

6. PARTNERSHIPS TO ACHIEVE THE GOAL

The link between poverty and inequality and all other aspects of the SDGs and 169 targets to be achieved are subsumed under SDG 17, underscoring the important role of partnerships to achieve the goal. The centrality of partnerships in every area of human endeavour cannot be overstated in the efforts to achieve the ambitious goals set for the development of every nation of the world. As contained in a U.N. report, "In addition to eliminating poverty, the new framework (the SDGs) must address the drivers of change, such as economic growth, job creation, reduced inequality and innovation that makes better and more careful use of natural resources. Industry will surely play a prominent role in advancing all these drivers" [2].

Global Impact, a non-governmental international organization, is championing the initiative captioned "IMPACT 2030," is essentially a collaborative effort. It is a "collaboration of international leaders from the private sector, non-profits and governments that are working towards the success of the SDGs exploring specifically what can be done to mobilize corporate volunteers to contribute directly to the success of the UN's SDGs." No one is in the delusion that achieving the SDGs would mean safer, cleaner, more peaceful and egalitarian world for all.

However, that success requires unwavering commitment, participation and coordination from all segments of the society---national governments, foreign governments, domestic non-governmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, international governmental organizations, private sector corporations and individuals. While the next 12 years will bring challenges, they will also bring changes as the world work together to surmount barriers and achieve the goals.

It is worthy of note that Global Impact's areas of expertise are focusing on SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals with the Private Sector. We concede that a successful sustainable development agenda will require partnerships with every segment of society, 'partnerships that are inclusive, built upon principles and values, and with a shared vision.' In this endeavour, each country must take responsibility to ensure the implementation of each goal and should not hesitate to call for assistance when and where necessary from more advanced development partners.

Many people would like to see a world free from abject poverty and inhumane inequality. As a fighter against poverty, Muhammad Yunus dedicated the Grameen Bank and affiliated institutions to providing opportunities that can help improve the socioeconomic condition of people living in abject poverty. Yunus strongly believes that not only does "microcredit has a key role to play in reducing poverty," but also the "access to credit for microenterprises is important by itself in improving the lives of the impoverished," and "complemented by other strategies [29]. Parts of these other strategies include "partnerships between microcredit programs and technology-oriented institutions" which "will help reduce discrepancies in the opportunities available to the poor and nonpoor."

As information and communications technology (ICT) has revolutionized human interaction globally, Yunus and well-meaning others "would like to see all information available to all people everywhere (including the poorest, the ignorant, and the most powerless) at all times, almost cost-free" [29]. Then, Yunus posed the challenging question: "Why can't we create a poverty-free world before the new century (21st century) crosses the halfway mark?" that is, by 2050. Indeed, the SDGs sunset is 2030 but if by that date not all the goals have been achieved, the goal post can be extended to 2050. Eradication of poverty is feasible but the reduction is the first step toward that end, and as success is recorded in poverty eradication, there will be a drastic reduction in inequality. ICT has done a lot to reduce social inequality in almost two decades in Nigeria since 1999. While most African academics cannot afford to attend international conferences, due to air transportation costs, in some cases they could send their papers for presentation via the internet, for example, the 2018 SRD Indonesia Conference [30]. Similarly, the cellular phone has broken the barrier in communication, even the ignorant, the uneducated and old people have access to mobile phones. Thus, communication (verbal telephoning) is no longer the exclusive of the rich only as was the case 20 years ago in Nigeria. With concrete actions in partnerships with corporate organizations, much can be achieved in the end.

7. CONCLUSION

The 2015 U.N. Sustainable Development Goals was established to build on the progress made under the Millennium Development Goals (2000-2015). It realized that despite the success recorded during the MDG years, "the indignity of poverty has not been ended for all." Therefore, this paper has focused on SDG 1, End Poverty, SDG 10, Reduced Inequality, and SDG 17, Partnerships to achieve the Goals. Partnerships in achieving the SDGs are a

critical goal on its own, bearing in mind that no single country nor organization can do it alone. Therefore, the partnership must be all-encompassing, inclusive of governments, NGOs and individuals.

Poverty and inequality in Nigeria have been used as a case study to illustrate the centrality of partnerships in the possibility of achieving the goals. We concede to Oxfam's position that Nigeria can close the poverty and inequality gap because "Nigeria is not a poor country yet millions are living in hunger. The government must work with the international community to get food and aid to hungry people now. But it can't stop there. It must free millions of Nigerians from poverty by building a new political and economic system that works for everyone, not just a fortunate few". In addition, the government must work with relevant stakeholders like the labour unions to enact a market-oriented minimum wage for workers. In furtherance of this, national budgeting in the next 12 years must make adequate provisions for affordable and quality education, good health care facilities, and decent housing, constant electricity supply and transportation systems. These measures would, largely, mitigate extreme poverty and inequality and enhance the living standard of the people. In this way, there is assuring hope that the SDGs will be achieved by 2030 and beyond.

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