ABSTRACT
The field of planning and Information professionals in poverty and hunger eradication for sustainable development is a necessity for both developed and developing countries, Nigeria inclusive. This paper focused on planning and Information as an imperative to poverty and hunger eradication in sub-Saharan Africa. The highlights of the paper are conceptualization of poverty and hunger, the poverty scenario in Nigeria, reasons why poverty persist in Nigeria, necessity of eradicating poverty and hunger in Nigeria, and a review of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The paper examined the role planning and ICT towards eradication of poverty and hunger such as: the place of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) on the following: provision of information on the availability of credit facilities, provision of agro-tech information to rural dwellers, usage of demographic data in the location of public utilities to prosecute poverty alleviation programmes, dissemination of information on viable small and medium scale enterprises to both urban and rural dwellers, identifying gaps between the qualified and available jobs in relation to facilities, location, and the affected in urban and rural areas, and awareness on misappropriation of resources for national development.

INTRODUCTION
Poverty in the face of abundance is now the world’s greatest challenge and a major developmental objective, which is, the achievement of equality in the distribution of income and reduction of poverty in the Land. Most developing countries still have much to do to eradicate the poverty and its effects which have remained and make further progress on many of the other challenges of the developmental agenda. Lack and want are characteristics of poverty particularly in developing countries (Osborn, Cutter, & Ullah, 2015).
The Nigeria story presents a paradox because the country is rich while the people live in penury. The situation is so pathetic in the sense that the country that is potentially rich and with available agricultural resources, Nigeria cannot boast of putting food on the table of its citizens (Edoumiekumo, Kariomo & Tombofa, 2014; Anger, 2010) in (Amaechi, Benson, Dike, & Okere, 2016).

The global world economy is experiencing poverty at the extreme level. This was aptly captured by Sachs (2014, p106) when he stated thus:

The world economy is vast growing rapidly (by three to four percent per year in scale), and highly unequal in the distribution of income within countries and between countries. Ours is a fabulous world and extreme poverty: billions of people enjoy longevity and good health unimaginable in previous generations, yet at least one billion people live in such abject poverty that they struggle for more survival every day. The poorest of the poor face the daily life and death challenges of insufficient nutrition, lack of health care, unsafe shelter, and the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation.

The battle to end poverty must be fought also in rural areas, where people depend directly or indirectly on farming, fisheries or forestry for income as well as food. Feeding a growing global population while nurturing the planet is no doubt an exceedingly great challenge (FAO). Globally, about 1.2 billion people are living in extreme poverty less than one dollar per day and due to the high prevalence of poverty, reducing it has been of grave concern to many countries in the past few decades (Ajulor, 2013) cited in (Amaechi et al., 2016).

Poverty, a global phenomenon that is complex and multi-dimensional, it is not easy to define. Each region of the world has different yardstick to measuring the level of poverty based on people’s ability to have access to basic things of life namely: food, clothing and shelter (Ogunleye, 2010). According to African Foundation for Population and Development, (2005) cited in (Ogunleye, 2010), Nigeria is the tenth most populous country in the world and the largest in sub-Saharan Africa. It is one of the fastest growing nations in the world. According to the past censuses, the country’s population increased sharply from fifty-four (54) million in 1963 to eighty-eight (88) million in 1991. Nigeria presently has a population of about one hundred and forty-four (144) million, according to 2006 population and housing census, with an annual growth rate of 2.9%. On the same report, Nigeria though endowed with numerous national resources, is currently ranked among the thirteen (13) poorest countries in the world. This is having more than ninety (90) million of Nigeria’s one hundred and forty-four (14) million people living in absolute poverty i.e less than one dollar ($1) a day.

Extreme poverty is a major challenge confronting developing countries in the world. Despite that the Nigerian economy is growing, the proportion of Nigerians living in poverty is increasing every year. Due to poverty level, the hunger level witnessed in Nigeria has increased. Worst still is that, Nigeria has no food policy perhaps because there is little appreciation of its contemporary role to agricultural system and practices to promote relative self-sufficiency in food production (Ojo & Adebayo, 2013) in (Amaechi et al., 2016).

An end to poverty requires much than just increasing the income of the poor, value orientation and job creation but also to see the contribution of the rich countries to assist in terms of funding development programmes, developing favourable trade and for the multinational institutions to help countries implement them (Amaechi et al., 2016).

It is thus clear that the SDGs have targets that Librarians and Information Professionals can embrace in the course of their professional practices as strategies towards the full realization of the SDGs. The SDGs seems like an aspiration of humans towards the sustainability and development of the global space for peaceful co-existence of the human species.
Goal 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere

Ending poverty in all by 2030 is a very ambitious goal, this to (Loewe & Rippin, 2015) is built on the premise that Target 1.2 of the SDGs contradicts the goals by requiring to “reduce at least by half” the proportion of those living in poverty in all its dimensions.

The Goal 1: end poverty in all its forms everywhere which is the focal point of this discourse includes five targets and two suggestions for means of implementation. The targets are:

**Target 1.1:** The target requires by 2030 to “eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living less than $1.25 a day.

**Target 1.2:** This target requires by 2030 to “reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

**Target 1.3:** The target requires to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

**Target 1.4:** The target requires by 2030 to ensure that all human beings “have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership, and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, national resources appropriate new technology and financial services including microfinance.

**Target 1.5:** The target requires by 2030 to “build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations, and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

Means of Implementation of Target

a. The target requires “ensuring significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development co-operation to providing adequate and predictable means for developing countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.

b. The target requires “creating sound policy framework at national, regional and International levels, based on proper and gender-sensitive development strategies to support accelerated investments in poverty eradication actions.

Goals 2: End Hunger, Achieve Food Security and Improved Nutritional and Promote Sustainable Agriculture

This goal is about ending hunger, enhancing food and nutrition security, linking the populace to resources available in order to maximize human output and promoting sustainable agriculture. Agriculture as noted by (Burchi & Holzapfel, 2015) in (Loewe & Rippin, 2015) is viewed as the central element of this goal, with endorsing agricultural, food-based, rural-centered approach. This goal like the first goal includes five targets which are to be achieved by 2030.

2.1 End hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations including infants, to safe, nutrition’s and sufficient food all year round.

2.2 End all forms of malnutrition, including achieving by 2025 the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under five years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women, and older persons.

2.3 Double the agricultural productivity and the incomes of small-scale food producers, particularly women, indigenous people, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

2.4 Ensure sustainable food production system and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain eco-systems, that strengthens capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

2.5 Maintain genetic diversity of seeds cultivated plants, farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at national, regional
and international levels and ensure access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge as internationally agreed.

**Means of implementation**

The above targets of goal two can be implemented through:

- Increase investment including through entreated international co-operation in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development, and plant livestock gene banks to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular in least developed countries.
- Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets including by the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.
- Adopt measure to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives, and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

**Role of ICT and Planning in Poverty Eradication for a Sustainable Development**

There is no doubt that the challenges of hunger and poverty eradication are enormous and there has been a lot of discourse on how to deal with the challenges. The use of ICT by Planners has a great role to play and these are ways they contribute their quota in the fight of hunger eradication.

i. **Access to Information:** Information should be regarded as one of the most fundamental rights in the current era. It is a fundamental requirement for personal and social development. Planners have essential role in helping to meet this grand challenge by location of public utilities to the reach of the inhabitants to prosecute poverty alleviation programmes, such as telecommunication facilities which the information professionals will help people to develop the capacity to effectively use Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Analysis from the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) has a great role to play in enabling Planners to be smarter in making the right decisions (Cruse, 2013).

ii. **Access to Availability of Credit Facilities:** This role goes beyond the availability of credit facilities obtainable but by planning concepts brand approach as regards to eradication of poverty, designate financial institutions during physical planning and designing of rural rehabilitation, makes these facilities accessible to end users. Furthermore information gathered from demographic analysis puts the planners in the know “where” and “what” is needed at any particular vicinity. In line with this Information Professionals will be aided in ensuring that rural farmers have timely access to information on credit facilities provided by government, NGOs, financial and non-financial institutions without travelling distance to access it. This will increase food productivity and reduction of hunger.

iii. **Location of Food Distribution Centres:** Longer-term food crisis settings can also benefit from GIS visualization. As an example, proximity mapping is a common feature that allows users to see certain demographic attributes within a chosen diameter or perimeter of a focal point. That point could be a military checkpoint or a humanitarian food distribution centre. This type of mapping according to Cruse (2013), can assist stakeholders in two ways: It provides a more effective reporting mechanism than other means of dialogue. You can report that a certain number of distribution centres should be within certain areas; or you can visualize it and show population densities and advocate making decisions based on those images. It also provides an effective means of formulating strategies. When users are able to visualize activities and expected outputs on top of areas that have demonstrated need, it becomes a powerful method of determining the relative value of activity in geographic means.

iv. **Provision of Agro-facilities:** The information on local content will provide the physical planner the basis for distribution of social amenities during the designing and planning stage. Provision of agro-extension site and institution on the grounds of what is obtainable in various localities will boost agricultural productivity. Hence, will contribute to the reduction of hunger and poverty. Farmers in the rural areas need agro-industrial machines, new/improved seedlings, best practices in farming that will boost agricultural and entrepreneurial productivity, storage methods and facilities, planting methods, disease and pest control; these will help in boosting agriculture in rural areas. However, access to information on fertilizers, will improve
output. These required information can be disseminated via Whatsapp which is one of the most commonly used social media platform even the rural areas.

v. **Provision of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises:** Most rural dwellers lack access to information and facilities on the existing viable small and medium scale enterprises that they can effectively participate. FOS (1999), indicates that majority of the poor are located in the rural areas of Nigeria. The design of Planners on the available information is to project for the investment in infrastructure both by the public (Government) and private (Capitalist) that directly enhances productivity capacity such as in the small and medium scale enterprises (Ogunleye, 2010). When this information are packaged to the target group via appropriate media and providing them with Selective Dissemination Information (SDI) services, it will avail them the opportunity to be gainfully engaged in business activities, this will contribute towards reduction of poverty and hunger in Nigeria.

vi. **Provision of Financial Information:** According to (IFLA & ALP, 2014) in Romania, Librarians and Information Professionals trained by Biblionet helped farmers get subsidies via new internet and computer services in 2011-2012. Information Professionals who participated in training decided to bring the services to their libraries together with local mayors. Most of the mayors understood that this service is in the farmers’ interest. The programme helped farmers learn how to use the technology in libraries to access financial forms and submit them to the government, saving time and money. Borrowing a leaf from this experience, Librarians and Information Professionals in Nigeria can train farmers on how to use ICT facilities to access financial information that will help transform their agricultural business by boosting food production that will eradicate poverty and hunger.

vii. **Sensitizing the citizenry on entrepreneurial opportunities:** In sensitizing the public on information relating to entrepreneurial opportunities calls for public participation. Public participation is a planning strategy and concept which gives the planner the opportunity to engage the public in various planning programmes. At the level, the locals are directly sensitized n any available opportunity such as entrepreneurial. At this stage the Information Professionals will be engaged in organizing conferences/talk shows / seminars on entrepreneurial opportunities that are available to the citizenry. Such could be disseminated through bulk sms, social media platforms commonly used in the area, e.g. Whatsapp. Information Professionals through their trainings can compile, package and distribute information brochures on products available. By enlightening them, they may likely undertake activities that would contribute to economic growth and reduction in the suffering of the people.

viii. **Dangers on the Misuse of Social Amenities:** The president of Nigeria, once said that ‘corruption will kill Nigeria if we don’t kill corruption’. Wrong usage of social amenities could also be attributed to as corrupt. Awareness and policy strategy on the dangers of misusing appropriated funds and facilities will go a long way in ameliorating hunger and poverty in our rural and urban areas. The end users of the facilities provided should be incorporated in the project processes that concerns them.

ix. **Campaign for strategic alliance:** The law makers recently called on governments of the 36 states to “enter into strategic alliance that will boost agricultural development in their states. Information and Planning Professionals can align with the government, private sectors, non-governmental organizations and individuals towards the boosting of agricultural development in Nigeria. They can also help implement the SDGs by being part of country’s agenda on poverty and hunger eradication, find out if the country has already started working on national development plans, ascertain which government departments or ministries are responsible, and partner with them in organizing meetings and take part in open consultations (Bradley, 2014).

It is important to note that there are challenges being faced by Information and Planning Professionals in achieving these goals which have been identified by (Benson, Anyanwu, Onuoha, & Nwauwa, 2016) as: lack of reliable and accurate data, negligence of libraries and information centres by Nigerian government, low level of private sectors interest in data and information. They recommended among others that:

i. Heads of Information centres and Physical Planners should endeavour to engage in sustainable lobbying and advocacy programmes, and also should acquire lobbying and advocacy skills at all costs to ensure that they contribute their own quota to the reality of the SDGs.
ii. Information Professionals and Planners should avail themselves the use of ICT and social platforms to propagate this fight against poverty and hunger for sustainable development in Nigeria.

iii. Beyond information, data and demographic services, Planners should endeavour to improve on their level of partnership drive. They should not work in isolation, hence the need to partner with private sectors and non-governmental organization to ensure that SDGs is actualized.

Planning has and will play an important role in improving the quality of life in both rural and urban areas. It is also a critical support for tackling poverty with its potentials to expand accessible services and economic opportunities. Informed planning can help regenerate connection among persons, bring public health amenities and promote social justice.

Conclusion

Professionals in Information and Planning should contribute positively towards full scale eradication of poverty, it is imperative that we embrace pragmatic approach to collaborate with the various stakeholders in the Nigerian economy. Eradication of poverty and hunger for a Sustainable Development is imperative in any country. The cardinal fact that we must appreciate here is that corruption is a major factor that influences the level of development of any nation and must be addressed with a sense of urgency. Provision of timely information in the right formation to the right people and equipping the Planning authorities will help in eradicating hunger and poverty at various levels.

Every Stakeholder involved should thus wake up and make their impact felt in this global move of making the universe a better place.

REFERENCES


