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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS ACHIEVEMENT IN NIGERIA: MODELS FOR REMOVING THE ROOT CAUSES OF INDIGNITY OF POVERTY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was to produce a set of universally applicable goals that balances the three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, social and economic; a common 15-year agenda to tackle the indignity of poverty. Today in Nigeria, there are very obvious causes of poverty: general poor governance, corruption and the backlash, over many years, of consistent instability in macroeconomic planning and management; the nature of government's Economic Recovery and Growth Plan since 2016, which 'executive priorities don't fully reflect people's needs, but emphasize more of physical capital over human capital; and a financial system which has not ensured steady and smooth flow of funds from surplus spending unit to the deficit spending unit through the process of financial intermediation; to mention a few. But these are not the main structural obstacles to sustainable development; the main root causes of poverty in Nigeria. This paper thinks that to achieve sustainable eradication of poverty indignity in Nigeria, attention should be shifted to the main roots of the problem, to how to re-enact the 'take-off' stages on the process of development in the country; by revisiting the fundamental stages of growth in development process from the point the country derailed and missed it at colonization, thus formulating and implementing proper development policies for 'agriculture first' in the country.

Keywords: MDGs, SDGs, GGs, Poverty and Indignity of Poverty, Economic Growth Stages, Development.

Introduction

"In 2015, world leaders agreed to 17 Global Goals. Seven years on, we have made progress, but there is still work to be done, and the Goals are more important than ever. The climate crisis. Ensuring no one goes hungry. Human rights abuses. Extreme poverty. Problems of this scale can be overwhelming, but the Global Goals (also known as the Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs) are the solution to tackling

them" (UN, 2023). The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), between 2000 and 2015, in Africa and Nigeria remained an unfinished business which had to be taken forward with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from 2015 and 2030 period.

"The 2023 SDG Summit took place on 18-19 September 2023 in New York. It marked the beginning of a new phase of accelerated progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals with high-level political guidance on transformative and accelerated actions leading up to 2030. Convened by the President of the General Assembly, the Summit marked the half-way point to the deadline set for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. It was the centerpiece of the High-level Week of the General Assembly. It responded to the impact of multiple and interlocking crises facing the world and is expected to reignite a sense of hope, optimism, and enthusiasm for the 2030 Agenda.

The 2023 SDG Summit marked the halfway point between the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by the UN in 2015 and the target year of 2030 for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The Summit provided an important opportunity for countries to highlight progress and challenges, and propose key actions for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, while addressing gaps between the global north and global south.

The 2023 Summit also comes at a critical juncture in history, marked by several ongoing crises, including climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, and global conflicts (in particular, the war of aggression by Russia against Ukraine). These have each significantly delayed, and even in some cases, reversed progress towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and have disproportionately affected the most vulnerable communities and nations, exacerbating already existing inequalities, as also highlighted by the Secretary-General on the SDGs Progress Report. Recent data shows that only 15% of the SDGs are currently on track. These overarching global challenges were frequently acknowledged throughout the Summit, increasing the urgency of recommitting to and hastening progress toward the 2030 Agenda. Throughout the Summit, which included 144 statements by Member States, several key issue areas emerged.

Further below and on the basis of a report dated October 19, 2023 (Fernandez et al, 2023), a highlight of the achievements, challenges and the role of democracy of the 2023 SDG Summit will be presented. However, and for the purposes of the focus of this paper, the second highlight of this report, which dwells on the identification of food security as one of the most pressing issues globally will deserve a strong mention at this stage. "The second highlight of the said report on the 2023 SDG Summit is that: "many identified food security as one of the most pressing issues globally. In his opening

statement, the President of the General Assembly reminded the assembly that 1.2 billion people were still living in multidimensional poverty in 2022 and that 8% of the global population (680 million people) will still be facing hunger in 2030. The UN Secretary-General identified hunger as one of six areas where urgent action is needed. 7 out of 14 country groups, including the Caribbean Community and the Group of Least Developed Countries, also identified hunger or food insecurity as one of the most pressing current global challenges" (Fernandez et al, 2023).

The above stated highlight goes to support more the notion that the centrality of GGs or SDGs achievement would necessarily be domiciled on the fact that: "While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlight eradicating poverty and achieving food security as two objectives (SDGs 1 and 2), interventions aiming to address one or the other goal are often similar in policy orientation and design. Thus, understanding better the relationship between poverty (SDG-1) and food insecurity (SDG-2) is of great importance to policy makers. The recent diffusion of experienced-based food security scales has stimulated research on the relationship at the household level. Nevertheless, most of this literature has not relied on a rigorous measure of poverty, nor has assessed how the poverty-food insecurity relationship can be different among population subgroups such as rural and urban people. Similar previous studies and results highlight a clear correlation between poverty and food insecurity. These results highlight that engaging in agricultural activities contributes to sustaining households' food security when they face welfare shocks, suggesting that agricultural development strategies should not overlook the safety net role of agricultural livelihoods for food security, especially for poor households" (Moncada et al, 2022).

Thus, the new Global Goals (GGs), and the broader sustainability agenda, go much further than the MDGs, in addressing the root causes of poverty in Nigeria. Fundamentally and presently too, Nigeria, on the basis of its seemingly entrenched culture of instability in macroeconomic planning and management underscored by constant policy somersault (CBN, 2010) including its satellite nature of industrialization since the colonial era (Biersteker, 1978), is neither best suited nor well positioned to produce from within the needed amount of wealth or resources (human and material) to eradicate or reduce drastically the persistent high level of poverty in the country and the larger obstacles to development. Ignacy Sachs (as in Biersteker, 1978), demonstrates how the Third World is in fact becoming poorer and poorer, trapped in an economic imprisonment clearly engineered by the Western industrial states.

This paper thinks that to address the issue of drastic poverty reduction or eradication of the indignity of poverty in Nigeria, attention should first be paid on removing the larger obstacles to development; and this would amount to going back to the basics of the nation's development process in order to re-join or re-enact the fundamental stages of growth in development process from the point or stage in which the country derailed

from it and missed it. In other words, this paper would maintain the position that "the larger obstacles to development" (Adefulire, 2016), or rather the major circumstances that caused the failure of the MDGs in Nigeria are more from within the country and such circumstances have remained persistent overtime and space; they now fuel "persistent high level of poverty" in the country. These same circumstances are capable of threatening the achievement of the GGs, maintaining the widening gap in Gini Index and compounding the nature of indignity of poverty in the country. The required content of the attention to these circumstances include, but not limited to: re-enactment of the fundamental stage in development process from the point the country derailed and thus missed laying sustainable growth foundation on the 'agriculture first' growth pattern.

Methods of Approach

Now and as pointed out above, the centrality of the GGs or SDGs achievement would necessarily be domiciled on the fact that: "While the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlight eradicating poverty and achieving food security as two objectives (SDGs 1 and 2), interventions aiming to address one or the other goal are often similar in policy orientation and design. In Moncada et al (2022) the relationship between poverty (SDG-1) and food insecurity (SDG-2) is further explained as being of great importance to policy makers. This paper will try to concentrate on evolving models for sustainable or lasting poverty (SDG-1) eradication in Nigeria. The methods of approach adopted by this research paper are interpretive-historical approach. In a strict sense, all research involves interpretation. However, the materials and data presented in this paper are based on existing body of historiography relevant to the subject of inquiry. The paper thus tries to address events and situations which greater proportion of their phenomenon is in the past relative to the time of this investigation. Equally, as historical accounts, the paper is underscored by 'narrative sentences' in describing the nature of historical thinking and writing with the necessary involvement of two situations (the pre-colonial and post-colonial Nigeria) separated by time. The paper is thus an inquiry into the social, economic and political phenomena within the complex contexts of the process of development in Nigeria, with an eye on explaining those phenomena in a narrative form and in a holistic fashion. As such, and as underlined by its interpretive process, the paper tried to search for and collect evidence, organize and evaluate same in order to constitute them in a narrative that is holistic, logical and credible. The main view of the paper- that the achievement of the SDGs and eradication of the indignity of poverty in Nigeria, in a sustainable manner, would need putting in place models of economic growth that could re-enact the process of development from where the country missed its 'take-off' stage on the path of growth and on 'agriculture first' principle. This view is reaffirmed by experiences from elsewhere, which seemingly universal, show that those Third World nations which performed very well in SDGs achievement had gone through the 'agriculture first' path to development.

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2023 SDG Summit Highlight: Achievements, Challenges, and the Role of Democracy:

This highlight is based on an analysis written by Fernandez et al (2023):

As already pointed out above, The 2023 SDG Summit marked the halfway point between the adoption of the 2030 Agenda by the UN in 2015 and the target year of 2030 for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The Summit provided an important opportunity for countries to highlight progress and challenges, and propose key actions for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, while addressing gaps between the global north and global south. Recent data shows that only 15% of the SDGs are currently on track. These overarching global challenges were frequently acknowledged throughout the Summit, increasing the urgency of recommitting to and hastening progress toward the 2030 Agenda. Throughout the Summit, which included 144 statements by Member States, several key issue areas emerged:

(a) The first, and most common, was the call for reform of the international financial architecture. In his opening remarks, the UN Secretary-General emphasized the importance of improving developing countries' access to finance, with an SDG stimulus of at least 500 billion U.S. dollars required per year. Perhaps the single most important outcome of the Summit was the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), a commitment by the U.S. in partnership with the Group of Seven Plus Member States (G7+) to mobilize 600 billion U.S. dollars by 2027 to help close the infrastructure gap in low- and middle-income nations.

(i) Beyond GDP**.** Many groups called for the implementation of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) that would allow for the inclusion of more than just income-based criteria in assessing countries' eligibility for financing, making financing more accessible to developing nations, especially those most vulnerable to environmental, economic, and social crises. Others, like the Alliance of Small Island States, called for an increase in climate finance. Some also called for long-term mission-oriented lending that would allow Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) to value the SDGs in their lending.

(ii) Private capital. The E.U. highlighted the importance of unlocking private capital (using a portion of its public budget to de-risk private investments) given insufficient public funding and pledged 300 billion euros in developing economies in the next five years in renewable energy, stronger health systems, quality education, green transport and digital infrastructure.

(b) Secondly, many identified food security as one of the most pressing issues globally. In his opening

statement, the President of the General Assembly reminded the assembly that 1.2 billion people were still living in multidimensional poverty in 2022 and that 8% of the global population (680 million people) will still be facing hunger in 2030. The UN Secretary-General identified hunger as one of six areas where urgent action is needed. 7 out of 14 country groups, including the Caribbean Community and the Group of Least Developed Countries, also identified hunger or food insecurity as one of the most pressing current global challenges.

(c) Thirdly, climate change was highlighted throughout the Summit as a critical global challenge**.** The President of the 2024 Session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) emphasized the harms of climate change, stating that the increased severity and frequency of natural disasters exert a disproportionate toll on vulnerable countries that are already under debt distress. Many others called upon wealthy nations to fulfill their promises to developing nations as set by The Paris Agreement. Some groups, such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), identified climate change as an existential threat to their countries. They urged others to do the same, reminding the Assembly that only 20% of the global greenhouse gas emissions are covered by carbon pricing. The Alliance of Small Island States also asked for Loss and Damage Funds to be operationalized and financed to help developing countries deal with the devastating effects of climate change.

(d) Fourthly, many identified expanding social protection and improving education as priorities, reaffirming the importance of "leaving no one behind." This statement was echoed by 5 groups, and 4 others mentioned the importance of quality education. There were three cross-cutting issues that were frequently referenced throughout the Summit. These were the importance of digitalization, the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and the strengthening of multilateralism. The World Bank President affirmed that digitalization is determinant for all other issues.

(e) Gender equality: The equality, empowerment, and proportionate representation of women and girls were mentioned many times as priorities not just in their own right, but also as essential to achieving international cooperation, climate action, and equitable finance policy. Many identified working towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, girls, and youth as a national priority.

(f) Multilateralism: Finally, every group in their statement highlighted the need to strengthen multilateralism

and international cooperation. Several groups specifically called for an end to unilateralism, especially concerning coercive measures for trade. Others, such as the African Union, cited regional cooperation as a priority. All acknowledged the importance of global solidarity in the achievement of the SDGs.

(g) Political declaration: The negotiation process of the Political Declaration adopted at the SDG Summit, and later formally adopted at the General Assembly, struggled to achieve consensus. The negotiation process was heavily polarized between the G77+China and Global North countries, especially on issues related to finance and unilateral coercive measures. Countries such as Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, North Korea, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, Russia, Syria, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe accused the global north countries of not sufficiently taking into account their concerns. The Political Declaration -- divided into three sections -- dispensed shared commitments previously agreed by Member States, stressed the progress and remaining gaps of the SDGs, and most importantly, put forth a call to action to Member States for the successful achievement of the entire 2030 Agenda. Reaffirming commitments on the eradication of poverty, focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable groups, ending hunger, bridging the digital divide, combatting climate change, and focusing on investment to tackle all these challenges were debated during the negotiations. At a time where the call to action needs real action, it is important to highlight that the impediments raised in this Summit can only be effectively addressed if societies are guaranteed peace, justice, inclusion, and strong institutions. SDG 16 is the bedrock of the entire 2030 Agenda and especially needed for true transformational change; therefore, explicitly addressing this goal is still needed in the next SDG Summit and in the political declarations to come.

(h) Democracy and the Summit: As an intergovernmental organization committed to supporting democracy, International IDEA brings in and assesses UN processes from the lens of democracy. However, the need for stronger democratic institutions was rarely explicitly mentioned during the 2023 SDG Summit. However, two groups mentioned Goal 16 in their statements, with a focus on the linkage between peace and strong institutions, rule of law and the importance of combatting corruption (Fernandez et al, 2023).

The Beginning of the Distortion of Natural Path to People's Progress in Nigeria

While on the one hand, it could be rightly said that colonialism distorted the bedrock of Nigeria's pre-colonial socio-economic order and put in place completely alien and foreign

institutions, structures and values which varied significantly from locally existing scheme of affairs, thereby resulting in the post-colonial weak economic, social and political conditions, which structural effects continue up till date; on the other hand, it goes the same way to put forward the fact that it was the discovery of oil in the country in 1957 that actually broke the camel's back and caused Nigeria to abandon the growth stage (on the agriculture first path) in which it was, on the normal path or process of development, which it had attained notwithstanding the colonial distortions. "Analysts have rightly stated that oil resources in Nigeria are a curse and not a blessing. This viewpoint is based on the fact that oil wealth in the country has done nothing to improve the life of Nigerians… The emergence of oil robbed this nation the vision of its founding fathers. Our founding fathers never put oil in the agenda for national development. They had agriculture and solid minerals high in the agenda of national development planning at the dawn of independence" (Onyekakeyah, 2007:93). From another perspective, with increasing urbanization as a result of cities new position in socioeconomic propagation in an independent Nigeria, the colonial urban structures, which up till date direct physical development in many cities, now constitute obstacles to smooth urban growth (Ukwu, 1980; Okonkwo, 1998:45-49; Oddih, 2000:63-78). Nevertheless, at present, the Nigerian economy runs on a financial system that has been structurally and persistently not in a position to fulfil its potential as propeller of economic growth and development (World Bank, 2000; Soludo, 2007; Adelakun, 2010; Akintunde, 2015; Obi, 2018; Bill Gate, 2018). The present situation, of derailment in formulating and implementing proper development policies for an 'agriculture first' natural progress in opulence, is more than capable of obstructing further the achievement of the GGs in Nigeria, anytime and anywhere.

Poverty and the Reality of Indignity of Poverty in Nigeria

"Years of military rule, fiscal neglect, and mismanagement have compounded the incidence of poverty in Nigeria. The lack of investment and commitment to the social sector are among the worst in Africa; although Nigeria is the seventh-largest exporter of oil in the world, it is one of the poorest countries in terms of human development" (Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke, 2003). Before appropriate and effective poverty alleviating policies and strategies can be identified, it is crucial to begin with the understanding of poverty, its victims, and its manifestations. However, understanding poverty and identifying 'the poor' is not a simple task. In order to identify, calculate, and formulate appropriate policies for using the cooperative movement as a distinct economic sector for the achievement of the SDG-1, some attempt should be made towards understanding poverty and the affected population in Nigeria.

Poverty

"Poverty is a plague afflicting people all over the world. It is considered one of the symptoms or manifestations of underdevelopment" (CBN/World Bank, 1999:1). There is no agreed universal

definition of poverty; it is complex and multidimensional" (World Bank, 2000/2001:10) and has "various perceptions" (Ogwumike). "It is experienced differently by men and women and can differ according to geographical area, social group, and political or economic context. Therefore, it is safe to agree that the poor are not a homogenous group" (World Bank, 2000/2001:2).

With focus on the urban population, Onibokun and Kumuyi (1996), argued that poverty is linked to a shortage of vital resources and the endurance of 'harsh and inhospitable environments', including the breakdown of economic, demographic, ecological, cultural, and social systems, and 'bad governance', which they claim sustains systemic poverty in developing countries. Poverty is caused when a "distortion becomes so pronounced that people, groups and countries lose their capacity to adapt, change and survive" (Onibokun and Kumuyi, 1996). Examples include rural to urban migration which undermines infrastructural facilities. A concluding definition recognizes poverty as "a way of life characterized by low calorie intake, inaccessibility to adequate health facilities, low quality education system, low life expectancy, high infant mortality, low income, unemployment and underemployment and in accessibility to various housing and societal facilities" (Onibokun and Kumuyi, 1996). In real terms, poverty denies its victims the most basic needs for survival, which are fundamental human rights, such as water, food, clothing, and shelter (Gass and Adetumbi, 2000). Fundamentally, poverty "manifests itself not only in economic deprivation but also in terms of an individual's inability to access basic social amenities" (CBN/World Bank, 1999: x).

(a) Levels of Poverty:

"Numerous indices can be used to assess income levels and categorize individuals in terms of their poverty ranking, but poverty itself is not easy to define. A UNDP report (UNDP, 1998:53) warns of the danger of discounting a hierarchy of poverty which demands the identification and inclusion of all sections of society; the report observes that general strategies for poverty alleviation may not incorporate the needs of all poor people. According to the report, 'the poorest among the poor are people who are the worst off in terms of physiological deprivation', suffering from income poverty, social exclusion, and a lack of freedom. The report concludes with a definition of the poor as 'those who are unemployable and are unskilled, whose daily meals cannot be guaranteed except with assistance of others because their incomes are extremely low or nil'. The report makes it clear that the definition is not exhaustive and goes on to list sectors which may not be included when statistics are gathered: people such as beggars, disabled people, homeless people, unemployed people, and those living in poverty because they have been the victims of theft (UNDP, 1998:54).

(b) Income Poverty:

"However, in practice the most common and preferred definition in determining a country's level of poverty id derived from the economists' concept of 'income poverty',

which assesses the poor as people living in 'absolute' or 'relative' poverty. A person is in s state of 'absolute' poverty when his or her level of income is insufficient to provide the basic necessities for life. Someone is considered to be in 'relative' poverty when he or she appears to have more than someone who is in absolute poverty, yet has less than others have in terms of income, property, and other resources.

For statistical analysis and formulation of policy, the most common and universal measurement (not without its critics for being subjective) defines a person as poor if he or she is living below the 'poverty line'. The most widely accepted means of calculating and assessing poverty, the poverty line is universally set at US$1 a day, although each country is urged to set its own particular level. In global terms there are an estimated 1.3 billion people living below the poverty line, of whom nearly half are living in sub-Saharan Africa" (UNDP, 1998:iii).

(c) Social Context of Poverty:

"Based on an annual increase of 2.9 percent, revealed by the 1991 Census statistics, the Central bank of Nigeria (CBN) and UNDP project Nigeria's population to be between 115 and 120 million people. It is expected that this number will double in less than 25 years, given high fertility rates, averaging 5.2 children per woman. However, the actual statistics may be higher, due to the non-reporting of births (NDHS, 1999). The average life expectancy of a Nigerian is between 52 and 54 years (UNDP, 2001/CBN, 2000), but more than one third of Nigerians are not expected to live beyond the age of 40 (UNDP, 1998).

Poverty and the Reality of Indignity of Poverty in Nigeria

According to an Oxfam Working paper, up till 2003, "all documentation, official or otherwise, shows that poverty in Nigeria in all forms is rising at an increasingly fast pace. Nigeria's social statistics rank it among the worst in sub-Saharan Africa, even though it possesses the greatest natural resources. The World Bank has observed that the poor of Nigeria have a 'cash income [that] is insufficient to cover minimum standards of food, water, fuel, shelter, medical care and schooling' (Achor, 2001:35). Given that Nigeria is the seventh largest exporter of oil in the world, these revelations are distressing. All commentators agree that the causes and effects of poverty in Nigeria are far-reaching, diverse, and complex. This was remarked in a recent UNDP publication, which commented: 'the inescapable picture of Nigeria as one of the poorest countries in the world is not in doubt … she is worse off today than in the 1980s' (UNDP, 2001:65). 'The poverty profile of Nigeria does indeed present a very somber picture of a rich nation in decline' (UNDP, 1998:34).

(a) Income Poverty in Nigeria:

"Given the absence of an 'official' poverty line for the purposes of measurement, the World Bank and the Federal Office of Statistics have established that a 'two-thirds mean per capita household expenditure' would determine the poverty line in Nigeria, whereas a 'one-thirds mean per capita household expenditure' would indicate extreme poverty. In monetary terms at 1996/97 prices, the above formula translates

into N658 (US$8.20) per month as the poverty line, and N320 (US$4.00) per month as an indication of extreme poverty. Given these figures, it is estimated that 55.8 million Nigerians (48.5 percent of the population) are living below the poverty line (in 2003; today, in 2023, the number of poor people in the country stands around 136 million). These figures also indicate that Nigerians are living well below the universal poverty line of US$1 a day. The World Bank (1996) gives a higher estimate of 66 percent of the population living in poverty, while the Central Bank of Nigeria (1997) reported that 69.2 percent of the population were poor. The 2001 UNDP 'Human Development Report' remarked that poverty in Nigeria has 'been exacerbated' since these statistics were obtained, and cites recent estimates that two-thirds of the population in Nigeria are experiencing income poverty" (Ali-Akpajiak and Pyke, 2003:7).

(b) External Influence on Poverty in Nigeria:

"One should not endeavor to provide a picture of poverty without reference to the global economic circumstances that have compounded the inability of some developing countries to haul themselves out of poverty. As Onibokum points out, population and governments in developing countries, including Nigeria, have an aggregated burden of debt which 'mortgages a large part of export earnings and considerably restricts their already limited economic possibilities' (Onibokun and Kumuyi, 1996:49). Nigeria's external debt amounts to US$28bn, of which US$6.6bn is owed in interest and penalties to the Paris-Club – although this figure is disputed by some as an under-estimation. Various Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) prescribed by the International Monetary Fund, seeking to restructure an ailing economy, have had catastrophic consequences for the majority of the population. The decline in government expenditure on social services has served to aggravate the incidence of poverty (Obadan, 1999).

True, the rate of economic growth increased from 1.8 percent to 5.4 percent, but 'absolute' poverty also increased, along with the proportion of those living in 'extreme' poverty, which rose by 12-14 percent (UNDP, 2001). The policy of foreign-exchange rate-conversion forced an increase in the costs of education and health care were seriously affected. An increase in the cost of imports and the undermining of manufacturing capacity led to an increase in inflation. By 2003, capacity utilization in manufacturing was just 35 percent. The diversion of scares foreign exchange to dubious speculative activities intensified capital flight, worsened income-distribution patterns, and further marginalized and deprived the poor" (Hodges, 2001).

(c) The Circular Causation of Poverty Indignity:

"If a man was poor, he could afford little food; if he was under-nourished, he was more prone to disease; if he was ill and under-fed his capacity to work was limited; if his work ability was limited, his income was low; and in consequence he could afford little food. There was then a process of circular

causation of poverty" (Dickenson, et al, 1983:16), and at each of the circle the elements of indignity is not only felt by the man but also made manifest.

(d) The Reality of Poverty in Nigeria:

The nature and incidence of poverty in Nigeria call for a well-focused attention on the conduct of any inquiry on the structural causation of this ugly reality in the country. In the 2021 Misery Index, Nigeria was placed 11th; and unemployment staggered at 33.3 percent. Nigeria odiously became the world's global capital of extreme poverty in 2018 with 86.9 million citizens living below the $1.90 per day threshold. Seven million more were destined to join that miserable category by December 2022 in the country (World Bank, 2022). "According to the USDA (2021), 32.1% of households with incomes below the official poverty line face food insecurity, compared to 14% of households with incomes above the official poverty line. This key finding is corroborated by related findings from several prior studies; Gundersen et al" (researchgate.net, 2023). In all, it is estimated that more than 112 million people are living in poverty in Nigeria today.

Nevertheless, the real reality of poverty in Nigeria may not possibly be better appreciated by the narratives on the circular causation of poverty indignation and the presentation of the population living in poverty as they elude any adequate circular categorization of the situation. However, paraphrasing Todaro and Smith (2003:3-5), the reality of poverty amongst large number of the population of Nigeria (probably more than three-fourths of the nation's total population) "are less fortunate. They may have little or no shelter and an inadequate food supply. Their health is poor, they often cannot read and write, they are often unemployed, and their prospects for a better life are uncertain at best. The indignity of poverty amongst this large number of poor Nigerians is manifest in their living conditions: they live "where many small clusters of tiny huts dot a dry and barren land. Each cluster contains a group of extended families, all participating in and sharing the work. There is no money income here because all food, clothing, shelter, and worldly goods are made and consumed by the people themselves- there is a 'subsistence economy'. There are no roads, schools, hospitals, electric wires, or water supplies, and life here seems to be much as it must have been thousands of years ago. In many respects it is a stark and difficult existence". Moreover, the facts of the reality of poverty in Nigeria show that, consistently, many more people are becoming poor; the rate of increase of number of the poor is more than the rate of population increase in the country.

As such, sustainable "development must be redefined as an attack on the chief evils of the world today: malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, slums, unemployment and inequality. Measured in terms of aggregate growth rates, development has been a great success. But measured in terms of jobs, justice and the elimination of poverty, it has been a failure or only partial success" (Paul P. Streeten, as in Todaro and Smith, 2003:110).

Towards the Basics in Development Growth

Growth would generally imply gradual progressive increase and the term is widely applied and may refer to: increases in size of an individual organism or its parts; increases in effectiveness or competence of a function, e.g. growth of cognitive capacity in a child. Differentiation and refinement of parts and/or functions (Reber and Reber, 2001:252). But fundamentally, development involves "the process of improving the quality of all human lives. Three equally important aspects of development are (i) raising people's living levels- their incomes and consumption levels of food, medical services, education, etc., through relevant economic growth processes; (ii) creating conditions conducive to the growth of people's self-esteem through the establishment of social, political, and economic systems and institutions that promote human dignity and respect; and (iii) increasing people's freedom by enlarging the range of their choice variables, as by increasing varieties of consumer goods and services" (Todaro, 2003:792). "When you look at other countries that have made it, they developed on agriculture. First, for the purpose of food security; second, for the purpose of processing what they get from their farms, which is for the beginning of the third. Third, to give it out as export, which is for the purpose of foreign exchange and fourth, as a means of generating employment for the youth" (Obasanjo, 2022). These stages are not descriptive; they have an inner logic of continuity which colonialism truncated and caused countries like Nigeria to derail on achievement of the basic stages of development process (Okonkwo, 1998).

The Principal Chains of Transformation (Development)

"Every nation strives after development. Economic progress is an essential component, but it is not the only component. Development is not purely an economic phenomenon. In an ultimate sense, it must encompass more than the material and financial side of people's lives. Development should therefore be perceived as a multidimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social systems" (Todaro and Smith, 2003:110). This discourse on basic aspects of human development growth will be based on some areas of a detailed and extensive explanation of the origin and meaning of urban development by E. A. Gutkind (1964): 'International History of City Development', as in Okonkwo (1998:11-17); as it were an attempt at etymological inquiry into the basic stages in human development process. This brief insight into the 'principal chains of transformation' (development) would take us to the next section below: 'the natural progress of opulence', which holds that: "the great commerce is that between town and country, which is obviously advantageous to both" (Adam Smith, 1776:481), somewhat in conformity with the "I-It" relationship within the principal chains of transformation.

The underlying trends of this development form an indivisible unity in space and time, provided we apply the right yardstick- that is, a long-term and large-scale evaluation. Then chains of transformation become visible, and something like an organic and integrated

process of development emerges from the ever-renewed adaptation of the environment to human needs and of man to his environment. In broad outlines, three principal chains of transformation can be distinguished:

(a) The first and most general chain is the change in the interaction of man and environment from an "I-Thou" to an "I-It" relationship.
(b) The second chain is more explicit in character; it shows man's reactions to his environment in successive stages, ranging from fear and defense to confidence and aggressiveness and, finally, to growing understanding and responsibility. These reactions are always guided by the two complementary forces of instinct and reason, and they result in man's conscious or unconscious control of his efforts toward systematization.
(c) The third chain represents the widening scale and the changing experience of space, the latter intimately related to the union of the universe.

These three chains of transformation/development illustrate, together and each in its own right, the fulfilment of the basic human needs for shelter, food, work, and social intercourse. Consequently, the significance of each chain should be evaluated in relation to these four basic needs of human nature as they form an indissoluble whole; and, since human nature is every-where fundamentally the same, they produce in similar conditions similar results, although for an inexperienced eye they may seem to differ considerably.

There are, of course, still other ways of systematizing the transformation through which the interaction of man and nature has passed and is likely to pass in the future. We shall dwell a bit on some aspects of the first chain and also present further below (in the natural progress of opulence, and development models) other patterns of translating forms of transformation/development; fundamentally underscored by universality of patterns or approaches.

The first chain is, as earlier indicated, the transformation from an "I-Thou" to an "I-It" relationship which is evident in the changing interdependence of man and nature and of individual and group. These two aspects belong together, and the results of this unity and of this change can still be seen today. The layout of tribal villages and old towns in Europe and Asia, the ancestral graves interspersed between the settlements of the living generation in China and Nigeria, the pyramids and temples in Egypt, Mexico, and the Far East, etc., bear witness to the intimate and direct "I-Thou" relationship between man and nature and man and man. When this relationship became indirect and estranged, when it turned into an "I-It" relationship, disintegrating the symbolic and magical bonds between man and environment and upsetting the oneness of man's functional and personal life, the growing abstractness and the ensuing disunity produced the amorphous character of all modern towns and villages and a harsh and purely utilitarian attitude

towards nature. Now, ever since the Scientific Revolution, nature has been depersonalized, and the awareness of the total relationship between man and nature has been fading.

"During the first 3,000 years of recorded history, man remained deeply embedded in his natural environment. Nature and man, human and cosmic events, were merged into one and man's experience was immediate and personal. The symbolic significance of events and phenomena was equated with actual reality. This equation produced a particular concept of causality and of space and time that established between man and the phenomenal world an intimate and reciprocal dependence. The external world was a great 'Thou' to early man. He did not search for impersonal laws behind the goings-on of the universe. Consequently, his approach was not analytical.

Today, the world of primitive man is still a living reality and still immersed in magic and animism. It is a world that has no development as we understand it; for change means a break in establishment and reciprocal relationship between man and environment and would destroy the unity between him and the natural phenomena. In his world, two spheres, the macrocosm and the microcosm, pervade each other. His efforts are directed towards a fusion of the two by means of magical contacts that make the universal and the social space coalesce.

Ancient Greek thought was also permeated by an experience of nature. The legacy of the past was still too strong for the Greeks; they had not completely shaken off the fetters of mystical limitations. Macrocosm and microcosm were firmly interwoven, and man symbolized the general in his individual being. Greek symbolism was very concrete, very direct; it came to life in visible form, not through complicated analogies. Thus the classical and even the Hellenistic 'polis' became the symbolic expression of the ideal structure of society, the only correct form of its synthesis with the super-mathematical cosmic order. The 'polis' was limited in size and character, and its scale was fixed by human standards. Thus life had not become abstract, and the relations of men to their town remained concrete. Somewhat the same applies to the towns of old China.

Now, after the Scientific Revolution, man's awareness of his total relationship with nature began to fade. Life gradually became more abstract, and the relations between men lost their personal directness. This growing disintegration can be seen in the loss of homogeneity of urban and rural settings and in the unrelated attempts to exploit the natural resources. The new 'I-It' relationship between man and nature has destroyed the continuity of the intimate and personal contract between man and environment- and also the unity of thought linking everyday events and the immediate environment to the order of the universe. Only about ten generations separate us from the beginning of the Scientific Revolution, but this short period has created conditions of life that challenge the very essence of our existence. We face the disruptive impact of an 'I-It' relationship that extends not only to things but also to persons (Gutkind, 1964 as in

Okonkwo, 1998:13-17). "African countries have a direct and immediate interest in sustainable development because many households are directly dependent on natural resources for their welfare" (Muchena, 1995:25); they are still very strong on the 'I-Thou' relationship while desiring to move to the next stage of 'I-It' relationship with the environment. Nevertheless, this dependency relationship between man and his environment does not rest with Africans alone, it is a universal phenomenon in which the three chains of transformation/development illustrate, each in its own right, the fulfillment of the basic human needs for shelter, food, work, and social intercourse which constitute the desired sustainable attack on the root causes of poverty and as such eradication of the indignity of poverty amongst all peoples and nations.

The Natural Progress of Opulence: Agriculture as First Principle

"The great commerce of every civilized society, is that carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country. It consists in the exchange of rude for manufactured produce, either immediately, or by the intervention of money, or of some sort of paper which represents money. The country supplies the town with the means of subsistence, and the materials of manufacture. The town repays this supply by sending back a part of the manufactured produce to the inhabitants of the country. The town, in which there neither is nor can be any reproduction of substance, may very properly be said to gain its whole wealth and substance from the country. We must not, however, upon this account, imagine that the gain of the town is the loss of the country. The gains of both are mutual and reciprocal, and the division of labour is in this, as in all other cases, advantageous to all the different persons employed in the various occupations into which it is subdivided. The inhabitant of the country purchase of the town a greater quantity of manufactured goods, with the produce of a much smaller quantity of their own labour, than they must have employed had they attempted to prepare them themselves. The town affords a market for the surplus produce of the country, or what is over and above the maintenance of the cultivators, and it is there that the inhabitants of the country exchange it for something else which is in demand among them. The greater the number and revenue of the inhabitants of the town, the more extensive is the market which it affords to those of the country; and the more extensive that market, it is always the more advantageous to a great number" (Adam Smith, 1776:481-482).

So in examining the natural progress of opulence, 'natural' would mean "existing in nature; not made or caused by human; normal; as you would expect; used to describe behavior that is part of the character that a person or an animal was born with; having an ability that you were born with; etc." (Hornby, 2006:976). While 'progress' would stand for "the process of improving or developing, or of getting nearer to achieving or completing something; movement forwards or towards a place; to improve or develop over a period of time; to make progress; to move forward; etc." (Hornby,

2006:1161). And 'opulence' ordinarily means "extremely rich; wealthy; etc. (Hornby, 2006: 1027).

Therefore, "the great commerce is that between town and country, which is obviously advantageous to both. The cultivation of the country must be prior to the increase of the town, though the town may sometimes be distant from the country from which it derives its subsistence. This order of things is favoured by the natural preference of man for agriculture. Cultivators require the assistance of artificers, who settle together and form a village, and their employment augments with the improvement of the country. In the American colonies an artificer who has acquired sufficient stock becomes a planter instead of manufacturing for distant sale, as in countries where no uncultivated land can be procured. Manufacturers are naturally preferred to foreign commerce. So the natural course of things is first agriculture, then manufacturers, and finally foreign commerce. But this order has been in many respects inverted" (Adam Smith, 1776:482-487). Now, while the 'I-Thou' relationship is synonymous with agriculture being first in the natural course of things, the inversion of the natural order of things is represented by the 'I-It' relationship. And so it is in Nigeria that colonialism having met the nation in its 'I-Thou' relationship stage (agriculture first in pre-development level) in the principal chains of transformation/development, left the country in a premature state of 'I-It' with a disorder that in many respect distorted and derailed endogenous natural progress of opulence (its growth patterns), installed enclave economy oil industry and satellite industrialization (Biersteker, 1978).

Economic Theories for Basic Development Infrastructure: Four Approaches

"At the time of European 'Age of Discovery', some indigenous peoples in the Americas, Africa, Asia and Australasia had highly developed sophisticated cultures and technologies. In each continent there existed a range of cultural levels, from simple hunter-gatherer tribes to more advanced, urbanized civilizations… Early development in Africa, as in America and Asia, varied greatly. There were, for example, marked contrasts between the societies of the Egyptian, Ethiopian and Sudanese empires on the one hand, and the pygmies of the Congo and the hunter-gatherers of the Kalahari Desert on the other. Some states had well-established trading and agricultural systems, as in the kingdoms of West Africa and Zimbabwe.

Thus, by the time European expansion began, the continents which now comprise the Third World had nurtured highly complex civilizations with high levels of cultural, technical and social development. Some of these areas were not 'undeveloped' or 'underdeveloped'. Rather they were what Buchanan (1967:21) has called 'pre-developed', with societies which had achieved a high degree of cultural, economic and political development before the arrival of Europeans, and in some cases in advance of progress in Europe itself. Their relative backwardness today is due, at least in part, to the impact of European colonialism on their development, which created a particular pattern of relationships between colonizers

and colonized, and profoundly modified the internal structures and patterns of the colonized territory. European expansion affected most of the world, and created a pattern of unequal relationships between a European core and a periphery of dependent lands" (Dickenson, et al, 1983:23-24).

And so it was that "the post-World War II literature on economic development has been dominated by four major and sometimes competing strands of thought:

(a) The linear-stages-of-growth model;
(b) Theories and patterns of structural change;
(c) The international-dependence revolution; and
(d) The neoclassical, free-market counter revolution. In recent years, an eclectic approach has emerged that draws on all of these classic theories" (Todaro and Smith, 2003).

However, the basics of development growth have been explained earlier above as 'principal process of transformation' and 'natural progress of opulence' but from non-economic stand-point. Now, from pure economic stand-point, "theorists of the 1950s and early 1960s viewed the process of development as a series of successive stages of economic growth through which all countries must pass. It was primarily an economic theory of development in which the right quantity and mixture of saving, investment, and foreign aid were all that was necessary to enable developing nations to proceed along an economic growth path that historically had been followed by the more developed countries. Development thus became synonymous with rapid, aggregate economic growth.

This linear-stages approach was largely replaced in the 1970s by two competing economic (and indeed ideological) schools of thought:

(a) The first, which focused on theories and patterns of structural change, used modern economic theory and statistical analysis in an attempt to portray the internal process of structural change that a 'typical' developing country must undergo if it is to succeed in generating and sustaining a rapid economic growth; and
(b) The second, the international-dependence revolution, was more radical and political in orientation. It viewed underdevelopment in terms of international and domestic power relationships, institutional and structural economic rigidities, and the resulting proliferation of dual economies and dual societies both within and among the nations of the world.

Dependence theories tend to emphasize external and internal institutional and political constraints on economic development. Emphasis was placed on the need for major new policies to eradicate poverty, to provide more diversified employment opportunities, and to reduce income inequalities. These and other egalitarian objectives were to be achieved within the context of a growing economy, but economic growth per se was not given the

exalted status accorded to it by the linear stages and structural-change model.

Throughout much of the 1980s and early 1990s, a fourth approach prevailed. This neoclassical (sometimes called neoliberal) counterrevolution in economic thought emphasized the beneficial role of free market, open economies, and the privatization of inefficient public enterprises. Failure to develop, according to this theory, is not due to exploitative external and internal forces as expounded by dependence theorists. Rather, it is primarily the result of too much government intervention and regulation of the economy. Today's eclectic approach draws on all of these perspectives" (Todaro and Smith, 2003:111), and the strengths and weaknesses of each will be highlighted.

Highlights on Some Related Development Theories

The developed world, even before the World War II reached their developed status by following 'the linear-stages-of-growth model'. This model was in agreement with the principles behind the 'principal chains of transformation/development' in its three chains of transformation, and also in line with the agriculture-first approach as held by 'the natural progress of opulence'; both projecting the physical dimensions of development in time and in space. The emphasis on this model for the Nigerian case is growth emanating from within and thus sustained therefrom. This is different from the present situation of the country's economy which main-stay is the oil industry with its enclave economy which production and also revenue are all externally controlled (the phenomenon of exogenous dominance). This enclave industry has barely no real linkages to the local economy; the fiscal linkages are prone to corruption thus reducing contributions to the national treasury (Okongwu, 1986; Okonkwo, 2021). Even when our quest for nationhood was not predicated on oil, the irony is that despite the very high premium placed on oil now, there is nothing to show for it in the life of Nigerians. This is why a typical Nigerian would not mind if the oil dries up today (Onyekakeyah, 2007:93).

"When interest in the poor nations of the world really began to materialize following the Second World War, economists in the industrialized nations were caught off ground. They had no readily available conceptual apparatus with which to analyze the process of economic growth in largely agrarian societies characterized by the virtual absence of modern economic structures. But they did have the recent experience of the Marshall Plan, under which massive amounts of U.S. financial and technical assistance enabled the war-torn countries of Europe to rebuild and modernize their economies in a matter of few years" (Todaro and Smith, 2003:112).

Nevertheless, "it is possible to argue that early Western theories and strategies for the development of the Third World emerged as a product of two traumatic events in world history:

- The great recession in trade in the 1930s and
- The end of the Second World War in 1945.

The first allowed free rein to the ideas of John Maynard Keynes and his followers, the second created an atmosphere of freedom, idealism and optimism and provided the seedbed of the colonial independence movement. Keynes (1936) believed that the free play of the money markets would lead to booms and slumps of increasing severity, so that in the modern world no sophisticated social, political and economic system could survive without careful regulation of the economy. This did not imply any lack of enthusiasm for capitalism itself, but a belief that economic growth was more likely to be continuous and to benefit more people if it were stage-managed.

The evidence of the 1930s brought this argument into sharp focus, and the post-war reconstruction of Europe was the first major attempt by European governments to use Keynesian economic strategies to regulate domestic economies and to plan 'aid' intervention on an international scale. The initial success of these measures through the Marshall Plan (the American Aid-to-Europe programme which allowed capital investment in new industries) encouraged development theorists to follow a similar reasoning process when they turned their attention to the poor nations of the southern hemisphere" (Dickenson, et al., 1983:14-15).

It is note-worthy that Marshall Plan approach to Africa, and to Nigeria in particular was most inadequate as at that time as the countries of Europe where the Plan succeeded in rebuilding and modernizing their economies had already developed their agriculture to a very good stage before the Plan was implemented. Following the linear stage of growth model these European countries had reached the required status for modernization and industrialization while the African countries were in their pre-developed state when colonization began. Countries like Nigeria, under colonialism, were derailed in their stage of growth trajectory and their process of growth in development was interrupted and distorted as the exploitations which commenced at colonial domination were rather directed at satisfying the needs of the European markets. The natural principal chains of transformation from 'I-Thou' to 'I-It' and the basic stages in progress of opulence were stagnated during colonialism; as it were the nation was held 'stand-still' in its path of movement on the stages of development growth.

"Moreover, was it not true that all modern industrial nations were once undeveloped agrarian societies? Surely their historical experience in transforming their economies from poor agricultural subsistence societies to modern industrial giants had important lessons for the 'backward' countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The logic and simplicity of these two strands- the utility of massive injections of capital and the historical pattern of the now developed countries- was too irresistible to be refuted by scholars, politicians, and administrators in rich countries to whom people and ways of life in the developing world were often no more real than U.N. statistics or scattered chapters in anthropology books. Because of its emphasis on the central role of accelerated capital accumulation, this approach is often

dubbed 'capital fundamentalism" (Todaro and Smith, 2003:112).

Development as Growth on the Linear-Stages Theories: Rostow Stages of Growth

"The first theories of Third World development were, then, the product of three major influences:

- The Euro-American experience which had generated an enthusiastic belief in managed capitalist economic and social development;
- A new spirit of optimism about the future; and
- Of the growing determination in the colonies to make their own fresh starts.

Nevertheless, as indicated above, "there were strong historical currents feeding early development theory. It is therefore not surprising that the first theories of Third World development were characterized both by a strong belief in the power of interventionist economics and the superiority of the current Western model of economic (and by implication cultural) development, as a linear process directed towards the same kind of economic, social and political structures which characterized Western Europe and North America. Walter Rostow (1960) gave an impetus to such thinking by likening the process of economic growth to that of an aeroplane setting off down a runway. After a long 'pre-industrial' taxiing process the economic engines are revved for a rapid surge towards 'industrial' take-off into the clear blue sky of sustained economic growth" (Dickenson, et al., 1983:15).

But it has to be underlined that "out of this somewhat sterile intellectual environment, fueled by the cold war politics of the 1950s and 1960s and the resulting competition for the allegiance of newly independent nations, came the 'stages-of-growth model of development'. Its most influential and outspoken advocate was the American economic historian Walt W. Rostow. According to the Rostow doctrine, the transition from underdevelopment to development can be described in terms of a series of steps or stages through which all countries must proceed" (Todaro and Smith, 2003: 112).

"As Rostow wrote in the opening chapters of 'The Stages of Economic Growth':

> 'It is possible to identify all societies, in their economic dimensions, as lying within one of five categories:
> (a) The traditional society;
> (b) The pre-conditions for take-off into self-sustaining growth;
> (c) The take-off;
> (d) The drive to maturity; and
> (e) The age of high mass consumption.

These stages are not merely descriptive. They are not merely a way of generalizing certain factual observations about the sequence of development of modern societies. They have an inner logic and continuity. They constitute, in the end, both a theory about economic growth and more general, if still highly partial, theory about modern history as a whole'" (Walter W. Rostow, 1960: 1,3,4 and 12).

Now, "the advanced countries, it was argued, had all passed the stage of 'take-off into self-sustaining growth', and the underdeveloped countries that were still in either the traditional society or the 'preconditions' stage had only to follow a certain set of rules of development to take off in their turn into self-sustaining economic growth" (Todaro and Smith, 2003:112). Arguably, Nigeria could be said to be in 'the pre-conditions for take-off into self-sustaining growth at the time colonization started with the British bombardment of Lagos in 1851 (Okonkwo, 1998:45) in the early nineteenth century. On the basis of 'the natural progress of opulence', which order of things is favoured by the natural preference of man for agriculture, the country would have been on track towards consolidating its agriculture first, a pre-condition for take-off into self-sustaining growth before the same order was interrupted and distorted by colonialism. This position could be corroborated by the fact that: urban life in Nigeria dates back far into the country's pre-colonial era (Mabogunje, 1968; Ukwu, 1976; Ukwu, 1980). From previous works of various authors, plus reports made by large number of the West African explorers a good number of well-established small towns formed a strong contrast with the prevailing type of village and scattered settlements. When Clapperton reached the interior of Yoruba country in 1825 he visited Katunga (Old Oyo) and other sizeable towns; the Portuguese explorer d'Aveiro had visited the city of Benin in 1485 (Mabogunje, 1986). The principal centres in Igboland were those associated with the great Aro trade system. This system incorporated a network of Aro settlements, the main nodes of which were Aro and Aro-Ndizuogu, as well as the great fairs of Bende and Uburu. Other centres with specialized trading and industrial (crafts) communities included Nkwere, Awka, Abiriba, Item, Ibagwa, Mgbowo, Nike and Imoha (Ukwu, 1980).

There are other development models such as:

- The Harrod-Domar Growth Model;
- The Lewis Theory of Development;
- The Structural Change and Patterns of Development;
- The International-Dependence Revolution; etc.,

but this paper will pay more attention to the Rostow Model because of its nearness and suitability to the Nigerian local situation, the principal chains of transformation and the natural progress of opulence which emphasize 'agriculture first'.

Economic Growth Model for Sustainable Development Goals Achievement in Nigeria

"China, they say, is not only a different country but also a different civilization; and it is her peculiar civilization that laid the organizational structure which has sustained the country's impressive economic growth and development especially in the last 40 years" (Scott and Marshall, 2009:). Generally, Nigeria is robust in natural and human resources which are needed for economic production and growth. It is in record that agriculture was flourishing as a sector in the country until government began to intervene in it. Today, Nigeria in contrast to China is still struggling with national identity as a country and has since attainment of independence jumped from one economic

growth model to another without any consolidated organizational structure for economic growth and development especially at the grass root level and of course for agriculture.

"Moreover, and as pointed out earlier, was it not true that all modern industrial nations were once undeveloped agrarian societies? Surely, their historical experience in transforming their economies from poor agricultural subsistence societies to modern industrial giants had important lessons for the 'backward' countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. As explained earlier, "when interest in the poor nations of the world really began to materialize following the Second World War, economists in the industrialized nations were caught off guard. They had no readily available conceptual apparatus with which to analyze the process of economic growth in largely agrarian societies characterized by the virtual absence of modern economic structures" (Todaro and Smith, 2003). But these economists had the concepts of how development had been taking place in Europe and America quite before the Second World War; they knew that most of these countries had already passed the stage of 'take-off into self-sustaining growth'. So the Marshall Plan, actually, did not take these countries beyond the stage of 'take-off into self-sustaining growth' but rather helped them to rebuild what was destroyed of the stage of development in which they were before the Second World War. It was not the Marshall Plan, which "financial and technical assistance enabled the war-torn countries of Europe to rebuild and modernize their economies in a matter of a few years" (Todaro and Smith, 2003) that actually laid the development foundation of the stage of 'take-off into self-sustaining growth'; they had followed the 'Rostow's Stages of Growth Model of Development'. The Marshall Plan rather helped them to leverage on their achieved pre-war stage of development to launch, within a few years, into rebuilding and modernization.

And so it was, in reality, that this 'take-off into self-sustaining growth' in development stage with agriculture first, made urbanization and industrialization feasible in many European countries. "The first cities arose where and when agriculture was sufficiently advanced to supply food, not alone for the actual producers, but also for those who were not engaged in agriculture. This was the basic prerequisite, for artisans, craftsmen, soldiers, and traders who congregated in the cities. And even if they owned fields outside the city or gardens without it, they produced hardly more than a welcome portion of the food they needed in addition to the supply from full-time farmers" (Gutkind, 1964:3-51). But even in the twenty-first century, "our potential in agriculture is not being tapped. Nigeria has 84 million hectares of land and only 40 percent of this portion is being utilized, accounting for 40 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product, with 70 percent of the employable population wallowing in idleness. We run an import dependent economy; we are not unlocking the potentials in agriculture. We have to unlock those potentials" (Adesina, 2012:17). "Nigeria has seen its food imports for the first nine months in 2021 surge to a six-year high; a total of

N2.1 trillion food products were imported into the country from January through September in 2021, indicating a 75 percent rise when compared to N1.2 trillion in the corresponding period of 2020" (NBS, 2021). The main reason for situation, which is aggravated today, remains colonial based government policy which consistently promotes production of more agricultural export raw materials for the Western manufacturing sector in detriment of food security in the country.

From the foregoing, the position of this paper, as to the models for removal of the root causes of the indignity of poverty and the achievement of sustainable national economic growth in Nigeria, has been consistently clear and hammered at laying the basic infrastructure for the re-enactment of the 'take-off stage' of development; the infrastructure for the 'agriculture first'. The argument is quite straightforward. Progress has been achieved in the West (and in the European East), as they followed the Rostow's development stages, by eliminating the rural character of economic and social relations. It is these 'primitive, backward, conservative, superstitious' elements which have all been removed in the progress towards an urbanized society (the transformation from an 'I-Thou' to 'I-It' stage). The Third World was characterized as having peasant social and economic attitudes and institutions of precisely the kind condemned by Western theorists.

"The Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal (1963) and others argued that if this process of circular causation of poverty could be broken and reversed by industrialization then economic progress might be achieved. There might then be a converse 'circular causation of cumulative development', a process which Myrdal linked to Rostow's 'take-off'. For the Nigerian case, this approach does not seem to have solved the problem; it rather metamorphosed into satellite industrialization without roots in Nigeria (Biersteker, 1978) because the basic policy and infrastructure have not been put in place for 'take-off' on the growth path. The fundamental and basic process of linear-stages-of-growth had been truncated by the advent of colonialism in the country and this made the nation most unprepared for industrialization and further urbanization at independence; to this should be added the fact that as satellite industrialization without sufficient endogenous input was introduced in the country, the Rostow's linear-stages approach to growth was largely replaced in the 1970s (as the oil boom started) by two competing economic (and indeed ideological) schools of thought, as earlier explained.

Conclusion

"There is no short-cut to development" (Hassan Kuka, 2022). While Gunnar Myrdal, the Swedish Nobel Laureate in Economics thinks that: "it is in agricultural sector that the battle for long-term economic development will be won or lost"; Francis Blanchard, Director General of the International Labor Organization, re-emphasizes that: "the main burden of development and employment creation will have to be borne by the part of the economy in which agriculture is the

predominant activity, that is, the rural sector" (as in Todaro and Smith, 2003:418).

But not a predominance of rural peasant agriculture in which the achievement of subsistence would constitute the major objective. Unless low-productivity peasant agriculture is transformed rapidly into higher-productivity farming in Nigeria, powered by sustainable infrastructure for agriculture with mechanized/industrial farming and greater price incentives/market access, the hundreds of millions of impoverished and increasingly landless rural dwellers will continue to face an even more precarious existence while the country continues to rely on food imports year in year out. This is the picture of the situation even in years ahead, notwithstanding the potentials in available large expanse of arable lands and sizeable population in the country.

Even from the natural progress of opulence explained above, 'the great commerce is that between town and country, which is obviously advantageous to both'. So, having identified a clear continuum from rural poverty to urban affluence in the West, it was perhaps inevitable that the first development strategies should approach the problem of inducing change in the Third World, in Nigeria, by concentrating on the 'successful' end of this spectrum. Since Western development process was guided and prepared under Rostow's Growth Model and thus positioned for take-off into self-sustaining stage; if Western development had taken place through the generation of urban industrial system increasingly geared to a sophisticated and capital-intensive technology, then this was the direction in which the Nigerian economy should go. By these means, the following key challenges of indignity of poverty could be broken:

- The interaction of negative effects of 'the vicious circles of poverty', which perpetuated the adverse condition of poverty in the country; and
- The challenge of inclusion which boarders mostly on the fact that 'poor people cannot borrow money' even when they could be organized into economic production communities in farming, fishery and forestry.

In all, had colonial human institutions, therefore, never disturbed and distorted that natural course of things, the linear-stages-of-growth, the progressive wealth and further urbanization of the Nigerian territory would have been consequential and in proportion of the improvement and cultivation of the land. As earlier pointed out, "When you look at other countries that have made it, they developed on the basis of agriculture. First, for the purpose of food security; second, for the purpose of processing what they get from their farms, which is for the beginning of the third. Third, to give it out as export, which is for the purpose of foreign exchange and fourth, as a means of generating employment for the youth" (Obasanjo, 2022). The stages, as earlier explained, are not descriptive; they have an inner logic of continuity which colonialism truncated and caused Nigeria to derail on the path of achievement of the basic stages of development process; and to find

more than three-quarters of its population living in abject poverty in the twenty-first century.

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