

A Policy Evaluation of the Constraints on Nigeria's Economic Development

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Abstract

This paper examines the concept of Economic Development as the increase of the amount of people in a nation's population with sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern, high-income economy. It considers Nigeria's effort to achieving economic development through development plans/rolling plans and development projects (Agricultural Development Projects). These efforts were found to be unsuccessful. Nigeria's development indicators and stylized facts about the economy showed that Nigeria has not achieved economic development. Human resource constraints, distortions caused by globalization and natural resource abundance, agricultural constraints and over-dependence on oil, political and administrative constraints, professional and administrative insincerity and technological backwardness constituted problems to achieving economic development in Nigeria. Nigeria can still achieve economic development by being more committed to plans and projects as work guide, isolating from non-imperialist nations of West in terms of policy making and trade, improving the quality of education to be more pragmatic, ensuring mechanized commercial agriculture and committed leadership.

Introduction

All nations of the world strive towards achieving a common goal - economic development. Nations of the West have attained economic development and hence have experienced higher consumption levels, higher levels of technology, low levels of production on the average, qualitative education and good health for their population. Other nations of the world have not been able

to achieve economic development. Nigeria happens to belong to those nations that have not achieved economic development, even with the consistent efforts that she has been making since independence in 1960. This paper seeks, to examine the constraints on Nigeria's economic development. The rest of this paper shall focus on the efforts of Nigeria to achieve economic growth since 1960 via development planning and development projects - Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs); examine their successes or failures, examine the reasons for their failures; and assess major constraints in achieving economic development in Nigeria. To achieve these, section two of this paper discusses the concept of economic development; section three Nigeria's efforts to achieving economic development; section four focuses on development indications: 2009 UNDP Human Development Report on Nigeria; section five considers the constraints in Nigeria's economic development; section six makes recommendations and section seven draws conclusion.

The Concept of Economic Development

Economic development is the increase in the amount of people in the nation's population with sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern, high-income economy (Muyint and Krueger, 2009). Its scope includes the process and policies by which a nation improves the economic, political and social well-being of its people (Sheffrin, 2003). Goncalo, L. Fonsesca at the New School for Social Research defines economic development as "the analysis of the economic development of nations" (New School Economics Department (NSED), 2009).

The University of Iowa's Centre for International Finance and Development states that:

Economic development or development is a term that economists, politicians, and others have use frequently in the 20th century. The concept, however, has been in existence in the West for centuries. Modernizations are other terms people have used when discussing economic development.

Although, no one is sure when the concept originated, most people agree that development is closely bound up with evolution of capitalism and the demise of feudalism (Conteras, 2003).

The study of economic development by social scientists encompasses theories of the causes of industrial-economic modernisation plus organizational and related aspects of enterprise development in modern science. It embraces sociological research on business organization and enterprise development from a historical and comparative perspective; specific processes of the evolution (growth, modernization) of markets and management-employee relations; and culturally related cross-national similarities and differences in patterns of industrial organization in contemporary western societies. On the subject of the nature and causes of the considerable variations that exist in levels of industrial-economic growth and performance internationally, it seeks answers to such questions as: "Why are levels of direct foreign investment and labour productivity significantly higher in some countries than in others?" (Abbott, 2003). Marshall and When (1998) state that development has been understood since the Second World War to involve economic growth, increase in per capita income, and attainment of a standard of living equivalent to that of industrialized countries.

Generally, economic development refers to social and technological progress. It implies a change in the way goods and services are produced, not merely an increase in production achieved using old methods of production on a wider scale. It typically involves improvement in a variety of indicators such as literacy rates, life expectancy, and poverty rates. It takes into account such aspects as leisure time, environmental quality, freedom, or social justice, and alternative measures of economic well-being.

A country's economic development is related to its human development which encompasses, among other things, health and education.

Nigeria's Efforts to Achieving Economic Development Development Planning in Nigeria since 1960: An Overview

Planning is one of the basic principles of administration and about the most critical of its functions since it permeates all others. Development planning therefore becomes a necessary tool used by many governments and organizations to set their visions, missions, goals and effective means of realizing development through effective direction and control. Development planning has been a consistent phenomenon in Nigerian administration since 1946. Experts, (e.g. Obikeze and Obi, 2004; Okojie, 2001) however, argue that it has not been as successful as expected. Truly, Nigeria remains an underdeveloped nation occupying a low position among the poorest countries of the world in spite of her tremendous natural and human resources endowment. This points to a distorted planning regime and implies two things: been made or correct plans made were not effectively implemented. Both options seem to be true of Nigeria. As Obikeze and Obi (2004) noted, "a review of the various plan (sic) clearly shows that, the country is still very far from where it was envisaged it will be today. This is simply as a result of either faulty implementation of the plan, distortions or even non-implementation".

The Nigerian government has aspired to achieve economic development through the use of various types of plans, namely short-term (Annual Budget), medium and long-term plans, Nigeria's development planning could be classified under four phases. These can be described as colonial era, the era of fixed-term planning (1962-85), the era of Rolling Plan (1990-1998), and the New Democratic Dispensation (1999 till date). There exists between these periods some years dominated by sporadic government actions and ad-hoc planning in which the country did not actually produce a plan document that could be categorized into the four periods mentioned. These periods represent times of major socio-political upheaval and economic crisis that necessitated

transitory and sporadic actions from the incumbent administrations (Ikeanyibe, 2009). We may ignore the colonial era and continue from the second period.

The Period of Fixed Medium-Term Plans

Within this period, four successful plans were launched, namely; First National Development Plan (1962-1968), the Second National Development Plan (1970-1974), the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980) and the Fourth National Development Plan (1981-1985). Reasonable commitment was made in the preparation of these plans. Realizing the effect of non-existence of a planning commission and the need to prepare the country as an independent country led to the establishment of a National Economic Council in 1955 with the mandate of coordinating activities for economic development of the country. The council was made of representatives of Central and Regional Governments and was headed by the Governor General up to 1958 when the Prime Minister became the Chairman.

The coordinating work of the council was boosted with the establishment of a Joint Planning Commission (JPC) made up of Senior Professional Administrators drawn from relevant federal and regional ministries and the Central Bank of Nigeria. It is important to mention that even these senior professional administrators *de facto* lacked the technical knowledge and experience necessary for a strategic planning as most of them were young inexperienced civil servants who, by sheer opportunities saw themselves in the high positions they occupied. The envisaged importance of human resource factors in any planning also led to the creation of the National Manpower Board (NMB) in 1962. The complementary nature of the assigned functions of the JPC and NMB instigated their merging with the Ministry of Economic Development with the responsibility for plan preparation and implementation. The NEC remained the overall political overseer of planning at this period. This was the new institutional framework under which the

First National Development Plan 1962-1968 was done (Adamolekun, 1983).

The First National Development Plan: 1962-68

In spite of political independence, the patterns of production and economic activities instituted by colonialism survived unscathed. The economic motivation of the petty bourgeoisie and comprador bourgeoisie which assumed the leadership of the country after Independence did not seek to make a break with the colonial production process. Thus the colonial development strategies were perpetuated after independence. The first development plan in post-colonial Nigeria emerged with the National Development Plan, 1962-68 (See Table 1). The main goals of the plan were to raise the rate of economic growth and the increasing control of the nation's economy (Olanunbosun, 1975).

The character of the plan made it essentially a continuation of the colonial development policy in Nigeria, for the substance of the economic policy implicit in the plan did not differ significantly from the previous policy of the colonial masters. For instance, transportation and communication still got the highest vote of 25.7%, while primary production got only 13.6% (First National Development Plan, 1962). Although, the proportion allotted the primary sector was higher than that in the 1955-69 plan/ Table 2 shows that it compares unfavourably with the situation in some developing countries.

Table 1: National Development Plan (1962-68) Sectoral Allocation of Funds (all Nigerian Governments)

Expenditure on	Amount (£Million)	Per cent Distribution
Town and Country Planning	41,746	6.2
Transportation and Communication	173,817	25.7
Electricity	101,740	15.1
Primary Production	91,760	13.6

Trade and Industry	90,269	13.4
Health	17,076	2.5
Education	69,763.	10.3
General	48,089	7.1
Judicial	964	0.1
Water Supply	24,528	3.6
Co-operative and Social Welfare	8,662	1.2
Financial Obligation	2,200	0.5
Information	3,662	0.6
Total	676,800	100.0

Source: First National Development Plan.1962-68, Federal Ministry of Information.

Table 2: Planned Development Expenditure and the Share of Agriculture in some Developing Countries and Nigeria

Country and Period	Agriculture as Percentage of Total Investment
Cyprus (1962-66)	30.5
Iran (1962-68)	19.2
Iraq (1961-66)	20.3
Jordan (1962-67)	43.0
Lebanon (1962-66)	14.2
Syria (1960-65)	50.9
UAR (1960-65)	23.1
Nigeria (1955-60)	11.9

Sources: (1) United Nations, Economic Development in the Middle East,

(2) Supplement to World Economic Survey, New York UN 1962, p. 17.

For example, as can be seen in-Table 2, Cyprus allotted 30.5% of its total expenditure to agriculture in her 1962-66 plan, Jordan voted 43% in her 1962-67 plan, while Syria allotted as high as 50.9% in her 1960-65 plan. Nigeria fared worse with 11.9% in her 1955-1960 plan. Worse still/there was under-spending of 42.8 per

cent in the primary production (See Table 3) and apart from establishing a Department of Forestry at the University of Ibadan, there were no tangible achievements in the primary sector (Olatunbosun, 1975). Furthermore, as can be seen from Table 3, the area of health which could have benefited the rural majority had the lowest achievement percentage of 13.55.

Table 3: National Development Plan (1962-68) Actual Public Expenditure (All Nigeria Government)

Sector	Total All Government (fimillion)		
	Estimate	Actual	%Change
Primary Production	91,760	82,800	-42.8
Trade and Industry	90,269	47,537	-47.3
Electricity	101,740	80,686	-20.7
Communications	30,000	11,042	-63.2
Transport System	143,817	121,101	-15.8
Water Supply	24,258	24,747	+2.0
Education	69,763	45,654	-34.0
Health	17,076	7,460	-56.3
Town and Country Planning	41,746	19,630	-53.0
Co-operatives and Social Welfare	8,622	3,722	-57.0
Information	3,662	6,630	+27.7
Judicial	964	1,247	+29.4
General	48,089	103,527	+115.3
Financial Obligations	2,200	12,883	+230.3
Total	676,800	536,499	-20.7

Source: Second National Development Plan 1970, Lagos: Government Printer, 1970, p. 13.

In brief, the First National Development Plan just like its colonial predecessors made little impact on rural development. Therefore, before the start of the civil war in July 1967, rural poverty existed alongside prevailing urban affluence. It is

important to mention that about half of the total fund for financing this plan was expected to come from external sources. This reinforced the domination of the economy by foreign private concerns. The result was the continued exploitation of Nigeria's economy by imperialist agents and the Nigerian comprador bourgeoisie with its attendant rural impoverishment. In fact, just like the colonial development plans, rural development was never included as a plan category.

The Second National Development Plan: 1970-74

This Development Plan emerged immediately after the Nigerian Civil War. It aimed at restoring and rehabilitating economic activities adversely affected by the civil war and to achieve as much development as the available resources would permit. To achieve the goals stated in the plan, a capital expenditure of N2,050,738 million was budgeted (see Second Nigerian National Development Plan, 1970).

The 1970-74 Plan just like the previous plan did not introduce an integrated rural development programme. But perhaps, a major weakness of this plan just like the previous plans was its implicit assumption that agricultural development and rural development were synonymous. Also, out of the total amount budgeted for the plan, a meager amount was allotted to programmes or projects that could have improved the lots of the rural inhabitants. For example, only 12.9% was allotted to primary production (a decrease of about 0.5% compared with the preceding plan 1962-68); 5% to rural and urban water supply and 1.2% to labour and social welfare (Second National Development Plan, *ibid*).

Although, the Second National Development Plan attached much importance to growth for the purpose of achieving "a just and egalitarian society" (Second National Development Plan, 1970); one would have thought that equitable distribution of the "national cake" would be as important to the authorities as the growth of the cake (Olatunbosun & Olayicie, 1971). Unfortunately, the

authorities seem to be more interested in the bright picture painted by the high rate of growth, which conceal the gloomy picture in the rural areas. The failure of the 1970-74 Plan to pay adequate attention to education, social amenities and job opportunities in the rural areas is a further proof of the continuation of the dichotomy of this balanced development in the relative development of the rural and urban areas.

The Third National Development Plan

The Third National Development Plan outlined ambitious programmes of rural development for Nigeria. One of the objectives of the plan is balanced development. An aspect of this balanced development is the relative development of the rural and urban areas. As the plan remarks:

In the past the rural areas have lagged behind the urban areas in development resulting in increasing disparity between standard of living in the rural and urban areas and in amass migration of population from the former to the later. The present plan aims at checking this movement by especially promoting the development for the rural areas (Third National Development Plan, 1975).

An important achievement of this plan is that for the first time, regional development was recognized as a special plan category. Unfortunately, the pattern of fund allocation to the various sectors did not differ markedly from the previous plans. Only 10.6% of the total capital expenditure by all the governments was spent on the Regional Development, out of which community development got only 0.6%. Also, 2.0% was spent on the Health Sector (Third National Development Plan, 1975). As in the previous plans, transport and communication received the highest amount of expenditure. It is important to mention that in spite of such huge amount spent on transport, most rural areas remain inaccessible, while dual-carriage roads and airports spring up in the urban centres.

Agriculture received about 3.3% of the total expenditure. There were two investment strategies here - assistance to private farmers in the form of subsidized inputs, the provision of credit and monetary incentives, for example, the establishment of the Nigerian Agricultural and Co-operative Bank (NACB); and the offering of support services such as seed multiplication programme, agricultural mechanization schemes with tractor hiring services in states.

The second investment strategy of the government as contained in the plan include execution of the National Accelerated Food Production Scheme, the setting up of the National Grains and Root Crop Production Companies, the setting up of five rural integrated agricultural projects in Gombe (Bauchi State), Gusau (Sokoto State), Funtua (Kaduna State), Ayangba (Kogi State) and Lafia (Plateau State).

It is worth mentioning that those ambitious agricultural programmes did not make any reasonable impact on the life of the rural farmers. The Fourth National Development Plan (1981-85), identified three broad reasons for this:

- a. The rapid development in the non-agricultural sectors (construction, commercial and services sectors) tended to depress rather than complement the agricultural sector.
- b. Emphasis was more on extending the cultivated area rather than on raising productivity per man and per acre.
- c. Lack of adequate supporting infrastructures as feeder roads, storage and marketing facilities and water supply (Fourth National Development Plan, 1981).

It is important to point out that the above enumerated reasons are just symptoms of a more fundamental factor-the urban-oriented nature of the rural development strategies inherited from the colonial masters. Thus, agricultural programmes have served the need to the big farmers and their imperialist collaborators. The perpetuation of the colonial development strategy had created the present imbalance between the rural and urban areas, encouraged

mas'sive migration of the rural population to the urban areas "and has promoted the stagnation of the rural areas. Table 4 further buttresses the urban bias of our government in investment.

We can observe from Table 4 that, only 17.1% out of the total amount allocated to community development from 1975-80 was invested in the rural areas, while the remaining 82.9% was spent in the urban areas. In the area of water supply, only 29.5% of the planned investment was spent in the rural areas, while 70.5% was spent in the few urban centres. That of industry is even the highest. Only 10.8% of the total planned expenditure in that sector was spent in the rural areas, while, the urban centres had a lion share of 89.2%. The same ugly situation obtains in the other sectors contained in-the Table.

Table 4: Imbalances between urban and rural investments by all governments in Nigeria, 1975-80.

Sector	Total Planned Investments (Nm)	Rural-based Investments (Nm)	Rural-based Investments as % of Total	Urban- based Investment (Nm)	Urban-based Investments as % of Total
Community and Water Supply	38.3	6.5	17.1	31.8	82.9
Education	173.0	59.1	29.2	121.9	70.5
Health	337.9	108.5	28.7	269.4	71.3
Electricity	215.6	23.3	10.8	102.3	89.2
	209.3	73.7	35.2	133.6	64.8
	102.9	32.0	30.1	70.9	68.9

Source: Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Third National Development Plan, 1975-80, Vol. II, Project Summary

In spite of its ambitious programme, the Third National Development Plan made little impact on rural development.

The Fourth National Development, 1981-85

The Fourth National Development Plan (1981-85), just like its predecessors, was committed to rural development. As the plan put its:

Government is committed to social transformation in the rural sector in order to give farmers a sense of belonging and

pride in their occupation ... During the plan period, the Federal Government, through the Federal Development of Cooperatives will give boost to the formation of agricultural cooperatives throughout the country ... In addition to promoting agricultural production, efforts will be made to improve social amenities in the rural areas through the provision of feeder roads, water supply, storage facilities, et cetera (Fourth National Development Plan, 1981).

It is important to mention that under the Fourth National Development Plan, emphasis was placed on agricultural transformation as a necessary strategy for hastening the development of the rural areas so as to stem the drift of population from rural to urban areas. To achieve this objective, the plan talked about the evolution of appropriate institutional and administrative apparatus to facilitate the rapid development of the country's agricultural potential.

As we now know, the 'apparatus' evolved was the creation of the 'famous' River Basin Authorities and the launching of the Green Revolution. Also apart from encouraging the further extension of the Agricultural Development Programme (ADP), which is a World Bank assisted programme to other states, the government also planned to establish a concurrent small-holder programme - the Accelerated Development Areas Programme (ADA) in areas not yet encompassed by the ADPs (Fourth National Development Plan, 1981). The ADP -ADA programme will be jointly implemented by the federal, state and local government will contribute N422,830 million, while the World Bank and State Government will contribute the rest.

The ADP was to combine agricultural production with the provision of economic and social infrastructure such as roads, schools, hospitals, housing, etc. while the ADA was to construct feeder roads and lay the foundation for the take off of the ADP in the states that have not benefited from it. The success or failure stories of these programmes especially the Green Revolution are well known and have been extensively discussed elsewhere

(Nzimiro, 1985). But suffice it to say that, at the end of the plan period, food imports and Bill had skyrocketed. Furthermore, "The impact of the ADP's in the rural areas was limited mostly in agricultural production as the programme did not embrace the provision of socio-economic infrastructures that would enhance the quality of life of the rural areas (First National Rolling Plan, 1990).

As a result of the dismal failure of the Green Revolution and the River Basin Authorities, the government, in initiating the Structure Adjustment Programmes (SAP), decided on a number of important institutional reforms in the agricultural sector. Prominent among these reforms are:

- a. Reduction in the number of River Basin Authorities from 18 to 11 and banning them from direct agricultural production activities.
- b. Decision to wind-up eleven government agricultural companies and to transfer them to the private sector.
- c. Leaving fertilizer importation to private firms.
- d. The establishment of the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1986).

But as we had earlier mentioned in this paper, these measures are mere palliatives because the failure of agricultural programmes in Nigeria just like the national development strategy inherited at independence and being perpetuated by the ruling class in Nigeria. As Nzimiro (1985) pointed out, "The ruling class of the interspersed hegemonies, military and civilian, well understood the ideology of the colonial agricultural policies which derives from the theoretical framework of the bourgeois notions of development and modernization. Only a change in this development strategy can bring agricultural transformation and the development of the country.

In brief, the agricultural programmes of the Fourth National Development Plan, which were aimed at ensuring rural development, were dismal failures. Also, the provision of social amenities as envisaged in the plan did not materialize and this was

a major reason for the establishment of the now dissolved Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure. Therefore, the Fourth National Development Plan did not achieve much as far as rural development is concerned.

The fixed term planning system did not improve the development planning and was found to be inappropriate for unstable national and international political, economic and social events in the period. Okojie aptly remarked that:

At the end of four plan periods, the foundation for sustainable growth and development was yet to be laid.

The productive base of the economy and sources of government revenue were yet to be diversified. The economy did not have its own driving force and was therefore highly susceptible to external shocks (Okojie, 2002:362).

The Rolling Plan Period (1990-1998)

By 1986, the development planning in Nigeria had hit the rocks. The huge deficit of the third and fourth plans had pushed the country's external debts to about \$22 billion. Nigeria's creditors necessarily had to be involved in her planning if further debts rescheduling had to be obtained. Thus, the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) came, which was basically a 'reform therapy' from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF).

SAP was only an economic emergency programme expected to last for two years. But its programmes were too radical to be realized within such a short time. SAP understood a shift from project-based to policy-based planning system and emphasized a private-sector-led economy rather than the prevailing public sector-led philosophy that had inspired previous plans. SAP also presented opportunity for reevaluating the planning system for the country as the fixed medium-term planning system had failed.

A three-tier planning system was to succeed SAP. The new proposal consisted of:

- i. a 15-20 years perspective or long-term plan;
- ii. a three-year Rolling Plan; and
- iii. an Annual Budget that will draw from the Rolling Plan (Okojie, 2002).

The perspective plan was to identify long term policies upon which the rolling plans and the annual budget will derive their medium and short-term programmes respectively. It is necessary to point out that the spelling out of some national objectives, as the foundation for plans - that started with the second fixed term plan was very much like doing the work of a perspective plan. However, the idea of a perspective plan was a significant innovation as it ought to be more elaborate and specific than the national objectives that were criticized for being vague (Okojie, 2002) and having no constitutional significance (Abasili, 2004) nor administrative utility for the implementation of plans. The preparation of a perspective plan that was to take effect from 1990 together with the rolling plan did not take place until 1996 when the Vision 2010 submitted to the Abacha government in September, 1997, among other things, recommended that the vision should provide the focus for all plans, including long (perspective), medium (rolling) and annual plans (budgets) (Adubi, 2005:65). It became in effect the first perspective plan for the country, even though it seemed to have died with Abacha in 1998.

The three-year rolling plan became effective from the 1990 with the initiation of the First National Rolling Plan, 1990-1992. The essence of the rolling was to afford the country the opportunity of revision in the midst of increasing socio-political and economic uncertainties. But preparation of medium term plans turned out to be a yearly event and became almost undistinguishable from the annual budgets.

Okojie concludes that Rolling plans have been prepared yearly at all levels of government including the local government level. At the end of about ten Rolling plans, from 1990-2000, Nigerians

are no better than they were during the years of fixed medium-term planning (Okojie, 2002:366).

With the coming to power of a new democratic power in May, 1999, there were high expectations that things were bound to change regarding development planning in Nigeria since the military rule was partly blamed for plan failure especially as it concerned constant change of governmental administrations that led to inconsistency in plan formulation and implementation and absence of democratic more responsibility in governance.

The New Democratic Dispensation (1999-2007)

Democratic governance returned to Nigeria in May 1999 with the swearing in of President Olusegun Obasanjo on the platform of the People's Democratic Party. This was after long military rule that ran from 1966 with a brief interlude from 1976 to 1982, and a few months interim National Government headed by a civilian in 1993. The new administration started development planning in 1999 on a clean slate with the initiation of a four-year medium-term plan document, the National Economic Direction (1999-2003). The plan had the primary objective of pursuing a strong, virile and broad-based economy with adequate capacity to absorb externally generated shocks. While being a new plan document, the objectives and policy direction was not significantly different from that to which the country has followed since the introduction of SAP. According to Donli (2004:69);

The new plan was aimed at the development of an economy that is highly competitive, responsible to incentives, private sector-led, diversified market-orientation and open, but based on internal momentum for its growth.

The plan did not achieve much of the articulated programmes of deregulating the economy, reducing bureaucratic red-tapism in governance, creating jobs, alleviating of poverty and providing welfare programmes and infrastructure such as water, improved health care, electricity and roads. Despite the huge resources garnered and from improved oil pricing, sale of privatized

government enterprises, and recovered loots from the Abacha family and its cronies, Nigeria went further clown to rungs of impoverished nations. Today, Nigeria ranks among the fifteenth poorest country in the world despite her position as the 6th among the oil producing countries of the world. Oil - the blackgold-being reckoned as one of the highly priced natural endowments in the world today, Nigeria by all standards supposed to be raised highly in the committee of wealth nations.

When the PDP government got a second opportunity by virtue of being re-elected in 2003; it saw the need to have a rethink on the issue of development planning. It realized the need for a comprehensive socio-political and economic reform of the country since no plan can succeed in Nigeria, if it continued to be business as usual. This intent to bring radical changes in the way things are done gave birth to the National Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

NEEDS: A Reflection

NEEDS was described as Nigeria's plan for prosperity. It is a four-year medium-term plan for the period of 2003 to 2007. NEEDS was a federal government plan, which also expected the states and period local government to have their counterpart plans - the State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and the Local Economic empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) respectively. It was a comprehensive that sought to include not only all levels of government towards moving the same direction, but also sought all and sundry namely, the private sector, the Non-Government Organization (NGOs) and the general public in cooperative activity in pursuit of development goals. As established in NEEDS document.

NEEDS wished to significantly eradicate poverty in Nigeria. It aims to create a Nigeria that Nigerians can be proud to belong to and grateful to inhabit, a Nigeria that promotes self-reliance, entrepreneurship. Innovation, rewards, hardwork, projects its

people and their property, and offers its children better prospects than those they be tempted to seek in Europe or the United States (National Planning Commission and Central Bank of Nigeria 2005:4).

The primary goal of marking Nigeria a 'promised land' would be realized according to NEEDS through four key strategies of wealth creation/employment generation, poverty reduction and value reorientation.

Under NEEDS, substantial progress was made in the implementation of structural reforms, including a comprehensive banking sector consideration programme, growing the non-oil sector, liberalization of Nigeria's import tariffs regime transaction, introduction of Wholesale Dutch Actions System (WD AS) for foreign exchange, fight against corruption and restructuring and privatizing state-owned enterprises, in order to improve, environment for its objectives.

On poverty, despite statistical claim that by Nigerian Living Standard Survey the poverty incidence had declined from 70% in 2000 to 54% in 2004 (CBN, 2005) nothing could support the authenticity of this claim. For instance in 2005 approximately N500 million was disbursed to 120,000 people to enable them set up small enterprises (CBN, 2005). This is approximately N4,200 each if the entire fund was disbursed. First, what is the percentage of 120,000 to a country of over 140 million people -where 70% suffer from abject poverty? Also, how many will likely succeed in starting any substantial business with N4,200?

On employment creation, NEEDS promised to create about 7 (seven) million jobs by 2007. However, most policies pursued by the government within the period were anti-employment rather than employment generating. In the bid to reform government institutions, thousands of employees had lost their jobs. The CBN alone served 804 employees through mandating retirement in 2005 alone (CBN, 2005). Bank consolidation exercise in Nigeria at the end of 2005 witnessed the throwing into the unemployment market

thousands of retrenched bank workers resulting from mergers and acquisitions (Marcellus, 2009). Cenerally, the NEEDS failed.

President Yar'Adua's Seven Point Plan and Vision 2020

Seven-Point Agenda supports the goals of Vision 2020. The agenda includes the following: polity, macro-economy, infrastructure, education, health, agriculture and manufacturers (Abdullahi, 2009). The federal government's expectations are: polity - the nation will be peaceful, harmonious and stable by the year 2020; macro-economy - a sound, stable and globally competitive economy with a GDP of not less than \$4,000 per annum; infrastructure - adequate infrastructure services that support the full mobilization of all economic sectors; education - a modern and vibrant education system which provides for every Nigerian the opportunity and facility to achieve his maximum potential and provides the country with adequate and competent manpower; health - a health sector that supports and sustains a life expectancy of not less than 70 years and reduces to the barest minimum the burden of infectious diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS and other debilitating diseases; agriculture - a modern technologically enabling agricultural sector that fully exploits the vast agricultural resources of the country, ensures national food security and contributes to foreign exchange earnings; and manufacturing - a vibrant and globally competitive manufacturing sector that contributes significantly to GDP than 40% (Abdullahi, 2009). This has already suffered set back by poor development of human capital. Innovations that have been advanced in the past have failed to reach their intended outcomes because they are half-baked and imposed from outside.

The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP)

The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), a Medium-Term Plan for 2017 - 2020, builds on the Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) and has been developed for the purpose of restoring economic growth while leveraging the ingenuity and resilience of

the Nigerian people - the nation's most priceless assets. It is also articulated with the understanding that the role of government in the 21st century must evolve from that of being an omnibus provider of citizens' needs into a force for eliminating the bottlenecks that impede innovation and market-based solutions. The Plan also recognises the need to leverage Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) and build a knowledge-based economy. The ERGP is also consistent with the aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) given that the initiatives address its three dimensions of economic, social and environmental sustainability issues.

ERGP'S New Approach

The ERGP differs from previous plans in several ways. First, focused implementation is at the core of the delivery strategy of the Plan over the next four years. More than ever before, there is a strong political determination, commitment and will at the highest level. Whilst all the MDAs will have their different roles in implementing the Plan, a Delivery Unit is being established in the Presidency to drive the implementation of key ERGP priorities. The Ministry of Budget and National Planning will coordinate plan-implementation and for this purpose will, amongst other things, build up its capability for robust monitoring and evaluation.

Second, the Plan, outlines bold new initiatives such as ramping up oil production to 2.5mbpd by 2020, privatizing selected public enterprises/assets, and revamping local refineries to reduce petroleum product imports by 60 percent by 2018. Other initiatives include environmental restoration projects in the Niger Delta, which demonstrate the Federal Government's determination to bring environment sustainability to the forefront of its policies. As part of this Plan, oil revenues will be used to develop and diversify the economy, not just sustain consumption as was done in the past. The economy will run on multiple engines of growth, not just the single engine of oil. The Plan focuses on growth, not just for its

own sake, but for the benefits it will bring to the Nigerian people. This Plan also places importance on emerging sectors such as the entertainment and creative industries.

Third, the ERGP builds on existing sectoral strategies and plans such as the National Industrial Revolution Plan, and the Nigeria Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan. Rather than re-inventing the wheel, the ERGP will strengthen the successful components of these previous strategies and plans while addressing challenges observed in their implementation.

Fourth, the ERGP is innovative in that it signals a changing relationship between the public and private sectors based on close partnership. In implementing the Plan, the Government will collaborate closely with businesses to deepen their investments in the agriculture, power, manufacturing, solid minerals and services sectors, and support the private sector to become the engine of national growth and development. In addition, science and technology will be effectively harnessed to drive national competitiveness, productivity and economic activities in all sectors.

Fifth, the current Administration has merged the Budget and Planning functions into one Ministry to create a better and stronger link between annual budgets and the ERGP. This has facilitated the ERGP's preparation process and will also expedite its implementation. It also strengthens the macro framework which underpins the ERGP, ensuring that budgets are properly aligned with planning, thus promoting effective implementation.

Finally, the ERGP provides for effective collaboration and coordination with the States to ensure that the Federal and State Governments work towards the same goals. The States have a significant role to play in the success of the ERGP and some have already adopted a number of the initiatives being promoted in this Plan.

The Vision of the ERGP

The vision of the ERGP is one of sustained inclusive growth. There is an urgent need as a nation to drive a structural economic transformation with an emphasis on improving both public and private sector efficiency. This is aimed at increasing national productivity and achieving sustainable diversification of production, to significantly grow the economy and achieve maximum welfare for the citizens, beginning with food and energy security. This Plan is a pointer to the type of Nigeria that the people desire in the short to medium-term, and encourages the use of science, technology and innovation to drive growth. It also provides a blueprint for the type of foundation that needs to be laid for future generations and focuses on building the capabilities of the youth of Nigeria to be able to take the country into the future.

Principles of the ERGP

Several principles have driven the thinking and the development of this Plan:

Focus on tackling constraints to growth

Economic growth in Nigeria faces various supply constraints including fuel, power, foreign exchange, and business unfriendly regulations. In addition, there is a shortage of requisite skills and appropriate technology necessary to drive growth. This Plan focuses on overcoming and resolving these challenges.

Leverage the power of the private sector

Economic recovery and transformative growth cannot be achieved by the government alone. It is essential to harness the dynamism of business and the entrepreneurial nature of Nigerians, from the MSMEs to the large domestic and multinational corporations to achieve the objectives of this Plan. The Plan prioritizes the provision of a more business friendly economic environment.

Promote national cohesion and social inclusion

Nigerians are the ultimate beneficiaries of more inclusive growth and therefore, the initiatives set out in this Plan are aimed at

ensuring social inclusion and the strengthening of national cohesion.

Allow markets to function

The ERGP recognizes the power of markets to drive optimal behaviour among market participants. The Plan prioritises the use of the market as a means of resource allocation, where appropriate. However, the Plan also recognises the need to strengthen regulatory oversight to minimise market abuse.

Uphold core values

The ERGP is rooted in the core values that define the Nigerian society as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution, notably discipline, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, self-reliance and patriotism. It requires all citizens and stakeholders to adhere to these principles.

Broad objectives of the Plan

The ERGP has three broad strategic objectives that will help achieve the vision of inclusive growth outlined above:

1. restoring growth,
2. investing in our people, and
3. building a globally competitive economy.

Restoring Growth

To restore growth, the Plan focuses on achieving macroeconomic stability and economic diversification. Macroeconomic stability will be achieved by undertaking fiscal stimulus, ensuring monetary stability and improving the external balance of trade. Similarly, to achieve economic diversification, policy focus will be on the key sectors driving and enabling economic growth, with particular focus on agriculture, energy and MSME led growth in industry, manufacturing and key services by leveraging science and technology. The revival of these sectors, increased investment in other sectors, less reliance on foreign exchange for intermediate goods and raw materials and greater export orientation will

improve macroeconomic conditions, restore growth in the short term and help to create jobs and bring about structural change.

Investing in our People

Economic growth is beneficial for society when it creates opportunities and provides support to the vulnerable. The ERGP will invest in the Nigerian people by increasing social inclusion, creating jobs and improving the human capital base of the economy.

Social inclusion

The Federal Government will continue to provide support for the poorest and most vulnerable members of society by investing in social programmes and providing social amenities. Targeted programmes will reduce regional inequalities, especially in the North East and Niger Delta.

Job creation and youth empowerment

Interventions to create jobs are a core part of the ERGP, which aims to reduce unemployment and under-employment, especially among youth. The ERGP accordingly prioritizes job creation through the adoption of a jobs and skills programme for Nigeria including deepening existing N-Power programmes, and launching other public works programmes. The partnership for job creation will also focus on the policies required to support growth and diversification of the economy by placing emphasis on Madc-in-Nigeria, public procurement which takes account of local content and labour intensive production processes. All initiatives under job creation would prioritize youth as beneficiaries. Accordingly, all capacity building and skills acquisition interventions will be targeted at youth-dominated sectors such as ICT, creative industries, and services. Furthermore, concerted efforts would be made to encourage youth to venture into other labour intensive sectors such as agriculture and construction.

Improved human capital

The Federal Government will invest in health and education to fill the skills gap in the economy, and meet the international targets set under the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ERGP will improve the accessibility, affordability and quality of healthcare and will roll out the National Health Insurance Scheme across the entire country. It will also guarantee access to basic education for all, improve the quality of secondary and tertiary education, and encourage students to enrol in science and technology courses.

Building a Globally Competitive Economy

Restoring Nigeria's economic growth and laying the foundations for long-term development requires a dynamic, agile private sector that can innovate and respond to global opportunities. The ERGP aims to tackle the obstacles hindering the competitiveness of Nigerian businesses, notably poor or non-existent infrastructural facilities and the difficult business environment. It will increase competitiveness by investing in infrastructure and improving the business environment.

Investing in infrastructure

The ERGP emphasizes investment in infrastructure, especially in power, roads, rail, ports and broadband networks. It builds on ongoing projects and identifies new ones to be implemented by 2020 to improve the national infrastructure backbone. Given the huge capital layout required to address the massive infrastructure deficit in the country, the private sector is expected to play a key role in providing critical infrastructure, either directly or in collaboration with the Government under public private partnership (PPP) arrangements.

Improving the business environment

Nigeria's difficult and often opaque business environment adds to the cost of doing business, and is a disincentive to domestic and foreign investors alike. Regulatory requirements must be more transparent, processing times must be faster, the overall economy

must be more business-friendly. The ERGP will build on the efforts of the Presidential Enabling Business Environment Council (PEBEG) and track progress using the metrics of the World Bank's Doing Business Report. The target is to achieve a top 100 ranking in the World Bank's Doing Business index by 2020 (up from the current ranking of 169).

Promoting Digital-led growth

To make the Nigerian economy more competitive in the 21st century global economy, its industrial policy must be linked to a digital-led strategy for growth. The ERGP will build on The Smart Nigeria Digital Economy Project to increase the contribution from ICT and ICT-enabled activity to GDP. The overall goals of a Digital-led strategy for growth centre on the establishment of an ICT ecosystem in Nigeria. This is enabled through significantly expanding broadband coverage, increasing e-government, and establishing ICT clusters, starting in the SEZs. Government will also drive a programme to build the skills in this sector, focusing on training IT Engineers in software development, programming, network development and cyber security.

Key Execution Priorities

To achieve the objectives of the ERGP, the key execution priorities, are:

- Stabilizing the macroeconomic environment
- Achieving agriculture and food security
- Ensuring energy sufficiency (power and petroleum pro
- Improving transportation infrastructure
- Driving industrialization focusing on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises

It is quite early to assess the failures and successes of this economic recovery plan, as lofty as it seems to be. However, we are not oblivious of the challenges Nigeria has had in the past about plan implementations in the past. Proper and coordinated

implementation of set objectives will certainly put the Nigerian economy not only on the path of recovery but also of sustained growth.

Development Projects in Nigeria: An Assessment of Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs)

The Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) were first launched as viable projects in 1972 only two years after the end of civil war, when Nigeria was facing its first food and fibre shock. The project was launched against the background of a Nigerian Agriculture which in the 1950s and 1960s had attained prominent expertise through complete reliance on small scale farmers (Auta and Dafwang, 2010). The main and first feature of the ADP was its reliance on the small- scale farmers as the central focus for increased food production. The projects were to be funded under a tripartite agreement involving World Bank 66%, federal government 20% and state government 14% in addition to payments of salaries of local staff. Two main objectives of the ADPs were (Auta and Dafwang, 2010)⁷ (i) to increase food production; and (ii) to raise the income of small-scale farmers. The ADPs started three (3) pilot projects in 1975 covering a local government area in 3 states. The success of the pilot schemes led to expansion of other local government areas and states in the late 1970s and by 1984, all the states of the federation were implementing the integrated approach (Kolawale, 1991). Adegboye (1991) observed that the ADPs were able to make remarkable achievements up to 1996 the time that the World Bank loan was on and when the federal and state governments were paying their counterpart funding. However, the situation is not the same today and the ADPs in majority of the states stand just as symbols of past glory.

A survey carried out by the National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Service (SAERLS) in collaboration with the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA) representative of the Federal Department of Agriculture (FDA), the Planning Research

and Statistics Department (PRSD) and the Five Zonal Coordinating Research Institutes, between 24th August and 10th September, 2008. All the states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory were visited by the multidisciplinary of three scientists each for a period of four days per state. The results obtained showed that 63.6% of the ADPs were ranked as having weak or very weak funding status. Only 22.7% had good or excellent funding status (Auta and Dafwang, 2010). Generally, the ADPs have not achieved the objectives they were set up to achieve, like other development efforts in Nigeria.

What was/is Responsible for the Failure of Development Plans and Projects in Nigeria?

There are numerous reasons, but the most important ones may include among others the fact that:

Firstly, the plans are perfunctory obligations that have seemed to guide governmental actions in Nigeria. When a government draws a plan and the actual programmes and policies pursued markedly differ from the plan projects, it shows that either the plan was not realistic or that government was not committed towards the plan.

Secondly, plan documents have been acknowledged to be well articulated to give direction to Nigeria in pursuit of her development goals. The problem has not been with the plans as formulated but on how best to implement and achieve the goals (Marcellus, 2010). Thus, a major problem remains the issue of good leadership for the country with the political will.

Finally, W. Arthur Lewis, Nobel economist suggested that the main weaknesses with Nigerian development plans and projects included incomplete feasibility studies and inadequate evaluation of projects, accompanied by meager public participation, followed by excessive political intervention in economic decisions, moreover, insufficient attention was/is paid to any other sector of the economy when oil was discovered.

The Constraints on Nigeria's Economic Development Nigerian Policies are Growth Focused

Since independence in 1960, Nigeria has consistently pursued growth strategies. The country has focused less on development, which bothers on issues relating to what has been happening to poverty, unemployment and inequality. For over 53 years Nigeria has been concerned with growth in macro-economic indicators such as GDP growth rate of 6.0% in 2006, 6.5% in 2007, 6.4% in 2008, 8% in 2010, 7.4% in 2011 and 7.1% in 2012 (Nigerian Economy Statistics, 2013); inflation rates either rose or fell from 72.8%, 18.9%, 17.9%, 8.2%, 5.4%, 11.6%, 12.5%, 13.7%, 13.9% and 12.1% in 1995, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, respectively (IMF, 2012). These also include External Reserves (US\$ billion) of 42.3, 51.3, 53.0 and 42.8 in 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2012, respectively (CBN, 2010; IMF, 2013). Growth in these macroeconomic indicators has not been able to translate into a reduction in poverty as the country remains poor with 70% of the population lived below the poverty line in 2010, unemployment rate of 23.9% in 2011 with 70% of its labour force involved in agriculture and the *Gini* index of 51.0 shows that resources in the country are highly inequitably distributed, hence the quality of life of an average Nigerian has not improved (IMF, 2012). This shows that Nigeria remains a state with low levels of standard of living, where growth is achieved without development.

Professionals and Administrative Insincerity

Economists, especially government loyalists, may well give us figures to justify success of Development strategies as Charles Soludo, the immediate past CBN Governor had done. He made hilarious presentation of all indices of growth of the Nigerian economy markedly achieved by the Obasanjo administration (2003-2007). It is opined that the acclaimed achievements of the government through manipulation and propagation of economic growth indices contrary to the commonsensical impact of government's (administration's) policies and programmes on the

standard of living of the people increasingly make our data questionable. Osagie (2007), laments that "ideological confusion and mystification encouraged by naive ideologies have successfully diverted attention from real issues to peripheral and esoteric cliché-ridden polemics along narrowly focused dogmatic lines. This attitude of analysis of economic simplistic solutions of problems which give the impression that either economist is unrealistic in their analysis or their tools of analysis are suspect and unreliable".

Human Resources Constraints

Human resources that are undeveloped constitute an important constrain in the economic development process of a nation. Nigeria has been suffering this constraint since her independence in 1960. Early commission in Nigeria such as the Eric-Ashby Commission of 1959 recognized the gross inadequacy of manpower in Nigeria to achieve any meaningful economic development. To correct this deficiency, early National Development Plans had one of their core mandates, development of manpower through establishment of several higher institutions that emerged between 1962 and 1968. However, Nigeria is a nation where a lot of schooling takes place with little pragmatic learning, hence Nigeria still lacks people possessing critical skills and knowledge for all-round development of her economy. The existence of surplus labour (i.e. unemployment) is to a considerable extent due to the shortage of critical entrepreneurial skills. It is in Nigeria that "qualified" and "trained" engineers go to road-side artisans for repair of cars, and generators among others. Statistics show that 80% of Nigerian graduates are unemployable (Egwu, 2010). This leads to low labour productivity, factor immobility and limited specialization in occupation, among others, which constitute a constraint on economic development.

Distortions in the Nigerian Economy due to Globalization and Natural Resource Abundance

Despite the effects and inevitability of globalization, there is no doubt that international interference globalization ensures

between the West and Nigeria, though trade liberalization has been dangerous to the latter in terms of achieving economic development. Nigeria's efforts as an import-dependent nation, towards achieving some level of economic development are usually distorted by the neo-imperialist nations of the West. This is most evident in the collapse of Ajaokuta Steel Company, Lokoja which collapse is associated with the West where Nigeria imports cars and other machinery. This is to ensure that Nigeria continues to import from them. Besides, Nigeria is heavily endowed with natural resources. This abundance of natural resources has created room for rent-seeking behaviour which is an important factor in determining a country's level of corruption, which is also the bane of the country's economic underdevelopment.

Technological Backwardness

Nigeria is technologically backward. This is due to the fact that the quality of education in Nigeria does not guarantee the ability of graduates turning out to be skilled to provide the necessary technology needed for economic development. Based on this, Nigeria experiences high average cost of production despite low money wages, high labour-output and capital-output ratios as a rule, and on the average, given a constant factor price which reflects low productivity of labour and capital. This is inimical to economic development.

Agricultural Constraints and Over-dependence on Oil

The agricultural sector (traditional sector) which is supposed to be the mainstay of Nigerian economy lacks political will and the appropriate attention. Economic Development Theories (e.g. Lewis, Arthur) are of the view that development should follow a process or pattern that moves resources from traditional (agricultural) to the modern (industrial) sector for economic development to take place. Agriculture in Nigeria has made the Nigerian economy mono-cultural, with oil accounting for 80% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings. This makes Nigeria vulnerable to oil price shocks and other problems - food insecurity,

increase in food import that make Nigerian economy continuously underdeveloped.

Political and Administrative Constraints

Political and administrative structures also help in economic development process of a country. These are responsible for economic development in Britain, Japan, Germany, United States, China and France (Jhingan, 2004), due to political stability and strong administration. In Nigeria, the weak administration and political structure is not favourable to economic development. Nigeria has a weak, unstable, inefficient and corrupt administration. Nigeria can't manage internal crisis effectively even when perpetrators are identified, for example, the Jos crisis, and the current menace of the *Boko Haram*- western education is evil' among others; struggle over control of resources (Niger Delta), contract sum inflation and projects duplication among others are quite inimical to economic development. It is only in Nigeria that leaders loot public treasury and go unpunished. Between 1985 and 1998, corrupt public office holders in Nigeria had looted Nil.130657 trillion (Body and Soul, August 3,1999:13). What a loot!

Recommendations

For Nigeria to achieve economic development, the following recommendations are necessary:

Firstly, Nigerian government should see its plans and projects as a work guide and do its best to prepare plans and projects that cannot only be rendered useless by future exigencies but also those that will be aimed at achieving economic development. That is those plans whose objectives will not only be to increase GDP, reduce inflation and increase external reserve, but those that will reduce poverty, unemployment and inequality.

Secondly, despite the effects of globalization and its inevitability, there is no doubt that, for Nigeria to achieve national economic development, there must be some kind of isolationism

from the harmful relationship of international trade especially with the West. Nigeria must sift from advice of international agencies those that will benefit her economy like China did recently when it was advised to appreciate her currency in relation to the dollar. The recommendations of World Bank and IMF on subsidy removal from agriculture should henceforth be ignored so that agriculture would be diversified and employ merit opportunities created for achieving the desired goals of economic development.

In addition, the quality of education in Nigeria should be improved from just acquiring academic education which trains people to do government and other clerical jobs to training of people for technical, entrepreneurship professional jobs. This will develop a natural tendency for practical work and training that leads to technological backwardness.

Again, to achieve agricultural progress and less reliance on crude oil, there should be the establishment of an Agricultural and Extension and Rural Development Agency (AERDA) in each state. Government should specify a structure that will rectify some of the weaknesses of the present ADP structure, such as nominal presence of non-crop commodities and provide for creation of a department responsible for facilitating the development of commercial agriculture and private public partnerships for accelerated agricultural and rural development. The structure should also have flexibility to accommodate local initiatives tailored towards meeting the specific needs of each state.

Finally, there should be a committed leadership with a serious political will that will guarantee political stability and efficiency, devoid of corruption and mismanagement of resources for economic development to take place in Nigeria.

Conclusion

This paper underscores development planning and development projects (Agricultural Development Projects) as a roadmap designed to achieving economic development in Nigeria since 1960.

An assessment of the plans and ADPs showed abysmal failure due to lack of political will, international interference, inadequate manpower and corrupt leadership among others. The paper also 'considered development indices on Nigeria and also concluded that Nigeria is not developed. This economic underdevelopment is attributed to certain constraints as human resources constraints, distortions made possible by globalization and natural resources abundance, agricultural constraints and over-dependence on oil and political and administrative constraints. The author have recommended among others that Nigeria should see its plans and projects as a work guide to development and handle them as such; Nigeria should isolate from the whims and caprices of western imperialist agencies in terms of policy and trade; the quality of education in Nigeria should be improved to meet the challenges of acquiring the desired technology for economic development and that there should be committed leadership to the path of development.

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