress, positive change, or the addition of physical, economic, environmental, social, and demographic components. Development is visible and useful, not necessarily immediately, and includes an aspect of quality change and the creation of conditions for a continuation of that change. Also, Sid Israel, (2021) noted that economic growth does not necessarily lead to a rise in the level and quality of life for populations all over the world. There is therefore the need to emphasize specific policies that would channel resources and enable social and economic mobility for the various strata of the population.

However, Jeffrey Sachs and Paul Collier, (2007) viewed development from the perspective of mechanisms that prevent development in various countries and cause them to linger in abject poverty for years. These include civil war, natural resources, and poverty itself. The identification of these would enable countries to avoid issues that will lead to civil wars, enact policies for poverty alleviation, and less emphasis on natural resources to achieve sustainable development. The identification of these hindrances to development requires constant interaction with the populace through various interpersonal and mass communication media.

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Defined comprehensively by Frazer and Restrepo-Estrada (1998), communication for development aims to facilitate consensus, plan actions for sustainable development, and equip individuals with the knowledge and skills for societal improvement. At its core, Behavior Change Communication (BCC) drives social transformation by advocating for resources, socio-political leadership, and public participation in development initiatives. Emphasizing roles, objectives, and the absence of manipulation, this approach fosters genuine audience response, critical consciousness, and self-responsibility while ensuring a two-way communication flow. Social mobilization and program communication, bring about wider public participation and ownership of development projects which affects changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) among specific program participants. The utilized tools, include reports, brochures, and social media, to aid in creating awareness for development projects, offering global benefits (Nnanyelugo Okoro, 2019).

Concept of Communication for Development

The central reasoning of communication for development is that strategic communication interventions should be used to produce social change. Development communication refers to using communication to facilitate development in society. The primary purposes include the fulfilment of basic needs, social transformation, and development. Quebral, N. (2001), a pioneer in development communication in Asia, expanded Jamias's philosophy and then referred to development communication as, "The art and science of human communication linked to a society's planned transformation from a state of poverty to one dynamic socio-economic growth that makes for greater equality and the larger unfolding of individual potentials

horizontal communication, popular participation, and empowerment.

Tracing the history of present-day communication for development, Akinfeleye, (2008) relates that in primitive times, certain individuals were given the task of making known current trends, discoveries, facts, and opinions, and to entertain the people. Therefore, community watchmen, members of the tribal council, parents, educators, jesters, and bards were regarded as communicators. Due to the expansion of the tasks and sophistication, the tasks grew too large for those individuals to perform. Hence communication systems took over the tasks because of their power of immediacy and mass circulation. The mass media is a product of opinion and as well produces opinion. Some theorists believe the mass media have significant effects on people with their persuasive tendencies. Some are of the view that the mass media have little or no effect on the people. Despite these different beliefs, the mass media function to inform people of the happenings and the opportunities available in the community/ society. Also, mass media relay ideas and information on development issues and are tools for positive attitudinal change to foster rapid development (Akinfeleye, 2008).

Relating notions from Harold Lasswell in Chris Drew, (2019), opined that communication is the most effective means of meeting many of the burning issues of society. As a tool for national development, communication through the mass media gives representation, an unbiased and accurate picture of the goals, aspirations, and socio-political foundation of the society in which they operate. Mass media also relate the events/projects that are of benefit to the society and those that are to the disadvantage of the society. They are powerful tools for education and serve as the “marketplace of ideas” for the populace as well as bridge the knowledge gap between government and the people (Chris Drew, 2019). The importance of communication for development cannot be overemphasized; as effective communication facilitates development in any society. UNICEF, (2015) highlights communication as central to sustainable development, involving community engagement, problem-solving, and action-oriented approaches for progressive societal growth. This is because communication for development (C4D) has to do with understanding people, their beliefs, and their values. Thus, communication is a major panacea to progressive development and beneficial from a global view for the achievement of sustainable socioeconomic development.

The Benefit of Communication for Development- the Global View

Specified tools for communication make communication effective and help in the successful implementation of development projects. Other benefits of communication for development are making participation in communication media inclusive and enabling the gathering and transferring of citizen feedback back into the policy information loop. This in turn allows for adapting, responding, and further engaging with audiences. Also, the openness of technologies enables communicators to organize and interpret a range of data through fast and interactive analytical tools, turning open development data into better policy and information. This new technology is fundamentally transforming international development cooperation – the way people perceive it and the way stakeholders do it. For instance, the data emanating from mobile phones can paint a picture of the needs and behaviors of individual users. Building user-centric solutions offers compelling possibilities for providing better access to health, education, finance, and agriculture services for people living in poverty.

Digital data also provide opportunities for gaining a real-time understanding of changes in human well-being and better detecting the social impacts of crises. One of the most important outcomes of the democratization of communication is that it enables the feedback and engagement of those who are directly concerned with the results of development; the beneficiaries of development assistance. As such, it improves opportunities for the world’s most vulnerable people to build a better life and lift themselves out of poverty. Social media platforms have rapidly become an influential means of communication between

civil servants, policymakers, and the public. Communication happens without the intervention of traditional media (i.e., print and electronic media), and public opinion and responses can be provided on a real-time basis.

Therefore, social media are considered as an unmediated channel of interactive communication between governments and citizens, and between citizens themselves. The issue is no longer about one-way communication from the government. It is a dialogue; dynamic and often not under the control of the state. Social media thus appear to offer an unprecedented channel through which to engage constituents in policymaking, actively collaborate and consult. By establishing new forms of interaction and engagement in policymaking, social media have the potential to help improve the design (or redesign) of policies, programs, and the delivery of more responsive public services. The best examples of this two-way conversation are more frequent public consultations seeking qualitative and quantitative feedback from citizens through online and social media platforms (Hem, Thore G. and A. Nygaard, 2012).

In 2006, the Irish Government developed Ireland's first policy on overseas aid, The White Paper on Irish Aid, following an extensive public consultation. In 2012, it invited members of the public to take stock of progress and review the policy through another public consultation. People could participate either by submitting their comments to Irish Aid or by attending one of four meetings scheduled around the country. The public could also contribute to the review in writing or by email; by organizing a discussion on any matter of interest and sending responses in writing; or by following the review on Facebook, Twitter, and elsewhere online. Also, the World Bank social media team discovered that feedback from users and followers could be very useful for adapting work to demands. Based on online conversations and comments on a food security report, for example, they prepared a concept note for a new study on how people deal with food security. Thus, social media and innovative online platforms enable communication on the complex stories of progress in development in a creative and accessible way. The government of Nigerian in collaboration with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) tapped into the numerous benefits aforementioned to achieve its eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), through inclusive participation of the citizens in the identification of their needs and contributing to the planning and implementation of development projects (OECD, 2015).

Communication for Development in Nigeria

For much of the twentieth century, news sources in Nigeria were involved in promoting political awareness, encouraging civic engagement, sensitizing citizens to national issues, and shaping public opinions on a variety of political issues. No doubt, communication tool such as the press (news sources) is a panacea for the effective participation of the people in the process of national development. This would enable the people to relate effectively in addressing the needs of the society and proffer development strategies which when implemented would culminate in sustainable development. Development studies by (Kothari & Cooke, (2001), & Diamond, (2004) of recent, indicate that responsible and effective governance is a sine qua non for sustainable democracy and political stability in developing nations of Africa, especially in a country like Nigeria, where the citizens and other significant stakeholders have been clamoring for policy reforms, improved quality of life, and a more robust media presence. Communication scholars and political analysts (Entman, 1989, Bennette, 2003, Gymai-Boadi, 2004) explain that over the past two decades, the participatory democratic process has taken a dramatic turn in the emerging democracies in the wake of citizens' agitation for good governance, expanded ethnic integration, independent and vibrant press, increased citizen participation, freedom of speech, and informed public debate. These have impacted positively on development in Nigeria

More than ever before, past and present leaders of Nigeria have consistently indicated a commitment to sustainable national and political development. He leaders have introduced various measures to support their

development objectives, social policies, and economic agenda. However, the World Bank, (2009) report strongly indicates, the country has not been able to achieve its seemingly ambitious national development programs because of a misplaced focus on tribal and ethnic issues and politics, rather than focusing on an integrated national development that would unify the country towards a common national purpose. For example, development objectives in the country shifted in recent times from rural areas where most of the country's approximately 100,000 communities reside to urban communities. Indeed, the uneven distribution of national programs and the building of infrastructures in different parts of the country accounts for the growing imbalance in the pace of development in rural and urban communities. The World Bank (2009) report noted that Nigeria's recent development priorities were guided by a new orientation to economic recovery, self-reliance, and social justice, but the strategic framework established by the political leadership did not fully include all of the national institutions and stakeholders, especially the press (news sources). The report, therefore, suggests that with a well-balanced blend of transparent leadership and the presence of robust and effective news sources, Nigeria's future will be as promising and productive as the nation's natural abundance of sunshine and resources. The World Bank's report and other studies (Diamond, 2004; Mbayo, 2000; Graf, 1988) stressed that a recurrent issue of many decades in the country is the establishment of government newspapers that serve as conduits for disseminating political and related issues and promoting the agenda of political leaders. However, with the establishment of privately-owned newspaper companies, communication and information on the government's development policies gained wider coverage in the rural areas where the majority of the populace reside. This created a healthy competition between the government news media and the privately owned newsagents, resulting in increased awareness, more cooperation and effective participation of the rural populace to ensure the implementation of projects on time in their various communities. Thus, it cannot be overemphasized that effective communication is a panacea for development in Nigeria. The effect of communication on development in Nigeria is seen in the implementation of the MDGs from the world view in the report of the Office of the Senior Special Assistant (OSSA) to the President on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Communication for Development in Nigeria – the Global View

Nigeria was among the 189 countries from across the world that endorsed the United Nations Millennium Declaration in New York in September 2000, which led to the adoption of the eight time-bound Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their monitorable indicators. The eight goals were to be achieved by respective countries by 2015 and were namely; eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV and AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development.

As indicated in the Report by the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs (OSSAPMDGs), Nigeria began to find its rhythm in the implementation of the MDGs in 2005. That was the year it successfully negotiated a debt relief from the Paris Club which enabled it to increase and target public investments in pro-poor interventions aimed at achieving the MDGs. In addition, the Presidential Committee on the Assessment and Monitoring of the MDGs and the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs (OSSAPMDGs) was established to guide the use of the Debt Relief Gains (DRGs) in the execution of pro-poor programs and projects. Accordingly, several policies, programs, and projects have been implemented as a result of advocacy and the use of mass media in rural areas for the effective dissemination of the MDGs, had a direct impact on the successful implementation of MDGs despite some environmental challenges encountered.

The environment for implementation has been characterized by a mix of risks and vulnerabilities with implications for the attainment of the MDGs. They included both local issues as well as those predicated on the global environment. These include; oil price volatilities, the Niger Delta Crisis, the Boko Haram

phenomenon; flooding as well as farmers-herdsmen clashes. Whereas most of the vulnerabilities and risks have endured, a few have diminished in importance with time, but collectively, they have all contributed to slowing down Nigeria's progress with the MDGs. Despite the challenges faced in the total achievement of the MDGs, the Report highlights a summary, of Nigeria's appreciable progression on the MDGs and consequently national development with the infusion of communication tools in the implementation process. The following were the progress made on the eight MDGs within the specified time line:

MDG 1 – Eradicating Extreme Poverty and Hunger

Nigeria showed notable progress in this goal, particularly in combating hunger, but fell short of meeting most indicators. The reduction in poverty prevalence was consistent, declining from 65.6% in 1996 to 45.5% in 2010, yet still missing the target by 24.1%. Recent estimates indicate a lower poverty incidence of 33.1% in 2012/2013, which is closer to the goal. Despite impressive economic growth, poverty reduction remained limited, posing a significant challenge. Although Nigeria cut hunger by 66% in 2012, earning international recognition, disparities persist across regions and between urban and rural areas, especially in the Northern states

The policy environment for this goal has been promising, especially with agriculture prioritization by Nigeria's new administration, which could positively impact poverty reduction. While the target for underweight children under five years was not met, progress from 35.7% in 1990 to 25.5% in 2014 was evident within this conducive policy environment. Effective communication by key institutions like the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Development Partners, through the utilization of mass media advocacy in rural areas, significantly contributed to these advancements. This is buttressed by Chris Drew, 2019 who noted that as a tool for national development, communication through the mass media gives representation, an unbiased and accurate picture of the goals, aspirations, and socio-political foundation of the society in which they operate. Ultimately, MDG 1 made strong strides, yet fell short of the 2015 endpoint but there was notable progress toward the achievement of MDG1 due to the positive impact of the application of communication to development goals. (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report).

MDG 2 – Achieve Universal Primary Education

Through sensitization of parents using mass media like film shows and talks through advocacy in the native dialect of the communities especially in Northern Nigeria, the net enrolment in basic education (as domesticated in Nigeria to mean six years of primary schooling and three years of junior secondary education) had a fluctuating history of an upward trend to the mid-point assessment year. This positive trend was however halted in later years as a result of the disruptions brought about by the Boko Haram insurgency. The insurgency led to the destruction of many schools with the school children constituting a large size of the internally displaced population. Consequently, the net enrolment of 60% in 1995 declined to the end-point net enrolment of 54% in 2013. There is, however, a good policy environment on sensitization through various mass media like radio, television, film shows and Talks on the importance of education provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and its parastatals which will aid significant growth in net enrolment once the Boko Haram phenomenon is effectively checked. Concerning the primary six completion rate, the trend and end-point status show strong and significant progress. Nigeria remained largely on track towards achieving this indicator. The completion rate which stood at 73% in 1993 trended upward in most of the subsequent years culminating in 82% at the end-point year.

The policy environment is good and supportive of consolidation of the achievements with the infusion of communication for development tools (social and mass media) to enhance the participation of the stakeholders (citizens). According to (Nnanyelugo Okoro, 2019) social mobilization and program communication, bring about wider public participation and ownership of development projects which affects

changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) among specific program participants. There are however variations across states which need to be addressed in efforts to consolidate the achievements. The literacy rate trended marginally upward in most of the years from 64% in 2000 to 66.7% in 2014. The significant rate of 80.0% achieved in 2008 could not be sustained. There were marked variations across states and between the North and the South. Concerning variations across geo-political zones, the northeast recorded the highest rate of illiteracy with the insurgency compounding the problem. Despite the insurgency, the policy environment at both the national and subnational levels is very supportive, especially with active and growing collaboration between Nigeria and international development partners. Thus, appreciable progress made for the MDG2 was attributed to the infusion of communication tools for development though the goal was not met (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report).

MDG 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

In Nigeria, strides have been made in achieving gender parity in basic education despite entrenched patriarchal norms. The ratio of girls to boys in basic education significantly increased from 82% in 1991 to 94% in 2013. Development Partners like Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) organized enlightenment campaigns and seminars on gender equality and women empowerment in marketplaces and religious gatherings to encourage women to actively participate in all facets of national development, especially governance. However, this success didn't extend to tertiary education. Women's representation in non-agricultural wage employment remained low at 7.7%, while their overall participation in the labor force increased to 37.7% in 2014. However, women's political representation in the National Assembly was only 5.11% against a target of 35%. Despite this, over 30% of women held higher-level political appointments. The progress shows gender parity achievements through the utilization of communication tools for development but had insufficient empowerment. The MDG 3 endpoint goal was not met. The endpoint goal would be achieved through an increased massive infusion of communication tools for development in all the strata of the nation. They are powerful tools for education and serve as the "marketplace of ideas" for the populace as well as bridge the knowledge gap between government and various categories of people in the populace (Chris Drew, 2019).

Below is a more detailed breakdown of the progress in achieving MDG 3 in Nigeria:

1. Education Parity:

Basic education showed commendable progress in achieving gender parity, with the ratio of girls to boys increasing significantly from 82% in 1991 to 94% in 2013. This indicates substantial advancement despite prevailing cultural norms that favor boy- child education.

2. Tertiary Education and Employment:

The success seen in basic education didnot translate to tertiary education. Progress here remained weak, with limited growth in women's representation.

Women's participation in non-agricultural wage employment remained low, standing at only 7.7% in 2010, highlighting persistent challenges in this area.

3. Labor Force Participation

The overall participation of women in the labor force grew to 37.7% in 2014. While this demonstrates advancement, the figures showroom for further improvement.

4. Political Representation

The representation of women in the National Assembly was substantially lower than the anticipated target of 35%, standing at only 5.11% in 2015. This disparity was largely due to entrenched patriarchal structures that limit women's access to elective positions.

5. Higher-Level Political Appointments:

In contrast, more than 30% of higher-level political decision-making positions were occupied by women in recent years, showcasing progress in appointive positions.

Overall, the progress in achieving gender parity in education was noteworthy, but in other areas like tertiary education, employment, and political representation, the advancements were insufficient to meet the MDG 3 endpoint goal. The country made strides in gender parity but faced obstacles in fully empowering women across various sectors (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report).

MDG 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Nigeria's efforts aimed at reducing avoidable child deaths have been met with gradual and sustained progress through effective mass media enlightenment campaigns, film shows, seminars, talks, and door-to-door immunization services in the communities. The under-five mortality rate (U5MR) has improved remarkably from 191 deaths per 1000 live births in 2000 to 89 deaths per 1000 live births in 2014 as the end-point status. Considering the end-point status of U5MR, Nigeria falls short of the 2015 target of 64 deaths per 1000 live births by 28 %. In 1990 (as the baseline), the infant mortality rate (IMR) was estimated at 91 deaths per 1000 live births. This, however, decreased to 75 deaths per 1000 live births in 2008 and 61 deaths per 1000 live births in 2012. Although the end-point figure which stood at 58 deaths per 1000 live births in 2014 reflects progress, it is still short of the 2015 target of 30 deaths per 1000 live births. Also the immunization effort against measles has been relatively effective. It has resulted in significant reductions in case burden as a result of the scale-up of the administration of measles vaccination to children 9 months and older through routine immunization services led by the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA). The proportion of one-year-old children immunized against measles increased from 46% in 1990 to 61.3% in 2012 and subsequently to 63.0% in 2014. Nigeria has also recorded strong progress in the effort to eradicate polio and recently celebrated one year without polio from July 2014 to July 2015. All these signs of progress are achieved as a result of the utilization of communication tools for the enlightenment campaigns by NPHCDA at the Ante and Post Natal clinics in all healthcare units and communities all over Nigeria. This is corroborated by Akinfeleye, (2008) that mass media relay ideas and information on development issues and are tools for positive attitudinal change to foster rapid development. Hence, strong progress was achieved in the MDG4 but the goal was not met (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report). There is a need for wider coverage through social and mass media sensitization, and enlightenment campaigns to fully achieve the MDG4 End-Point status.

MDG 5: Improve Maternal Health

The drive to make progress on this goal has seen improvements in maternal health. With a baseline figure of 1000 deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990, the Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) consistently decreased over the years to 545 in 2008. The downward trend continued to 350 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2012 and subsequently to its end-point status of 243 per 100,000 live births in 2014. Many policy drivers made the progress possible; one being the Midwives Service Scheme while the other was the collaborative efforts made between donors and the Federal Ministry of Health and its parastatals. In the meantime, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel improved significantly from a baseline figure of 45% in 1990 to the end-point status of 58.6% in 2014 with the conviction that the national figure would have been better

had it not been for the wide disparities across states with lower records. The successful development recorded is attributed to the training and retraining of health care givers using communication tools such as mass and social media for effective implementation of the Midwives Service Scheme (MSS). In the case of antenatal coverage, notable progress was also recorded. Antenatal coverage of at least one visit recorded an end-point status of 68.9% in 2014, and for at least four visits, the end-point status was 60.6% in 2014. The successes imply the need for a scale-up of the policy interventions for sustainable progress. Thus, on the MDG 5; the Maternal mortality target was met, and strong progress was made on other indicators (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report). Accordingly, Frazer and Restrepo-Estrada (1998), opined that communication for development aims to facilitate consensus, plan actions for sustainable development, and equip individuals with the knowledge and skills for societal improvement. Hence, this feat would not have been achieved without the use of communication tools for manpower development in the health sector of the economy.

MDG 6: Combat HIV and AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

The prevalence of HIV among pregnant young women aged 15–24 years has steadily declined from 5.4% in 2000 to 4.1% in 2010 (end-point status). The decline resulted from the implementation of tested high-impact interventions implying the need for consistent implementation of such high-impact interventions in the sector. Concerning the incidence of tuberculosis per 100,000 people, the efforts have not produced substantial results. In the past 7 years, the value for this indicator has fluctuated between 343 in 2005 and 339 in 2012. The end-point status of the incidence of tuberculosis in Nigeria was 338 as of 2013. This latest figure is still unacceptable and calls for renewed efforts, more resources, and interventions to drastically reduce the prevalence of tuberculosis. It is noteworthy to state that there was significant progress in combating HIV and AIDS by organizing health education and sensitization for the populace through social and mass media tools. Social mobilization and program communication, bring about wider public participation which affects changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) among specific program participants. The utilized tools include reports, handbills, brochures, and social media, to aid in creating awareness of the menace of the diseases and the need for their eradication (Nnanyelugo Okoro, 2019). In the same vein, increased health education and other sensitization campaigns using communication tools like social and mass media would impact positively on the decline of the prevalence of tuberculosis and other diseases to be achieved in MDG6.

MDG 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Nigeria has made considerable progress in improving households' access to safe drinking water with an end-point status in 2015 at 67.0% access. The country is also deemed to have done well on this indicator from the statistics of the Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) /United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) indicating the recorded end-point status of 69% in 2015. This compares well with the baseline figure of 40% in 1990. This was achieved through mass publicity and advocacy on the imperative of safe drinking water through social and mass media. UNICEF (2015) highlights communication as central to sustainable development, involving community engagement, problem-solving, and action-oriented approaches for progressive societal growth. Therefore, the effective utilization of communication tools which enabled the full participation of the populace to achieve laudable development cannot be overemphasized. However, there are wide disparities in access to safe drinking water across states, with those in the South having higher access than those in the North. Nevertheless, in Nigeria as a whole, there is a good policy environment for the provision of safe drinking water with the Conditional Grant Scheme (CGS) being a major policy driver of the intervention in all parts of the country and mostly in the rural areas. Again, the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and its parastatals, as well as the Federal Ministry of Lands, Housing, and Urban Development, along with many donors have played prominent roles in the provision of safe drinking water to Nigerians and advocacy on the need for safe drinking water. Given

the existence of many policy drivers targeting both the urban and rural areas for improved access to safe drinking water, as well as the scaling up of interventions, health education, sensitization and advocacy through social and mass media communication tools, in no distant time, the entire populace of the nation will have access to safe drinking water (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report).

MDG 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

Nigeria has performed better on this goal as compared to the others. There has been a rising trend in per capita Official Development Assistance (ODA) with the potential impact felt in infrastructure and human development. The reasonable decline in debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services is attributed to the debt relief granted in 2005. The socio-economic benefits associated with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have seen significant growth in the industry. The growth in the number of cellular phone subscribers and the teledensity per 100 people standing at 77.8 and 99.3, respectively, in 2014 signifies wide coverage. Conversely, the growth in the number of internet users per 100 people, standing at 42.68 in 2014 implies that there is a need to step up interventions in this sector. It can therefore be concluded that MDG8 which hinged on communication tools was met and consequently enhanced national development (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report).

To buttress the impact of communication for development on the achievement of the eight MDGs, there are selected MDG success stories despite the challenges which attended the implementation in Nigeria. Six notable success stories can also be considered best practice examples to inform the post-2015 development agenda. These significant success stories include the following:

1. The Nigeria Polio Eradication Effort; which has resulted in the country's celebration of one year without polio (July 24, 2014 – July 24, 2015). Indeed, this is seen as Nigeria's MDG implementation exit gift to the world. The strategies used for achieving this feat which were the utilization of social and mass media communication tools to educate and sensitize the populace, were replicated in the dogged and successful fight against the outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus in Nigeria.
2. The Conditional Grant Scheme (CGS); which has helped tremendously to scale up investments at the sub-national levels promote ownership and sustainability of such investments, empower the people, promote improvements in service delivery, leverage public service reforms, especially in public expenditure reform, and strengthen the partnership between the tiers of government. This also was accomplished through campaigns, advocacy and sensitization for the need for the populace to participate in governance at the grassroots level. The Scheme remains a major success story from Nigeria to the rest of the world.

III. Implementation of the Village Health Workers Scheme (VHWs); which has been recognized internationally for its notable success in reducing morbidity and averting mortality where the overall Primary Health Care (PHC) system is weak. This was achieved through the provision of health services mobile training to the village health workers through the use of social and mass media communication tools.

1. Adoption of the independent monitoring and evaluation system; which is a result-based monitoring strategy anchored on good planning, good budgeting, and effective feedback from the populace gathered through interviews, town hall meetings, radio and billboard advertisement. The system contributed immensely to the success of CGS given the systemic nature of corruption in Nigeria.
2. Implementation of the Midwives Service Scheme (MSS): This scheme resulted in the tremendous progress recorded in crashing the high maternal mortality rate in Nigeria. This is a notable intervention in the health sector that without the infusion of communication for development would not have had such notable success. This scheme needs to be scaled up under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for optimal decline of high maternal mortality in Nigeria.
3. NYSC MDGs Corps Volunteers Projects: Through lectures, seminars, film shows, and the utilization of communication for development, the Corps Volunteer Projects offered excellent mentoring skills to

Corps members, many of whom excelled and received awards in later years (Nigeria 2015 | Millennium Development Goals | End-Point Report).

CONCLUSION

The paper examined communication for development in Nigeria, communication tools, and their development benefits. These inherent benefits in the application of communication tools for development have made these tools the hub around which all development processes must revolve to achieve the set goals. This is glaring in the ascertainable progress made on the MDGs in the last 14 years, particularly in the area of universal primary education enrolment; achieving gender parity in education; reducing the spread of HIV and AIDS; reducing maternal deaths, as well as, halving the percentage of people living in absolute hunger for which it received recognition from the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). Despite the appreciable progress, some of the targets could not be met due to challenges in the areas of poverty, insecurity, social inequality, absence of inclusive growth, and youth unemployment. It therefore means that the MDG implementation in Nigeria remains an unfinished business that needs to be rolled over to the successor SDG framework. The SDG could only be successfully implemented when there is political will by the government to address the identified challenges through the infusion of state-of-the-art communication technologies that would enhance all-inclusive participation of the various strata of the citizens for rapid development.

There are two key areas of communication the government has to fully embrace to become a more powerful tool in development processes; deeper involvement of citizens in the process, and leveraging the opportunities as development tools that new technologies offer. These are the social media and mass media through advocacy. This will enable the nation to experience sustainable progress in development and reap the benefits of communication as a tool for development. Any complacency on the part of the government to fully embrace communication as a tool for development would result in the stagnation of socioeconomic development and abject poverty in the nation. Hence the imperative of communication for development cannot be overemphasized.

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