Vocational – Technical Education: Extent of Achievement of Millennium Development Goals for Sustainability

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Abstract
Technical and vocational education is a comprehensive programme of education embracing eight service areas which break down into over one thousand careers. It is capable of training skilled manpower in those careers for the attainment of MDGs for sustainable national development. Its philosophy, goals and objectives appear to subsume most of the MDGs in favour of poverty alleviation, health improvement, entrepreneurship development and prosperous living for all. It is the key to Nigeria’s development, but efforts at goal achievement are beset with challenges to be addressed by Nigerian governments. The MDGs are a series of 8 time – bound development goals that seek to address the identified national problems. The MDGs are impressive, but the attainment of the goals in 2015 is unrealistic vis – a – vis the limitations in utilizing them for measuring development and the prevailing challenges in Nigeria. Political will is needed to implement the policies on national growth.

Post-independent Nigeria has witnessed state and national strategies evolved over the years to move her from agrarian/raw-materials – based to industrial – based economy. Among such efforts have been; Operation feed the nation (OFN) of Obasanjo’s regime, Structural adjustment programme (SAP) of Obasanjo’s regime, Seven point agenda of Yar’Adua’s regime, National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS) of Obasanjo’s regime, State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (SEEDS) of Obasanjo’s regime, The National Centre for Technology Management (NACETEM) of Obasanjo’s regime, Millennium Development Goals, MDGs and others.

The vision and missions of the foregoing strategies are directed towards achieving goals of wealth creation, employment generation, poverty reduction, value reorientation and national development. The foregoing strategies constitute the development content of Nigeria’s road map to industrial eminence while education constitutes the limps with which the development content moves to achieve the industrial eminence. It is to be noted also that the above are home grown strategies which if well managed are likely to assume international standards in industrial advancement. It is quite clear that education in all its dimensions is a dependable and vital instrument for achieving technological development in Nigeria. Without education, the vision and missions of the lofty strategies for national development become wishful thinking. Vocational education as one vital dimension of education has a role to play in achieving MDGs. The MDGs are coming into the scene of the quest for global emancipation of humanity from poverty and other obstacles against development of good living standards for all.

From its inception, vocational education has always been viewed as education for work in order to survive. It is a very comprehensive form of education characterized by responsiveness to emerging technologies which have become the order of the day (Roberts, 1973, Thompson, 1973, Rao, 2008). Vocational education in the Nigerian system of education refers to those aspects of educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupations in various sectors of economic and social life. This definition is based on United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization’s (UNESCO) recommendation and contained in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004). It clearly indicates the comprehensive nature of vocational education because it is part of general education which is education for all. Its basis is science, it involves the studies of technologies, acquisition of psychoproductive, cognitive and affective (attitudinal) skills needed in all the nine categories of educations on earth (U.S. Department of Labour, 1999). Vocational technical education has very broad and impressive content areas of training manpower for national development. These areas are: vocational business, technical education, trade and industrial education, health occupations, distributive education, home economics education, vocational agriculture and computer education – a recent member in the family of vocational education (to be illustrated later in this paper).
The Philosophy of Vocational Education

Philosophy is the concept that determines the mind or instructional content of vocational education. It is an expression of belief in what vocational education is billed to do for the youth and Nigerian nation. Education of individuals/youths into productive manpower for industrial development of Nigeria is same as the philosophy of vocational education for the nation. A careful analysis of the definition of vocational education in Nigeria points unmistakably at the foregoing philosophy.

Goals and Objectives of Vocational Education

In support of the expressed philosophy of vocational education in Nigeria, the following goals (long – term objectives) and objectives (short – term goals) are in order (FRN, 2004). These goals are:

- Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technology and business at craft, advanced and technical levels; provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills needed for agricultural, commercial and economic development; and give training and impart the necessary skills to individuals who shall be economically self-reliant.

The objectives of vocational education include: gainful employment sequel to training, responsible citizenship via general education, skilled craftsmanship, creative tendencies (leading to inventions), leadership qualities, problem-solving ability, safety consciousness, development of balanced work behavior (cognitive, affective, psychoproductive and perceptual), cooperative attitude, economic self-reliance (via entrepreneurship training), understand the role of labour and management in the world of vocational education careers.

Vocational Education Careers and Potentials for Manpower Development to Meet MDGs

There are about eight service areas of vocational education (to be illustrated later in this paper). These areas are broad groups of occupations which when subjected to spectrum analysis yield over 1000 careers (Evans, 1971, Thompson, 1973, U.S Department of Labour, 1999 and Usoro, Akpan, Usoro and Otu, 2010).

In the face of emerging technologies, vocational education careers are likely to increase appreciably. The reason is simple. Vocational education is very responsive to new technologies. In addition to being responsive to emerging technologies, vocational education embraces occupations which are multiblock in nature. A multiblock occupation of industrial nature is made up of divisions of work, each of which is practically an occupation in itself. The foregoing concretizes the possibility of vocational education being a vital source of careers. Skills training in more than one thousand careers can produce the required manpower to meet the MDGs in the foreseeable future which may not be 2015 which is already around the corner.

The Millennium Development Goals

The problem of poverty and sustainable development has been “a thorn in the flesh” of many nations’ livelihood for decades. In order to address the problem of
hunger, poor health and impediments to progress, the United Nations Millennium declaration was adopted by 189 nations in September 2000 and signed by 147 heads of states. The declaration committed countries both rich and poor to do all they can to eradicate poverty, promote human dignity and equality and achieve peace, democracy and environmental stability. (www.un.org/documents/ga/res/55/a55r002.pdf-A/RES/55/2/. Retrieved on 24/07/2011 & Igbuzor, 2006). The millennium development goals are a series of eight time – bound development goals that are meant to address issues of poverty, education, gender equality, health, child mortality, spread of HIV/AIDS, environmental stability and global partnership for development. These goals are to be achieved by 2015 in response to the worlds’ main development challenges. MDGs therefore are the products of international efforts.

The MDGs constitute a key element of the National Economic Empowerment Strategy (NEEDS). NEEDS is Nigeria’s mid – term plan for socio economic reform proposing, according to Abbas (2008) widespread reforms of the public and private sector social charter and corresponding poverty reduction tools. There are also State Economic Empowerment Strategies (SEEDS). They are the mid – term strategies of the Nigerian states. Briefly, they are state development programmes which constitute prerequisites to the development of NEEDS framework. A close examination of the foregoing development strategies indicates a central focus which is to set a fruitful stage for achieving vision 2020.There is a unique feature in the MDGs presentation. The MDGs have a uniqueness of analytical presentation which incorporates a chart showing the goals, targets as well as the indicators for monitoring progress (www.un.org/documents/ga/res/55/a55r002.pdf-A/RES/55/2/) as shown in chart 1;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals and Targets From The Millennium Declaration</th>
<th>Indicators For Monitoring Progress</th>
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<tr>
<td>Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
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| Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day | 1. Proportion of population below $1 (PPP) per day  
2. Poverty gap ratio [incidence x depth of poverty]  
3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption |
| Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger | 4. Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age  
5. Proportion of population below minimum level of Dietary energy consumption |
| Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education |  |
| Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling | 6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education  
7. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5  
8. Literacy rate of 15-24 year-olds |
| Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women |  |
| Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015 | 9. Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education  
10. Ratio of literate females to males of 15-24 year-olds  
11. Share of women in wage employment in the |
| Goal 4: Reduce child mortality |  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate | 12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament | 13. Under-five mortality rate |
|  |  | 14. Infant mortality rate |
|  |  | 15. Proportion of 1 year-old children immunized against Measles |

| Goal 5: Improve maternal health |  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio | 16. Maternal mortality ratio |
|  |  | 17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel |

| Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases |  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS | 18. HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women |
|  |  | 19. Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate |
|  |  | 20. Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS |
| Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases | 21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria |
|  |  | 22. Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures |
|  |  | 23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis |
|  |  | 24. Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment short course (DOTS) |

| Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability |  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources | 25. Proportion of land area covered by forest |
|  |  | 26. Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity to surface area |
|  |  | 27. Energy use (kg oil equivalent) per $1 GDP (PPP) |
|  |  | 28. Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) and consumption of ozone-depleting CFCs (ODP tons) |
|  |  | 29. Proportion of population using solid fuels |
| Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water | 30. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source, urban and rural |
| Target 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers | 31. Proportion of urban population with access to improved sanitation |
|  |  | 32. Proportion of households with access to secure tenure (owned or rented) |

| Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development |  |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally | Some of the indicators listed below are monitored separately for the least developed countries (LDCs), Africa, Landlocked countries and small island developing States. Official development assistance |
| Target 13: Address the special needs of the least | 33. Net ODA, total and to LDCs, as percentage of OECD/DAC donors’ gross national income |
developed countries
includes: tariff and quota free access for least
developed countries' exports; enhanced
programme of debt relief for HIPC and
cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more
generous ODA for countries committed to
poverty reduction

Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked
countries and small island developing States
(through the Programme of Action for the
Sustainable Development of Small Island
Developing States and the outcome of the
twenty-second special session of the General Assembly)

Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt
problems of developing countries through
national and international measures
in order to make debt sustainable in the long term

34. Proportion of total bilateral, sector-allocable
ODA
Of OECD/DAC donors to basic social services
(basic education, primary health care, nutrition,
safe water and sanitation)
35. Proportion of bilateral ODA of OECD/DAC
donors that is untied
36. ODA received in landlocked countries as
proportion of their GNIs
37. ODA received in small island developing States
as proportion of their GNIs Market access
38. Proportion of total developed country imports
(by value and excluding arms) from developing
countries and LDCs, admitted free of duties
39. Average tariffs imposed by developed countries
on agricultural products and textiles and
clothing from developing countries
40. Agricultural support estimate for OECD
countries as percentage of their GDP
41. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade
capacity Debt sustainability
42. Total number of countries that have reached
their HIPC decision points and number that have
reached their HIPC completion points
(cumulative)
43. Debt relief committed under HIPC initiative,
US$
44. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods
and services

Target 16: In co-operation with developing
countries, develop and implement
strategies for decent and productive
work for youth

45. Unemployment rate of 15-24 year-olds, each
sex and total

Target 17: In co-operation with pharmaceutical
companies, provide access to affordable,
essential drugs in developing countries

46. Proportion of population with access to
affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis

Target 18: In co-operation with the private sector,
make available the benefits of new
technologies, especially information and
communications

47. Telephone lines and cellular subscribers per 100
population
48. Personal computers in use per 100 population
and Internet users per 100 population

The MDGs are impressive and their accomplishments are zealously desired but
the paths to the achievement of the said goals are beset with limitations.

Limitations of MDGs Achievement in Nigeria
The situation of MDGs in Nigeria calls for a careful review. The eight (8)
millennium development goals are very impressive but their achievement in 2015 is
doubtful because the deadline is around the corner. The possibility of achieving the
goals belongs to the future beyond 2015. A look at the development conditions in
Nigeria may assist in evaluating the potentials of the efforts directed towards MDGs
attainment in 2015. Igbuzor (2006) draws our attention to the fact that in the early
1970’s, Nigeria was one of the richest 50 countries, but has now retrogressed to become one of the 25 poorest countries at the threshold of the 21st century. It is an irony that, Nigeria, the sixth largest exporter of crude oil is at the same time hosting the third largest number of poor people after China and India. The incidence of poverty in Nigeria based on the US dollar per day increased from 28.1% in 1980 to 46.3% in 1985 and declined to 42.7% in 1992 but increased again to 65.6% in 1996. In 1997, the incidence increased to 69.2% (Igbuzor, 2008). The same source has reported that the average annual percentage growth Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Nigeria from 1990 – 2000 was 2.4. This is offensively poor when compared to Ghana (4.3) and Egypt (4.6). It is difficult to imagine that poverty in Nigeria is in the midst of plenty. Even though steady economic growth has been observed in the recent past, there are doubts regarding the evenness of distribution of benefits to the poor and the left outs (UNDP, 2003 and Igbuzor, 2008).

Nigeria has been noted as one of the 20 nations on the globe with the widest gap between the rich and the poor (UNDP, 2003). The Gini index measures the extent to which the distribution of income among individuals or households within an economy deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A Gini index of zero represents perfect inequality. In the foregoing regard Nigeria falls within the nations of the world having the highest Gini index. The Gini index (50.6) for Nigeria compares very poorly with countries such as India (37.8), Jamaica (37.9), Rwanda (28.9) and Mauritania (37.3) (Abani, Igbuzor and Moru, 2005)

In addition to the foregoing, Nigeria has many other hindering variables to be surmounted for a prosperous and industrialized millennium. Nigeria with a population of over 140 million people depends on electricity energy of 2000 MW out of a total capacity of 6000 MW which has never been reached. The question as to how much energy Nigeria needs is never emphasized (Dike, 2009). If we are to compare Nigeria’s per capita production of electrical energy with other nations like the USA and South Africa, the USA produces 570 billion KWH and South Africa produces 200 billion KWH as at 2001 figures. If Nigeria were to generate electricity at the US rate of 12.7 billion KWH per million people, then with a population of over 140 million, the country should be generating 174 000 MW. The present power generation is too small compared to what the whole population requires. This situation has led to the concentration of power in areas where the privileged few reside at the expense of the poor majority. The consequence of poor energy distribution has forced factories to close down and cause mass lay – offs of workers. This in turn has worsened the already bad employment figures. Most households’ turn - on their generating sets to cope with the anomaly, and the ensuing undesirable condition is environmental pollution – a serious health hazard. There is poor literacy rate (less than 20%) in Nigeria. While the literacy rate in Asia is 90% and in Japan 100%, the figure in Nigeria keeps dropping sequel to lack of adequate and poor funding of education. Nearly 50 years ago, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the head of the Western region of Nigeria allocated 50% of the budget to education and made education free for all. Compare this with UNESCO’s recommendation that 26% of the national budget should be allocated to education. In terms of education, what can 10% or less of Nigeria’s budget allocated to education
achieve in the present regime? Democracy thrives where the majority of people are literate (Glueck, 1977 and Daft, 2008).

Transportation is a necessity for every nation because there can be no serious economic growth without a good and efficient transport system. Even though efforts are being made to improve transportation in Nigeria, most roads are still death traps for the populace. Promises made by succeeding regimes to improve transportation have not been honoured to the detriment of economic and social life of the nation (Dike, 2009). With a total road network of about 193,000 Kilometers, the Nigerian road sector carries more than 90% of domestic passengers and freight. Except the roads and bridges are kept in good condition, they cannot support the desired socio–economic development of the country.

The Sahara desert encroaches to the North of Nigeria while gully erosion threatens parts of the south. Agriculture is the dominant economic activity and roughly 75% of the land is arable of which about 40% is cultivated. Nigeria has estimated proven oil reserves of 32 billion barrels and is the 6th largest producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). At the current rate of production, the reserves can last about 35 years (31 years beyond MDGs focus of 2015). In addition to oil, Nigeria has substantial reserves of natural gas and abundant solid mineral deposits, including coal, tin, kaolin, gypsum, columbite, gold barites, marble, tantalite, salt and sulphur. Capacity utilization in industry is about 50% (Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) (1999). Dike has drawn attention to the fact of Nigeria chairing the African Union, an organization that aims at promoting cooperation on the continent and has taken the lead in regional peacekeeping initiatives. Yet Nigeria is still one of the poorest nations in the world. It ranks near the bottom in many human development indices. Corruption is endemic, unemployment is growing, illiteracy rates are near 50%, HIV/AIDS is on the rise, crime and violence in the Niger Delta has handicapped oil production, while sectarian fighting between Muslims and Christians has killed thousands. Kidnapping (becoming a career) and violence constitute serious threats to peaceful living and Nigeria’s security goal.

The efforts towards attaining the MDGs amidst the problem of the unrealistic date (2015) for achievement are to be balanced against the limitations for successful outcomes.

Reasons for Engaging MDGs
Igbuzor (2006) has provided the reasons for engaging MDGs as follows;

1. The MDGs draw together in single agenda issues that require priority to address the development question.
2. The MDGs have received tremendous endorsement and backing by world’s governments.
3. The MDGs have the advantage of being less measurable, few in number, concentrated on human development and focused almost on a single date – 2015.
4. The MDGs in their analytical structure add urgency and transparency to international development.
5. Explicit resource commitments have been made to achieve MDGs.

The MDGs Situation in Nigeria

There are two sources associated with the viewed situation of MDGs in Nigeria: the MDGs report 2004 and the Nigerian MDGs report 2005. The situation of MDGs can also be assessed from MDGs office especially the debt relief gains as contained in the 2006 annual budget (Igbuzor, 2006 & Abam, Igbuzor and Moru, 2005). The 2004 report states:

……based on the available information it is unlikely that the country will be able to meet most of the goals by 2015 especially the goals related to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, reducing child and maternal mortality and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. It therefore states that for most of the other goals (i.e., apart from goal 1) up to date data exist which show that if the current trend continues, it will be difficult for the country to achieve the MDGs target by 2015.

The Nigerian millennium development goals 2005 report is the second in the series of annual reports on the MDGs in Nigeria. The report addresses the eight MDGs and highlights the current status and trends of each of the MDGs, the challenges and opportunities in achieving the goal; the promising variables/initiatives that are creating a supportive environment and priorities for development assistance. The conclusions contained in the report focus on achievement of some of the millennium development targets (18 in total). They are achieving universal primary education, ensuring environmental stability and developing a global partnership for development.

A review of the Nigeria millennium development goals 2005 has led to the identification of some problems as reported by Igbuzor (2006) and Abbas (2008). There is the challenge of accurate, reliable, credible and believable statistics. The report did not indicate the policies and practices that need to change to attain the goals.

Vocational Education Careers and Potentials for Manpower Development to Meet the MDGs

Vocational education has already been viewed as the key to Nigeria’s development (Dike, 2009). This claim is based on the definition, structure, philosophy, goals/objectives and career potentials of vocational education which have already been presented in this paper. Though technical and vocational education is apparently deficient in citizenship or leadership training, it provides the youth with “life skills” to become productive entrepreneurs as it engenders creative and innovative ideas, increase personal freedom.

Technical and vocational education has undeservedly experienced public prejudice occasioned by imprudent assessment of its potentials by ignorant minds. Most of the so called “expatriate engineers” who are being paid millions/billions of dollars to build Nigeria’s roads and bridges are graduates of technical and vocational colleges (Dike, 2009 and Usoro, Akpan, Usoro and Otu, 2010). Yet the leaders do not pay serious attention to youth training in technical institutions. The role of technical
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and vocational education in the attainment of MDGs is illustrated by the authors in figure.1

**Figure.1** Role of Vocational Education and Achievement of MDGs

**Objectives or short term goals in support of the vocational philosophy:**
1. Gainful employment
2. Responsible citizenship
3. Skilled craftsmanship
4. Creative tendencies
5. Leadership qualities
6. Problem solving ability
7. Safety consciousness
8. Balanced work behavior
9. Economic self – reliance
10. Understanding of labour and management.
11. Understanding cultural influence on vocational

**Goals and Objectives of VE**

1. Provide trained manpower in the applied sciences, technologies and business at craft, advanced and technical levels.
2. Provide the technical knowledge and vocational skills needed for agricultural, commercial and economic development.
3. Give training and impart the necessary skills required for economic self – reliance of the individual.

**VE service areas through innovations occasioned by emerging technologies and creative reasoning break down into over1000 careers.**

**Careers in VE**

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Global partnership for development

The above goals are broken down into 18 quantifiable targets that are measurable via indicator for monitoring progress.
The structure, philosophy, goals/objectives, careers in vocational education and 2015 MDGs in Nigeria are clearly displayed in the figure. To the former eight service areas of vocational education, the eighth one has been added as a new member in the family of vocational education. This new member is computer education which belongs in the area of ICT. ICTs have revolutionized training features in technical education, home economics, agricultural education, trade and industrial education, business education and health occupations. In fact, there is no novel situation in technology which is isolated from computer application (Spencer, Dygdon and Novak, 1995; Learnovation consortium, 2008; Odigiri and Ede, 2011). Computers are thinkers for industry, science and defense and useful supporters of educational processes (Bendik, 1980).

A close examination of the philosophy and goals/objectives of technical and vocational education and the MDGs, the latter are subsumed by the former. The achievement of the goals/objectives of technical and vocational education is a guarantee that the foundations are laid for the attainment of MDGs, even though the date 2015 for the accomplishment of the goals seems unrealistic. Furthermore, the potentials of technical education as an instrument for achieving the MDGs in Nigeria are fantastic as already conceptualized by the authors in figure 1. As already stated and illustrated in figure 1, technical and vocational education covering eight occupations which are mostly multiblock in nature while very few are single block (Fryklund, 1970). A multiblock occupation is made up of divisions of work, each of which is practically an occupation in itself. Each division is an occupation in which training is provided for skills development. The process of breaking down occupations involves occupational analysis which is outside the scope of this paper. Since almost all the occupations in the eight service areas of technical and vocational education are multiblock, a breakdown of the occupations contained therein, yields well over 1000 occupations (U.S Department of Labour, 1999). Skills training in more than one thousand careers produce more than the required manpower for national development and technical and vocational education is evidently a viable instrument for achieving the purpose (Usoro, Usoro, Akpan and Otu, 2010).

In pursuing the attainment of the MDGs through technical and vocational education, the nation must take into consideration the reality of timing among other constraints. The MDGs are expected to be achieved in 2015, less than 5 years from now. The question to raise at this juncture is: can Nigeria meet the goals? The foregoing question is a crucial one that should agitate the minds of politicians, government, bureaucrats, civil society activists and development workers (Igbuzor, 2006). There is no straight forward answer to the question. It can be either in the negative or the affirmative. According to NEEDS documents, if the present trend continues, the country is not likely to meet the millennium development goals (National Economic empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS, 2004)). Nigeria has the required resources to meet the MDGs in 2015, but for this to happen; she must exercise her political will and aggressively manage the challenges already identified in this paper. Technical and vocational education with its promising potentials is a vital tool...
for achieving the MDGs, but there are many constraints to be addressed before it can fulfill its functions. Usoro, Usoro, Akpan and Otu (2010) have identified those challenges that hinder technical and vocational education from achieving its goals and objectives towards MDGs attainment for sustainable national development. Among the challenges identified are lack of integration of ICT into vocational education related to technical training, dearth of qualified teachers, unsuitable curriculum, erratic power supply, inadequate land space for school and college agricultural practices, lack of emphasis or non–inclusion of nursing education into vocational programmes, weak dependence on locally produced training materials and poor funding of vocational education.

Summary
Vocational education is a comprehensive programme of education embracing eight service areas which breakdown into over one thousand careers. It is capable of training skilled manpower in over 1000 careers for the attainment of MDGs for sustainable national development. Its philosophy, goals and objectives appear to subsume the MDGs in favour of poverty alleviation, health improvement, entrepreneurial development and good livelihood for all. It is the key to Nigeria’s development. Its potentials in facilitating the attainment of MDGs are fantastic but efforts at meeting the goals are hindered by many challenges yet to be aggressively addressed. There are home grown strategies developed to meet the goals of national development, but they face challenges also. The MDGs are a series of eight time – bound development that seek to address issues of poverty, education, gender equality, spread of HIV/AIDS and global partnership for development. The MDGs are a response to the world’s main development challenges. They are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the millennium declaration adopted by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. MDGs are therefore an outcome of international effort. The attainment of MDGs appears to be plagued by time constraints and other challenges that characterize the nature of third world nations. The deadline of 2015 for the achievement of MDGs appears unrealistic vis – a – vis the prevailing challenges. Nigeria needs to sincerely exercise her political will and aggressively implement the policies associated with sustainable national development.

Conclusion
Sequel to the foregoing write – up, the following conclusions are deemed to be in order:

Technical and vocational education is the key to Nigeria’s development. It is capable of training skilled manpower required in reforms towards attainment of MDGs which are an outcome of international efforts. The philosophy goals and objectives of technical and vocational education subsume most MDGs, so the challenges facing the mission of vocational education and MDGs are same or very similar. There are limitations to using the MDGs as a framework for delivering or measuring development. They however provide a stage for engaging the development process. There are challenges in achieving the goals in Nigeria by 2015. To meet the MDGs in
Nigeria there is the need to formulate policies that will help eliminate or reduce the challenges of TVE and MDGs. It is unrealistic for Nigeria to meet the MDGs in 2015, but it is possible for her to attain some of the MDGs before or around 2015.

Recommendations

1. The government should exercise its political will to eliminate or reduce the challenges of not only MDGs, but also those of other development strategies including technical and vocational education.
2. The Nigerian government should utilize the existing volumes of write-ups on recommendations for national development and aggressively transform them into physical, observable and measurable action.

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