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**WORKING WITH EDUCATIONAL IDEA OF MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGS) AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF EDUCATION FOR ALL IN NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*This paper seek to map out the millennium development goals and sustainable development goals, educational idea for the achievement of education for all in Nigeria. In doing so the paper highlights the Mandeep Development Goals as established by the United Nations, and Sustainable Development Goals for narrowing education for all agenda, by integrating millennium and sustainable development educational goals. The paper then closes with some recommendation for the government to implement the education goals of both millennium and sustainable development as this will enhance the achievement of education for all agenda.*

**Key words:** *Millennium Development Goals, Sustainable Development Goals, Education for All, Integrating, Achievement*

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**Introduction**

Education, it is argued, enables people to live with dignity, develop their full capacities, participates fully in development and improves the quality of their lives (UNESCO, 1990). It also have a role to play in promoting “the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice” (UNESCO, 1996: II). Yet it also has the potential to be used as a vehicle in the reinforcement of authoritarian, discriminatory and anti-democratic practices in society. The role of teachers in the Rwandan genocide is a particularly stark example of this (Harber, 2002). A less dramatic, but equally disturbing, example is the influence of ‘genderviolence’ perpetrated by males pupils and teachers in schools in

Zimbabwe and Uganda, which socializes girls into accepting male violence in society and by governments (Leach, 2003). Tomasevski (2003) provides further examples of the abuse of education and its prejudice prejudiced and anti-human rights policies and practices. Yet education has played a role in national reconstruction. It has helped in the elimination of child labour in some countries (Tomasevski, 2003) and Oxfam (2004) claims that young people who have completed primary education are less likely to contract HIV than who have not been to school.

**The Mandeep Development Goals (MDGs)** were eight international development goals for the year 2015 that had been established following the Millennium summit of the United Nations in 2000, following the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. All 191 United Nations member states at that time, and at least 22 international organizations committed to help achieve the following Millennium Development Goals by 2015:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve primary education universally
- Promote gender equality and empowerment in women
- Reduce child mortality rates
- Improve maternal health
- Combat HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development

In September 2000, building upon a decade of major United Nations conferences and summits, world leaders came together at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

The Declaration however, committed nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and set out a series of eight time-bound targets with a deadline of 2015 – that have become known as the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**.

**The first MDG Report** found that the 15-year effort has produced the most successful anti-poverty movement around the globe in history.

The literature on, and politics of sustainable development shows that achieving strong sustainability, which implies no trade-offs between the economic, social and ecological goals, is rare; politics tend to make trade-offs in favour of the economy at the cost of social and ecological issues (Lorek and Spagenberg, 2014). Furthermore, autonomous processes of globalization allocate resources through a poorly regulated market, resulting in a ‘one dollar one vote’ approach, rather than a ‘one person one vote’ system at the national level, or a ‘one country one vote’ system at the global level (Karabarbounis 2011; Stiglitz 2015; Piketty 2014). Without strong countervailing power, this might concentrate resources in the hands of the few, as is already happening (Oxfam 2014, 2015).

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 aimed to compensate for this autonomous concentration of wealth by focusing on ensuring dignity for the poorest people. It mobilized people in different parts of the world and in different capacities to implement the MDGs, even though the end results have been uneven. Negotiations on the follow-up to the now expired MDGs have expanded the scope of discussion to include ecological issues. They have led to adoption of a document entitled “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” which includes the sustainable development goals (UNGA 2014) under the auspices of the United General Assembly (for background see Chasek and Wagner and Gellers in this issue).

### **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

In sharp contrast to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are uniformly applicable to all countries of the world, removing the “developing” versus “developed” dichotomy that left the MDGs open to criticism. And while there are similarities in regard to the format of the MDGs and the SDGs – e.g. each framed the international development agenda for a 15-year period – the SDGs have significantly expanded on the scale and content of the MDGs. The SDGs are focused on a global development with and-for sustainability, and demonstrate an understanding that the environment is not an add-on or in opposition to sustainable development, but rather the base that underpins all other goals. As a result, whereas the MDGs maintained a retrospectively narrow focus on poverty reduction, the SDGs include new themes which reflect an approach that

sees the environment, economy and society as embedded systems rather than separate competing “pillars”: e.g. urban areas, water and sanitation, energy, and climate change are all prominently featured. Another significant difference between the MDGs and SDGs is how they have been created: the crafting of the SDGs has been regarded as an unparalleled participatory policy process, and this is reflected in their scale and ambition. A UN Open Working Group (OWG) made up of 70 countries sharing 30 seats was established in 2013 to draft the SDGs and was tasked with incorporating a range of stakeholders into their negotiation process (Micheal Woodbridge, 2015). As a result, developing countries have been able to provide significant input into the content, as have local and subnational governments, and prominent actors from civil society and the private sector, Nigeria inclusive. The sustainable development goals (SDGs) as mentioned above set goals to ensure a social floor (La Rawth, 2012), and planetary boundaries La Rockatrum et al. (2009) and suggest some of the means that should help in achieving these goals. The Sustainable Development Goals are:

- No Poverty
- Zero Hunger
- Good Health and Well-being
- Quality Education
- Gender Equality
- Clean Water and Sanitation
- Affordable and Clean Energy
- Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
- Reducing Inequality
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Responsible Consumption and Production
- Climate Action
- Life Below Water
- Life On Land
- Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
- Partnerships for the Goals

The goals are broad based and interdependent. The goals are to be achieved around the world, and by all UN member states, by 2030. This means that all states are called upon equally to play their part in finding shared and lasting solutions to the world's urgent challenges in which universal basic education is among the issues need to be addressed globally. This is what calls the attention for this paper.

### **The Narrowing of the Education for All Agenda**

Education for All (EFA) represents an international commitment to ensure that every child and adult receives basic education of good quality. This commitment is based both on a human rights perspective, and on the generally held belief that education is central to individual well-being and national development as the following quote from the UK department for International Development (DFID, 2006) illustrates:

*“Education benefits not just children, but families and communities and whole countries. It improves job chances and prosperity; promotes Health and prevents diseases”.*  
(Foreword)

In this paper, issues related to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) educational goals in relation to Education for All (EFA) achievements will be discussed.

### **Education for All (EFA) as Global Agenda**

Education for All (EFA) means ensuring that all children have access of basic education of good quality. Even child with disability are not segregated, because this may be the single factor excluding children from schooling; this means that the goal of Education for All (EFA) cannot be achieved simply by doing more of what we are already doing. Closing in on EFA will require new strategies to reach these children. Inclusive Education is one such strategy. It is based on the principle that all children should have the opportunity to learn and that children learn best when they learn together.

This implies creating an environment in schools and in basic education programmes in which children are both able and enabled to learn. Such an

environment must be an inclusive of children, effective with children, friendly and welcoming to children, healthy and protective from children and gender sensitive. The development of such child friendly learning environments is an essential part of the overall efforts by countries around the world to increase access to, and improve the quality of their schools.

In early documentation on Education for All (EFA), there was a rather token mention of 'social needs'. This has been gradually replaced by recognition that the inclusion agencies should be seen as an essential element of the whole Education for All (EFA) movement. And therefore, in taking an inclusion approach, we must not lose sight in addressing all vices bedeviling the lives of children to be out of school, as (Tomasyeski, 2004). Stated "a right-based approach to education is founded upon these principles of:

- ❖ Access to free and compulsory education.
- ❖ Equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination.
- ❖ The right to quality education content and processes.

After an assessment of the achievement of the goals of Jomtien (goal that were not achieved in the developing world in particular for reasons of political instability, civil strife, economic crises and structural adjustment policies and failure of technical and financial aid from the industrialized world) the world met in Dakar (Senegal) and came up with new Education for All (EFA) goals (the Dakar EFA goals of April 2000). However, the goal aimed to achieve the followings:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particular girls' children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

4. Achieving a fifty percent (50%) improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls full and equal access to an achievement in basic good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The target year for attaining Education for All (EFA) in 2015, as experience has shown this would be another stock taking year, the requirements for meeting basic learning needs will continue to evolve with developments locally and in the wider world. The world is already working on education post -2015 (Obanya, 2011).

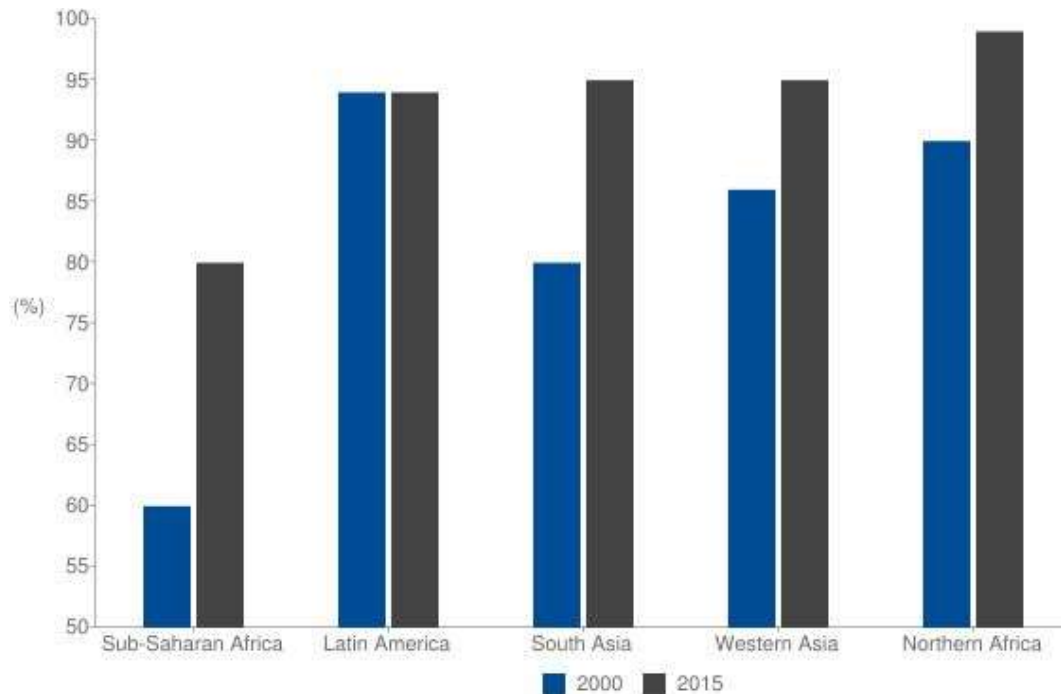
### **Integrating MDGS and SDGs goals**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development came into force in January 2016 as the central United Nations (UN) platform for achieving ‘integrated and indivisible’ goals and targets across the three characteristic dimensions of sustainable development: the social, environmental and economic.

#### **Goal 2 of MDGs: (Achieving Universal Primary Education)**

*Considerable progress has been made in expanding primary education enrolment since 1990, particularly since the adoption of the MDGs in 2000.*

The global number of out-of-school children has fallen considerably since 1990, although the pace of improvement has been insufficient to achieve universal primary enrolment by 2015. Currently, 57 million children of primary school age are estimated to be out of school, down from 100 million in 2000. Of these, 33 million are in sub-Saharan Africa, and more than half (55 percent) are girls. *Adjusted net enrolment rate for primary education, 2000 and 2015 (Percentage)*



(Source) *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2015*

- The primary school net enrolment rate in the developing regions has reached an estimated 91 percent in 2015, up from 83 percent in 2000.
- The number of out-of-school children of primary school age worldwide has fallen by almost half, to an estimated 57 million in 2015, from 100 million in 2000.
- Between 1990 and 2012, the number of children enrolled in primary school in sub-Saharan Africa more than doubled, from 62 to 149 million.
- In the developing regions, children in the poorest households are four times as likely to be out of school as those in the richest households.
- The literacy rate among youth aged 15 to 24 has increased globally from 83 percent to 91 percent between 1990 and 2015.

#### **Goal 4 of SDGs: (Quality education)**

"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."<sup>1</sup>

Major progress has been made in access to education, specifically at the primary school level, for both boys and girls. The number of out-of-school children has



almost halved from 112 million in 1997 to 60 million in 2014. Still, at least 22 million children in 43 countries will miss out on pre-primary education unless the rate of progress doubles.

Access does not always mean quality of education or completion of primary school. 103 million youth worldwide still lack basic literacy skills and more than 60 percent of those are women. In one out of four countries, more than half of children failed to meet minimum math proficiency standards at the end of primary school, and at the lower secondary level, the rate was 1 in 3 countries. Target 1 of Goal 4 is to ensure that, by 2030, all girls and boys complete free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education.

Additionally, progress is difficult to track: 75 percent (75%) of countries have no or insufficient data to track progress towards SDG Goal 4 targets for learning outcomes (target 1), early childhood education (target 2), and effective learning environments. Data on learning outcomes and pre-primary school are particularly scarce; 70 percent and 40 percent of countries lack adequate data for these targets, respectively. This makes it hard to analyze and identify the children at greatest risk of being left behind.

### **Working with Educational Idea of MDGs and SDGs for the Achievement of Education for All (EFA)**

These goal 2 of MDG and goal 4 of SDG are related to education when collaborated and work together will lead to the achievement of current SDGS and definitely result in the wellbeing of NIGERIAN children less the privileges In particular and the world children in general.

Looking at the MDG goal 2 which address the achievement of universal primary education and emphasize on the enrollment in primary education and completion of primary education; known as the Universal Basic Education (UBE). This alone cannot enhance the wellbeing of children because they may end up only been enrolled in primary school without any further creative development, likewise the illiterate adults were totally sidelined by the goal. But it will be in the best effort when collaborated with SDG goal four which advocate for ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, this will give room for every individual be it disable or less privilege to be enrolled into primary schools, and even

proceed further without hindrance in the learning pursuit. Also working with the two goals will reaffirm the achievement of education for all and give room for the attainment of any development goal in its assign target year especially in developing countries which Nigeria is inclusive.

Considering MDG education goal cannot do well to the achievement of SDGs but integrating the two educational goals can give room for the realization of EFA. The goal two of MDGs is an emphases on universal basic knowledge for day to day interaction, while goal four of SDGs stresses the need for ensuring quality and equal opportunity in education to every citizen.

Education is a fundamental human right and is widely recognized as a means to develop human capital, to improve economic performance, and to enhance people's capabilities and choices (Epstein, 2010). We need a change, a change towards a more inclusive system every child has a fundamental right to education, and must be given opportunity to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of learning and inclusion should be use to respond to the diversity needs of every individual children in particular.

Inclusion enhances the attainment of the objective of EFA. Education cannot be for all until it is received by all (Garuba, 2001). A system that excludes some people cannot be for all and should therefore give way to one that is accommodating of all. It has been argued, "A system that serves only a minority of children while denying attention to a majority of others that equally need special assistance will not prosper in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As Obanya (2013) puts it the goals of EFA cannot be attained until meaningful access becomes universal. That means removing the barriers universally that have created exclusion and ensure that all children successfully completed the different cycles of basic education by successfully learning.

## **Conclusion**

For increasing the life standard and wellbeing of the country, every developmental goal should give emphasis to their access to inclusive and equitable quality education. Also EFA goals should be reaffirm and achieve moving it from a focus on quantity (enrollment figures) to quality inclusive for all. Education for all (EFA) has become a universal goal and a basis for investment, the world education forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2000

acknowledged the Salamanca statement and admitted how far there was to go to meet the goals of education for all more than 113 million children with no access to primary education. Ensuring the right to education is at very heart of UNESCO's mission, which is also affirmed and recognized by its member state. Such education must also be a quality education. Thus, UNESCO (2000) emphasizes not merely the right to education, but also particularly the right to quality education for all.

### Recommendation

The discussion of this paper recommended that Nigeria in particular and developing countries in general should go back and reaffirm the previous global developmental goals such as education for all goals and millennium development goals and formulate strategies for achieving them before signing on any global goal that might come hence it was not the fault of the goals. As all the goals have geneses of positive development but the lapses is on the strategies for achieving them. Also on the current sustainable development goals, there is need of integrating MDGs, SDGs, and EFA educational idea for the

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