NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY
WILBERFORCE ISLAND, BAYELSA STATE.

54th Inaugural Lecture

# THE PRESSURE OF POVERTY IN AFRICA: AN ANALOGY OF THE MEAT ON THE ALTAR

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*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)*
B.Sc Econs (UPH), M.Sc Econs (UPH), Ph.D Econs (UPH)
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# NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY

Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

## Motto

Creativity, Excellence, Service

## Vision

To be a centre of excellence defined by well articulated programme that will produce creative and innovative minds

## Mission

To strive to maintain an international reputation for high quality scholarship, research and academic excellence for the promotion of thesocio-cultural and economic well-being of mankind

## NIGER DELTA UNIVERSITY ANTHEM (THE BRIGHTEST STAR)

Like the brightest star we are, to lead the way
To good education that is all our due,
The dream of our fathers like the seed has grown;
Niger Delta University if here to stay.

Let us build on this noble foundation
And with love, let our dedication increase,
To rise and uphold this noble vision
Ev'ry passing moment let our zeal never decrease.

In all that we do, let us bring to mind
Our duty as staff and students of N.D.U
Ev'rywhere to promote peace towards mankind.
Creativity, Excellence and Service

CHORUS
Rejoice, great people old and new, rejoice
For the good fruit through us is shown;
Be glad in our worthy contribution
To the growth of humanity (x2)

# DEDICATION

To God Almighty the giver of life and hope

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**PROTOCOL**

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Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

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Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

## Introduction

I am giving my inaugural lecture in this university today, April 19, 2023, and I am doing so with thanks and a strong feeling of humility.

With God's Grace, I have been promoted to the prestigious rank of full Professor. So, it is my responsibility to uphold and further the great principles of the Niger Delta University administration and academic colleagues who adjudged that my modest contributions to research merited acknowledgement. An inaugural lecture gives the speaker the chance to describe his new position and his future objectives.

The inaugural lecture is an opportunity for the academician to publicly evaluate his area of specialisation, show his academic credentials, and connect his contributions in the field to the demands and concerns of society as a whole. One of such challenge in our society is poverty. Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, you would agree with me that the issue of poverty has dominated almost all the developmental discourse in the world, especially, as it relates to Africa and Nigeria.

As a development Economists, I think it is not only necessary but also wise that I lend my voice to this poverty discourse in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular.

**Poverty in Africa**

Early in the 1960s saw the independence of the majority of African nations. Their average income levels at the time were greater than those of many Asian nations and were comparable to those of certain South American nations. Sub-Saharan Africa, however, has now come to be linked with prolonged poverty and economic stagnation. Particularly during the so-called "lost decades" of the 1970s to 1990s, while other emerging areas made significant progress in reducing poverty, poverty rates in Africa increased. Even though there is a wide range in economic levels amongst nations, the African continent nevertheless contains several of the world's poorest nations today.

Since the 2000s, average regional poverty as measured by the percentage of the population living in poverty has been falling, albeit at a slower rate than has been seen in several Asian nations. In addition, the overall number of Africans living in poverty has increased and is certain to do so for many years to come due to the continent's high

population growth.
Contrasting sharply with the vast natural resource richness and very big young labour population of many African countries is the rising levels of poverty. Growing local and worldwide demand for forestry, mining, and agricultural resources has not produced a strong foundation for long-term poverty reduction. The revenues of Africa's natural wealth are too frequently unequally distributed and/or invested in activities that create few additional jobs for a growing number of unemployed and underemployed people, despite the preconditions for sustained economic growth and a durable improvement in living standards being improved.The management of national wealth functions rather effectively in certain nations, such as Botswana, and such examples inspire optimism and hope for the future. But, in other nations, corruption, elite capture, and armed conflicts make it difficult to reduce widespread poverty.

This lecture focuses on economic kinds of poverty, which are categorizable according to material standards of life. We'll talk about two distinct aspects of poverty: a national one and an individual one. We shall provide the measurement and worldwide comparison methods for both dimensions. We will discuss changes in Africa from a global comparative viewpoint and offer estimates of absolute poverty and poverty rates. Although it may seem obvious, it's crucial to remember that human health encompasses far more than just material circumstances. For instance, combined measures of economic poverty do not take into account things like access to health care and education, environmental sustainability and climate change resilience, agency and empowerment, political freedom, and acceptance of people of all races, genders, and sexual orientations.These elements continue to be outside the purview of this presentation. We also concentrate on poverty in Africa since its independence. We start in the 1960s, a decade that saw both the birth of the World Bank's yearly report on poverty and the independence of Africa. As 2016 is the most recent year for which the World Bank has statistics on poverty levels, we examine the data up to that point.

The structure of the presentation is as follows. It starts with a discussion of the definition and measurement of poverty. We then move on to explore the patterns in global and African poverty as well as the differences between rural and urban poverty. A review of both African and global poverty-reduction tactics is then covered. Then, we looked at poverty in Nigeria, key factors contributing to poverty in Nigeria. Finally, we dare to look at the pressure of poverty on those outside the poverty trap and proffered possible ways of reducing poverty in Africa at large and Nigeria in particular.

## 2. Defining and measuring national and individual poverty

Mr. Vice chancellor Sir, understanding how poverty is often defined and quantified is necessary before we can examine levels and trends in both national and personal poverty. The concepts we've chosen for this lecture speak about economic poverty, which is often determined by the level of life a person enjoys. The most popular metrics are the GDP per capita and the percentage of the population that lives in poverty. International organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank employ both techniques. The benefit of employing a globally recognized definition and measurement standard is that it makes cross-national and intertemporal comparisons easier.The drawback of these measurements is that they are very crude and leave out a lot of the regional, national, and local context that affects living standards at the collective or individual level. Moreover, these measurements don't include any data on how the impoverished see their living situations.

What does it mean to describe a nation as "poor"? In all practical terms, national poverty is the same as a lack of economic expansion. GDP (Gross Domestic Product), which is the total value added to all products and services generated in a national economy each year, is a measure of a nation's wealth. GDP is often divided by the total population to produce GDP per capita since the size of any nation's economy is correlated to its population. We can compute income growth over time and compare income levels between nations using this measure. The World Bank classifies economies into four income groups: lower income (up to US$ 1,005), lower-middle income (US$ 1,006 - 3,955), upper-middle income (US$ 3,956 - 12,235), and higher income (US$ 12,236 and above) (*these are official standards for Gross National Income in 2018*).

The increase in total value added from one year to the next is used to calculate GDP growth. GDP growth divided by population growth is used to calculate GDP per capita growth. So, for countries to become wealthy, GDP growth must outperform population growth. Nevertheless, a decrease in poverty, which is measured as the percentage of persons living at or below the poverty line, is not always correlated with increase in GDP per capita since poverty distribution critically depends on how national income and GDP growth are spread among the population. Hence, growth that is pro-poor or inclusive and helps the entire society, including the poor, is conceivable. But there are also instances of exclusive growth, which exclusively increases the wealth of the wealthy.

In general, nations with high GDP per capita levels struggle to see rapid economic expansion. Their income levels can increase particularly as a result of the GDP per capita growing steadily over time, without experiencing too many years of negative growth. Contrarily, poorer countries frequently experience greater GDP growth rates, a phenomenon known as "catch-up growth," but whether or not they are able to catch up to wealthier countries critically relies on how stable and long-term sustainable their growth path is. Several nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, have experienced years of significant setbacks along with years of rapid GDP development over the previous 20 years.For instance, Rwanda in the 2000s and Botswana in the 1970s both saw phenomenal yearly growth rates of 11 and 8 percent, respectively, but these spurts of prosperity must be sustained for several decades in order to cement these gains and alleviate poverty at a structural level.

We must represent income levels in a single common currency, generally US Dollars (US$), in order to compare GDP per capita across nations. Two strategies exist for doing this. Using exchange rates between the local currency and US dollars is the first option. This has the drawback that sudden changes in exchange rates impact income comparisons across borders in ways that go beyond 'real' changes in comparative economic performance. Because it focuses on changes in domestic price levels rather than the value of the national currency, the second method is thought to be more accurate. Economists utilize so-called Purchasing Power Parities to translate GDP to US dollars (PPPs).By putting together, a basket of goods and services and comparing the prices of this basket across nations, a PPP is created. The PPPs (relative domestic price level) determined in this way can sometimes be almost as high as the official exchange rate, but there are also numerous instances when they are far lower. In this situation, utilizing the exchange rate would give the impression that the nation is poorer and that its citizens have less purchasing power than they actually have. The fact that PPPs allow for an assessment of what the exchange rate between two currencies would have to be in order to completely reflect relative pricing levels in nations is another method to interpret the differences.

The GDP per capita is obviously a factor in determining individual poverty levels, but wealth distribution across national populations also matters. The World Bank established a new benchmark in 2008 by classifying those who make less than US$1.25 per day on average as being among the extreme poverty. Once more, PPPs are utilized to make this poverty threshold comparable between nations. When prices rise over time, which they usually do in the long term, this line shifts. Hence, the World Bank revised its estimate of the price of a subsistence consumption basket in 2015 and raised the international poverty threshold to US$1.90. It is usual practice to estimate how many individuals live in extreme poverty using this poverty threshold.This does not imply, however, that those who earn a little bit more than US$ 1.90 per day are free from poverty. In actuality, although the number of those who are really poor is decreasing, billions of people today are living just over that poverty threshold. Africa can also see this tendency.

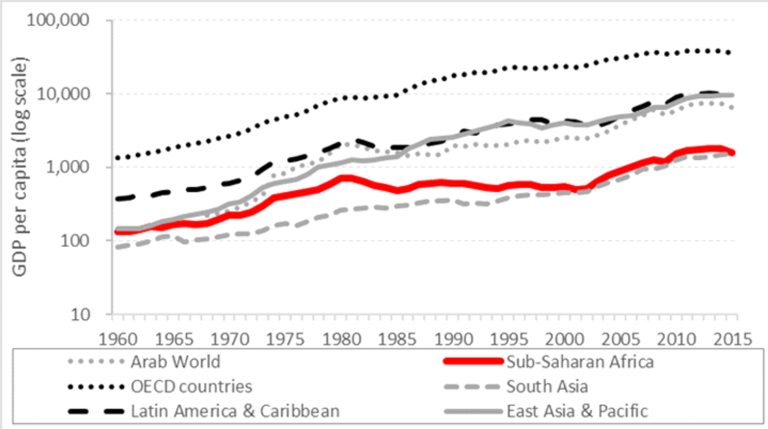
But, the backdrop of poverty is extremely important, even for individuals who make $1.90 per day. The state of poverty is not constant. People can rise out of poverty, but they can also sink back into it. Even many people who are no longer regarded to be in poverty today have only been able to marginally increase their salaries, making them incredibly sensitive to any change in their income. The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which the UN created in 2010 to measure not only income but also health, education, and some other aspects of living standards, aims to solve these problems.How individuals view poverty in connection to the communities and societies in which they live is another crucial aspect of poverty. When a person's living conditions are compared to the typical living conditions of a society, that person is said to be in relative poverty. Being impoverished in a rich nation vs a poor country makes a significant impact. Being impoverished in a developing nation may leave the poor with a persistent feeling of unfairness and make life mentally more challenging for them. On the other hand, living in a wealthy nation may have the advantage of providing more opportunity to escape poverty because of increased social mobility.

## 3. Poverty trends in Africa

In this lesson's portion, we analyzed African poverty trends based on three factors: GDP per capita, levels and shares of the people living in poverty, and the distinction between rural and urban poverty. It presents a variety of nation instances that highlight the diversity found within Sub-Saharan Africa and makes comparisons between that area and other parts of the world.

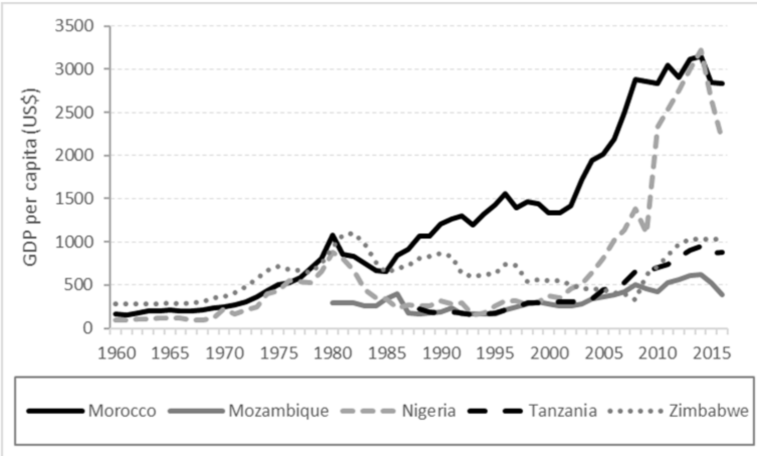
### 3.1 National poverty in a global perspective

Trends in the global GDP per capita are seen in Figure 1. The richest nations in Europe and North America, the OECD countries, have been positioned on the right axis (OECD; black dotted line; axis 0 US$ 40,000), while the developing areas have been positioned on the left axis (US$ 0-12,000). The graph demonstrates the stark differences in GDP per capita during the past 50 years between Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and other areas including Latin America, East Asia, and OECD nations. Except for the OECD nations, all regions' GDP per capita before to 1980 was less than US$ 2,000. With the exception of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, all world regions have since the 1980s crossed the US$ 2,000 threshold. Latin America and East and Pacific Asia have grown beyond US$ 8,000.

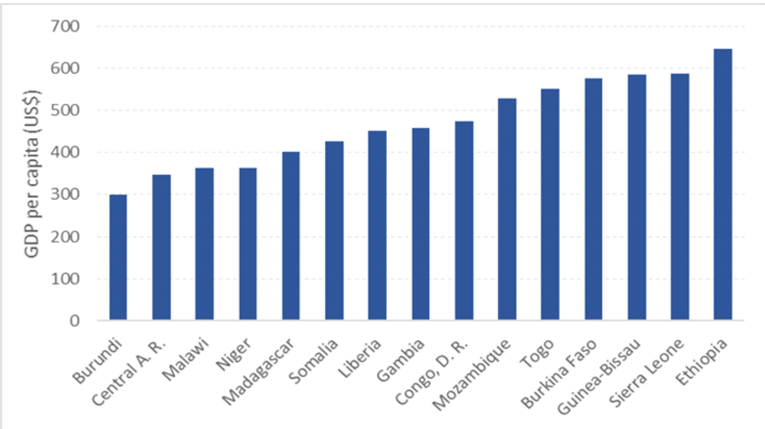



Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators(WDI)*.
**Figure 1:** GDP per capita in US-Dollars (log scale) regional trends, 1960-2015

The comparison of the two regions demonstrates the worldwide development of Sub-Saharan Africa. We examine the diversity within Sub-Saharan Africa in figure 2. We chose five nations—Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe—because they provide an excellent representation of the range of economic paths. Morocco's economy began to grow in the middle of the 1980s and has since made quite good progress. The oil-dependent economy of Nigeria has grown significantly since the early 2000s commodities boom brought about by rising oil prices. But, there is a significant chance that this growth spurt won't sustain if oil prices on the global market keep declining or remain at the low levels they have reached since 2015, the last year shown in this graph.Zimbabwe's economy expanded throughout the 1970s and 1980s, but since then has been in decline and stagnation as a result of the political and economic unrest of the 1990s and 2000s. Zimbabwe recovered after 2008, although it is unclear to what degree the government has manipulated growth figures given that it is generally known that many African income statistics have dependability difficulties. In the years of calm that have followed the end of the country's protracted civil war in 2000, Mozambique has made some progress toward recovery, but the country's fast population expansion has somewhat offset the GDP growth.Tanzania's population growth remained high throughout the previous ten years, but it has had stronger Economic growth than Mozambique. As a result, there has been a noticeable difference in per capita growth between these two neighbouring nations (2005-2015).




Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators* (WDI).
**Figure 2:** GDP per capita trends in 5 African countries, 1960-2015

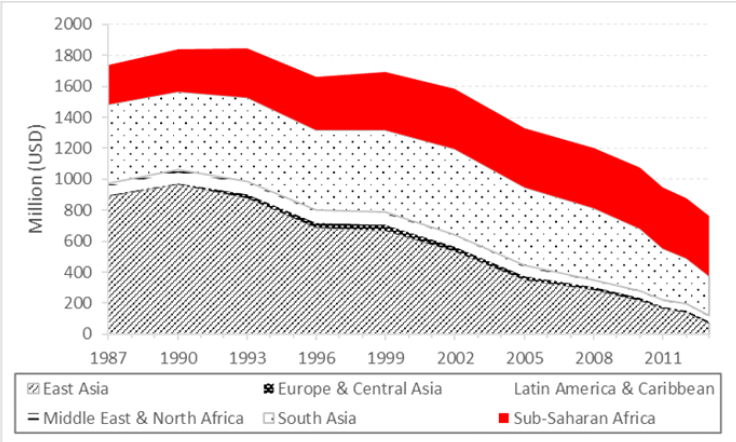



Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators* (WDI).
**Figure 3:** The 15 poorest African countries in 2016

Although many African nations have seen significant economic development as a result of the commodities boom from the mid-1990s, this growth has not yet been sufficient to considerably reduce the number of developing nations. The 15 poorest African economies in 2016 are depicted in Figure 3. Burundi, the Central African Republic, Malawi, and Niger are at the bottom of the list with GDP per capita below US$400.

### 3.2 Individual poverty in a global perspective

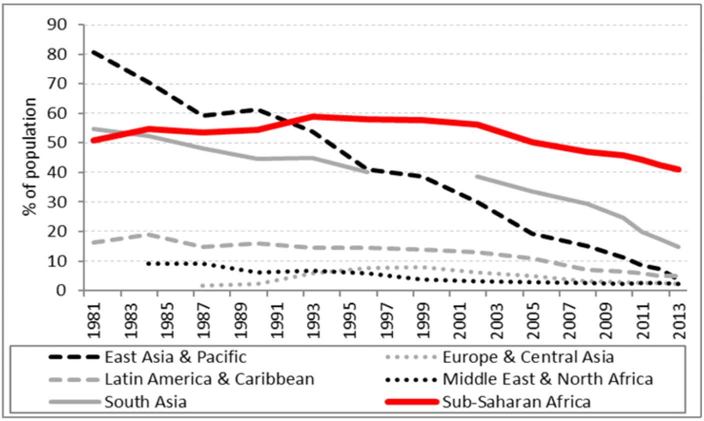
The total number of people living in poverty across the world is shown in Figure 4 per region. It shows that since the early 1990s, the rate of global poverty reduction has been tremendous. The number of people living in extreme poverty decreased by more than half, from 1.7 billion to 766 million, between 1987 and 2013. In 2013, the most recent year for which accurate data are available, just 11% of the world's population lived in poverty, down from 35% in 1987. Particularly in Asia and South America, poverty has decreased during the past 25 years. This sharp fall has mostly been caused by East Asia (bottom) and South Asia (third from top).Two-thirds of the worldwide decline in poverty between 1987 and 2013 may be attributed to China alone. Poverty is increasingly vanishing in Vietnam, Indonesia, and India as well. Yet, from 250 million in 1987 to 390 million in 2013, the overall number of Africans living in poverty (red top area) has grown. Africans are now estimated to make about half of the global population living in poverty.




*Source:* World Bank, *World Development Indicators* (WDI).

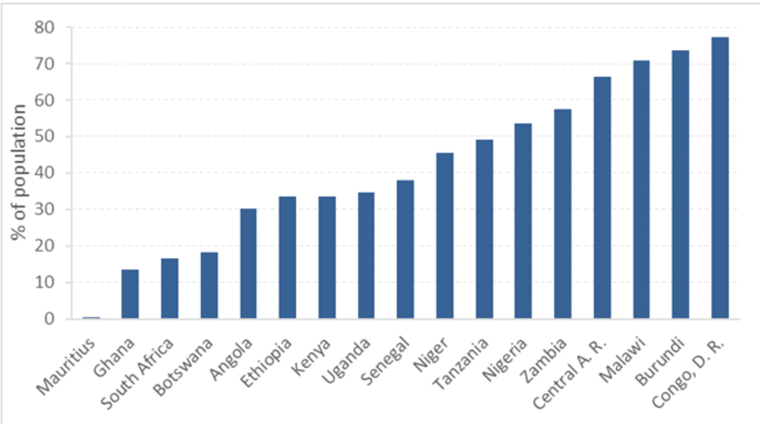
**Figure 4:** Total population living in poverty by world regions, 1987-2020

Figure 5 contrasts the percentage of the African population that lives on or less than US$1.90 (thick red line), or the poverty rate, with other world regions. Figure 4 showed absolute poverty levels. It demonstrates that the percentage of people living in poverty has decreased internationally during the 1980s. The reduction in East Asia, the Pacific, and South Asia has been particularly spectacular, but Latin America's poverty rate has been more than half. The poverty rate in Africa has decreased from 51 percent in 1981 to 41 percent in 2013, as shown by Figure 5. As a result, relative poverty levels have been dropping in Sub-Saharan Africa even if absolute poverty levels are still rising.Given that relative poverty rates are not falling quickly enough to keep up with Africa's rapid population increase, this paradoxical scenario can be explained (by about 2.5 percent a year, compared with 1 percent for Asia). As a result, there are more Africans living in poverty now than there were in the 1990s. While there is little question that the decline in relative poverty is a positive trend that is consistent with the return to prosperity seen by many African nations after 1995, poverty will continue to be a significant development burden for the area for many years to come.




Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators(WDI)*.
**Figure 5:** Regional poverty rate at US$ 1.90 a day (2011 PPP) (% of population)

The poverty rates in several African nations in 2012 are shown in Figure 6. We can observe that there are a few unique instances, such as Mauritius, where poverty has been all but eliminated. Just 0.5% of the people of this island nation, one of Africa's growth wonders, are considered to be poor. In Botswana, the country that has had another economic miracle, 18% of the population still lives in poverty. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (77%) Burundi (74%) Central African Republic (66%) Zambia (58%) and Nigeria (58%) have the highest rates of poverty (54 percent).




Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators(WDI)*.
**Figure 6:** Poverty headcount ratio at US$ 1.90 a day (2011 PPP), % of population, 2020

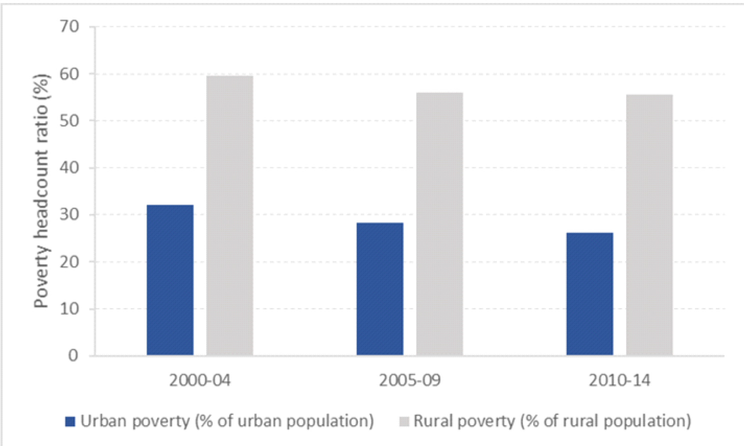
**Why are so many Africans still stuck in poverty today?**

The causes of the persistently high rates of poverty among Africans are numerous, complicated, and span from deeply rooted (ultimate) factors to more immediate ones. So let's focus on three crucial elements. Secondly, the high population growth rate of the area (2.6 percent annually) is correlated with poverty. African economies are producing more money, but an increasing number of people must share that money. The second reason has to do with how severe the poverty is in Africa in comparison to other places. Even while the continent's GDP is rising, it frequently isn't enough to raise people's living standards over the US$ 1.90 mark.Finally, there is a wealth gap between the wealthy and the poor due to extremely high levels of economic inequality or unequal income distribution among a population. Economic development produces less poverty reduction if there is considerable baseline inequality, and the benefits predominantly benefit the wealthy.

## 3.3 Poverty in Rural and Urban Africa

We've spoken about national averages up to this point, but there are several categories of individuals living in poverty inside nations, and each group has distinct obstacles to escaping poverty. The gap between urban and rural poverty is the biggest one. Although there are numerous relationships and dependencies between these two groups, urban poverty takes on quite different shapes than rural poverty.

Figure 7 displays the average proportion of persons living in poverty in both urban and rural regions. It shows that although poverty in Africa has declined in both urban and rural areas in the twenty-first century, rural poverty is still twice as high as urban poverty.




Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators(WDI)*.
**Figure 7:** Rural and urban poverty headcount ratio (%), Sub-Sahara Africa

Yet poverty is no longer only a rural problem. According to Akekere & Yousuo (2014), urban regions may soon replace rural areas as the primary residence for the bulk of the poor. One of the most important phenomena in Sub-Saharan Africa in the twenty-first century is urbanization, as rural people, particularly young men and women, are moving to cities at previously unheard-of rates in quest of work and economic development. The world's fastest-urbanizing continent is Africa. Compared to 15 percent in 1960, around 38 percent of Africans lived in towns and cities in 2016. Rural-urban migration is not just a way to get out of poverty; it also provides a chance, especially for young people, to advance in society, pick up new skills, and send money back to their rural family. But, for rural migrants in cities, the reality is frequently different. Urban regions are becoming incredibly congested and overworked, placing stress on underdeveloped infrastructures, schools, healthcare facilities, sewage systems, and water supplies. Urban centres are unprepared to handle rising rates of young unemployment as a result of the new backdrop of poverty brought about by this rapid urbanization.

## 4. Responses to poverty in Africa

In an effort to end poverty in Africa, Africans and the world community have adopted a variety of solutions and initiatives.

### 4.1 African responses to poverty

Most individuals who are poor try to help one another and themselves. Africans who live in poverty don't simply suffer from it; they also possess a remarkable talent for problem-solving. For those who live in poverty, managing money is a crucial and well-understood aspect of daily life. It is a significant determinant of how successful poor households are at enhancing their own quality of life. The majority of destitute households use a range of unofficial financial instruments instead of subsisting off of nothing.Poor business owners can also get around their lack of access to traditional banking by using microfinance companies as their source of credit. Also, Africa is the global leader in mobile money, and technical advancements have made it feasible to offer financial services at a cheap cost to millions of underprivileged people. M-Pesa was used by 7 out of 10 persons in Kenya in 2016, resulting in 9 million daily transactions that supported the employment of 130,000 agents. Such programs are in place all throughout Africa, providing a variety of services like transfers, savings, loans, and health care that promote financial inclusion and increase the stability of African families' finances. Also, more and more African farmers are looking to join agricultural cooperatives in order to have access to cash for investments and commodities markets so they may sell their goods for fair rates. In order to reduce the danger of famine, they also demonstrate knowledge of the hazards of climate change by producing short-season crop types (such as smaller grains) from better seed kinds that are drought tolerant.

### 4.2. Global Responses to African Poverty

The first "Millennium Development Goal," established by 189 United Nations Member States in 2000, was to reduce severe poverty and famine. It specifically established a goal of halving the poverty rate by 2015, which was accomplished in 2010. The UN has now established a new, ambitious goal to eradicate severe poverty by 2030. There are several international and African NGOs and development organizations that support initiatives to reduce global poverty, but official development aid, or ODA, accounts for the lion's share of their funding.

ODA, or official development assistance, is money given by governments and other organizations to help the political, social, economic, and environmental advancement of developing nations. It differs from humanitarian aid in that it focuses on long-term poverty alleviation rather than providing emergency help in the wake of calamities like famines, wars, and natural catastrophes. Such assistance may be delivered bilaterally—directly from one nation to another—or multilaterally—by the donor nation to an international body like the World Bank or a United Nations agency (e.g. UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS). Nowadays, the ratio is around 70% bilateral and 30% multilateral. The greatest regional portion of ODA, or roughly one third (34%) of the total, went to African nations.The top African recipient nations and their international contributors are included in Table 1 for 2015. Although the majority of Chinese investment does not qualify as ODA because it is largely meant for commercial and infrastructural projects, China has also emerged as a significant donor during the past 20 years.

**Table 1:** African ODA recipients and international donors, 2015

| Top 10 ODA recipients | billion (US$) | Top 10 ODA donors | billion (US$) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ethiopia | 3.23 | USA | 9.32 |
| Congo, D. R. | 2.60 | European Union | 6.25 |
| Tanzania | 2.58 | IDA | 5.18 |
| Egypt | 2.49 | UK | 4.20 |
| Kenya | 2.47 | Germany | 3.04 |
| Nigeria | 2.43 | United Arab Emirates | 2.84 |
| Mozambique | 1.82 | France | 2.29 |
| Ghana | 1.77 | Global Fund | 2.21 |
| South Sudan | 1.68 | African Dev. Bank | 2.18 |
| Uganda | 1.63 | Japan | 1.76 |
| Other African recipients | 28.34 | Other donors | 11.77 |
| **Total** | **51.04** | **Total** | **51.04** |

Source: OECD (2021), *International Development Statistics (IDS) online database.*

## International Organizations Response to Eliminating Extreme Poverty in Africa

"Eradicating extreme poverty for all people everywhere by 2030" was at the top of the list of UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were anticipated to direct the development agenda from 2015. (UN, 2014). Considering Africa's capacity and history, its efforts to eradicate poverty should go beyond the MDGs and centre on increased prosperity and inequality reduction. These objectives may be met through high-quality growth that is also inclusive and environmentally friendly. In other words, when Africa emerges as a global economic hub unto itself, its expansion need to be ecologically sustainable and advantageous to all facets of the populace (Hong, 2015; Janneh and Ping, 2012; AfDB et al., 2010).

While the UN post-MDG goals have been addressed, the significance of ending poverty by 2030 has received widespread recognition and achieved consensus among international organizations. Moreover, the World Bank and its Governors adopted the following two connected objectives in 2013:

i. to end extreme poverty by 2030 and

ii. to promote shared prosperity in every society.

The specific targets are:

I. to bring the share of global population living below this threshold to less than 3 percent; and

ii. to foster the per capita income growth of the poorest 40 percent of the population in each country (World Bank, 2013; Basu, 2013). Poverty reduction always featured high on the policy agenda of the African Development Bank, and the development agencies in both developed and developing countries also assigned high priority to it.

According to some assessments, it would be difficult but doable to reduce severe poverty to less than 3% of the world's population by 2030. Yet, eradicating poverty by 2030 is out of Africa's reach, as simulations in this study and elsewhere reveal, even with our "best case" scenario assumptions on faster development and redistribution from the 10 richest to the 40 worst percent of the population. Positively, the percentage of Africans living in poverty might be reduced to low levels by 2030 - roughly 10%.

Wide inequality and an increase in the frequency of catastrophic weather events and accompanying shocks mark the end of the MDG period and the start of the SDG era. These characteristics are especially evident in Africa, where the economy is disproportionately dependent on agriculture and natural resources and is marked by substantial inequality (as assessed, for example, by Gini coefficients). Hence, strategies to reduce poverty must concentrate on strengthening growth and enhancing its quality by making it inclusive and "green." In order to reduce poverty, inclusive growth is necessary so that the population as a whole, including the poorest members, may benefit from growth. Green development will also assist Africa in utilizing its natural resources and adjusting to climate change, which otherwise may have severe effects on the world's poorest people (AfDB, 2013a).

As the UN MDGS draws to a close, 2015 is referred to be a "year for development," which is intended to inspire decision-makers to reconsider their development frameworks for the upcoming decade or decades. From the standpoint of African policymakers working to end extreme poverty, the main challenge is how to develop and put into practice strategies that will boost growth while gradually making it more inclusive and long-lasting. This is a key component of the African Development Bank's ten-year strategy (TYS), which is centred on inclusive and green growth and runs from 2013 to 2022. (AfDB, 2013)

Mr. Vice-Chancellor sir, Prior to concentrating on structural changes as a driver of growth and poverty reduction in Africa, this portion of the study first analyzes pro-growth oriented national and regional macroeconomic policies. It then looks at how global institutions' policies, including those of the G20, might help Africa achieve inclusive and environmentally friendly growth in the post-2015 age. Also, while inclusive growth is widely covered in G20 work, green growth might use more regular attention. Third, more space will be required for African and other low-income developing nations to express their opinions on significant global problems that have an influence on the continent's sustainable development.

**How Much Can Poverty Be Reduced by 2030?**

***Trends in Poverty Reduction***

Since the 1950s, the world's poverty rate has been dropping, although Africa has only recently achieved progress. Due in part to faster development, the continent's rate of extreme poverty decreased by 10% between 1999 and 2010. The World Bank household surveys, however, indicate that in 2010, the poor continued to make up a staggering 56% of the population in Africa and 30% of the world's poor. The poverty rate was more than twice as high as that of South Asia, the second poorest area in the world (Chandy & Gertz, 2011 and Olinto et al, 2013).

Significant disparities in poverty rates still exist between subgroups and nations in Africa because of its variety. While frontier markets consistently contributed to the decrease of poverty in Africa in the 2000s, the effect of fragile nations has been muted. In contrast to certain middle-income nations like Cape Verde or the Seychelles, the frontier markets of Zambia and Tanzania have retained high percentages of poverty. In contrast, Western and Southern Africa were characterized by severe inequality and poverty.

In conclusion, there were disparities in the distribution of severe poverty between global areas as well as across groups and nations within regions. Several of the biggest nations in Africa, like Nigeria, have huge populations that will fall below the $1.25 per day poverty threshold in both 2010 and 2030, which makes them a major cause of poverty in the area. In 2010, poverty rates topped 50% in a number of smaller nations, including frontier markets (like Mozambique) and middle-income nations, in addition to fragile states.

As seen, for instance, by rising adolescent literacy rates and lowering child mortality, stronger growth and the resulting increased income can be linked with better social outcomes, well-being, and improvements in human development in addition to reducing economic poverty (see Figures 8a and 8b below). More access to power and - for advanced countries - lower CO2 emissions in relation to income both improve societal well-being (see Figures 8c and 8d below). The stagnant completion rates for basic education in resource-rich African nations show that progress does not always have a favourable influence on social indices (see Figure 8e below).

Together with social indices, the reduction of income poverty varied across resource-rich and resource-poor African nations. Between 1995 and 2000, resource-poor nations lowered it by 16 percentage points, while resource-rich countries saw a drop of just 7 percentage points (World Bank, 2013). More generally, for resource-rich African nations, getting greater human development effect from their prosperity continues to be a major problem.

**Trends in Inequality**

Additionally, despite the strong real GDP growth since the middle of the 2000s, there are still significant economic disparities between African nations. In particular, looking at developments in GDP per capita indicates that between 1995 and 2015, the difference between Africa's income per capita and that of the main industrialized nations has only slightly decreased. Although the GDP per capita of Africa was just 8% of that of rich nations in 2015, it was only 6% in 1995. Africa will need to continue or even speed up growth in the upcoming decades to reduce these economic discrepancies.

**Figure 8.** Non-income measures of poverty and well-being in African and other countries

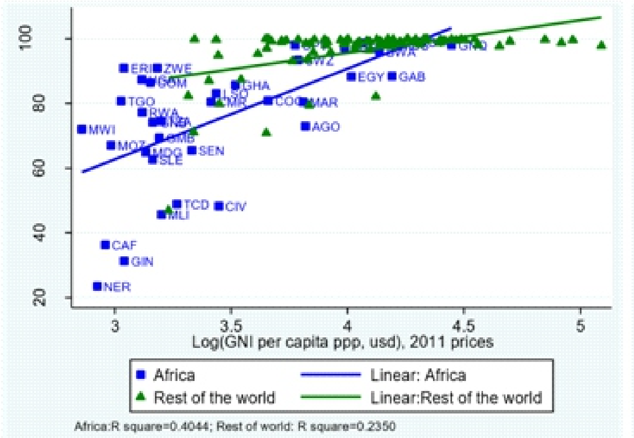



**Figure 8a.** Income levels and youth literacy rates (2009 - 2013), by regions

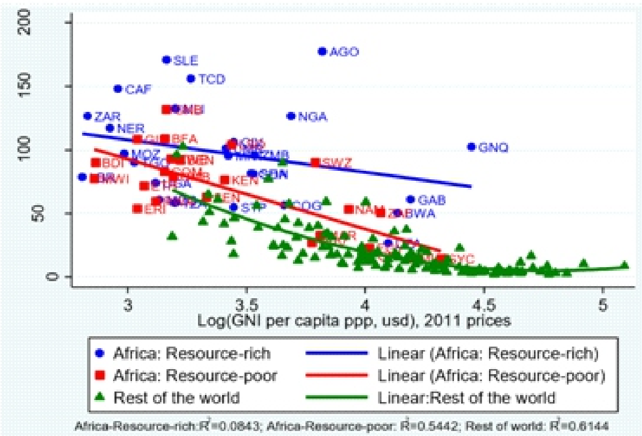



**Figure 8b.** Income levels and child mortality rates (2009 – 2013), by subgroups

**Source:** Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015

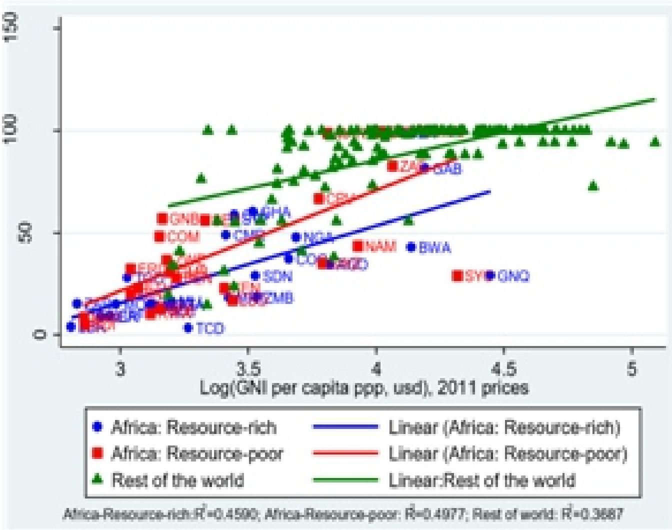



**Figure 8c.** Income levels and access to electricity (2009 – 2013), by subgroups

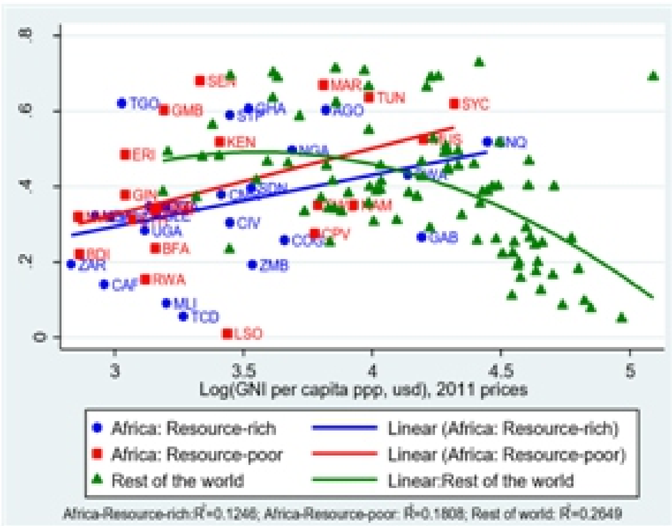



**Figure 8d**. Income and CO2 emissions (2010) by subgroups

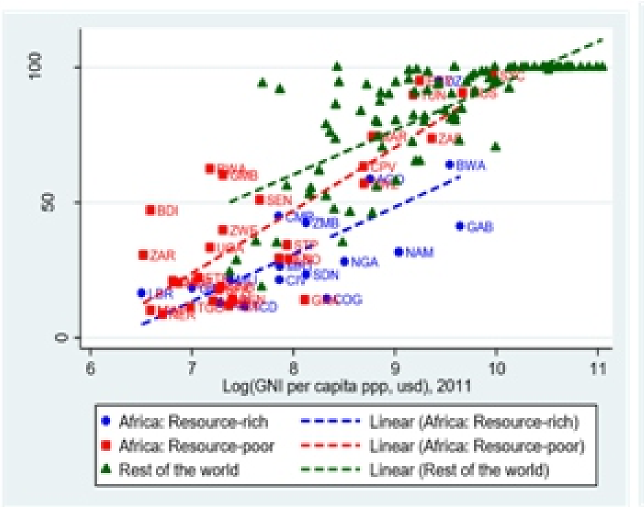
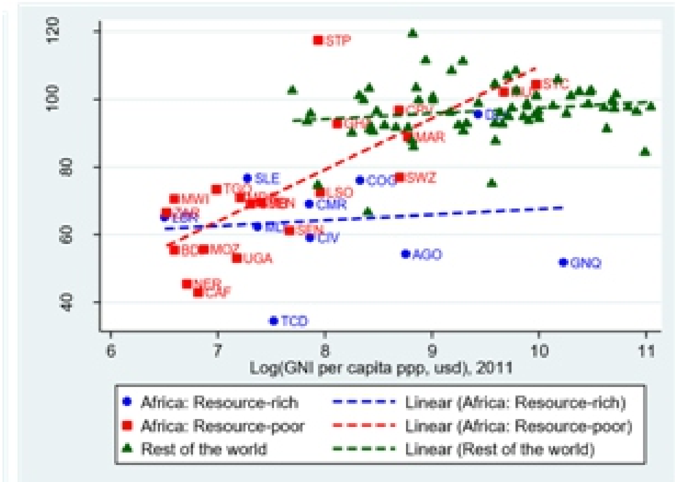



**Figure 8e:** Income levels and improved Sanitation facilities by subgroups




**Source:** Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015

**Figure 8f:** Income and primary school completion rate, percent of the relevant age groups.

The letter predominated until 2010, and inequality dynamics in Africa have been driven by both intra- and inter-country disparities. Comparing the GDP per capita of a "typical" (median) African country to the GDP per capita of the entire continent is one way to assess the regional inequality in Africa. Up to the global financial crisis (2009 and 2010), this ratio was declining, and there was a subsequent partial reverse Comparing the median and average incomes of chosen nations yields within-country inequality, which shows a mixed record.

Also, changes in the Gini coefficient indicate substantial but largely steady inequality for the continent of Africa as a whole as well as a variety of patterns across sub-regions (Figure 3). Among Southern Africa's medium-income nations, the majority of which are also victims of the "middle income trap," inequality continues to be the highest. East Africa is home to some of the world's fastest-growing areas, making rising inequality there a major worry that has to be addressed by politicians. For instance, despite Tanzania's strong economic growth of 6 to 7 percent annually from 1996 to 2010, poverty only decreased by 2.2 percentage points overall, far less than Rwanda's 1.7 percentage point average annual fall (World Bank, 2013).

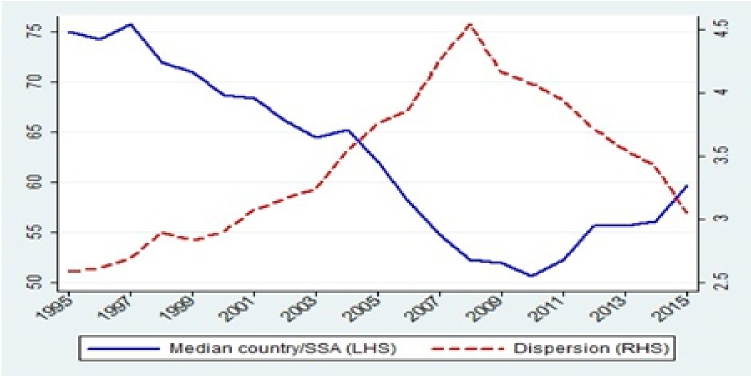



**Figure 9.** Inequality among countries in Africa, 1995 - 2015

**Source:**Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015based on the AfDB AEO database. **Note:** Median income of SSA countries relative to GDP per capita of SSA is in percent. Dispersion is computed as standard deviation over median.

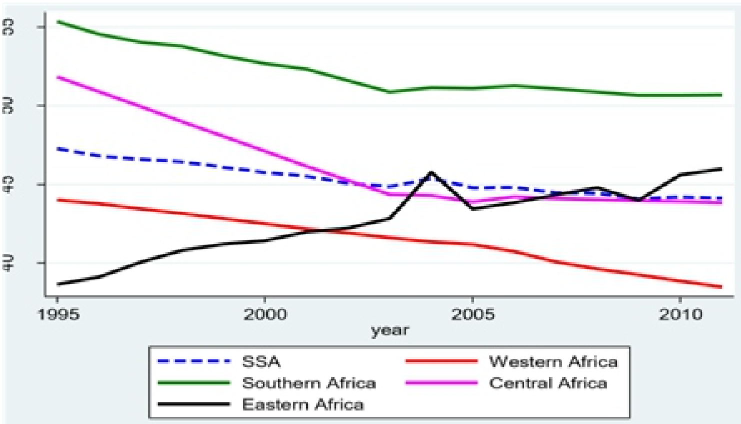



**Figure 10.** Inequality among African Regions, (Gini coefficients, %) 1995 - 2010

**Source:**Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015based on the AfDB AEO database.

Even though Africa has grown quickly during the early 2000s, its influence on eradicating poverty lagged behind that of other parts of the world. In particular, SSA is expected to have a growth elasticity of poverty of -0.69 as opposed to -2.02 in other areas.

Actually, there are two things that make this difference. First, development from labor-intensive industries, such as manufacturing or agriculture, reduces poverty more than growth from the mineral industries. So, the reduction in poverty brought about by growth in Africa's resource-rich nations was slower. Second, large beginning income disparity undermines the ability of growth in Africa to reduce poverty in addition to resource reliance. The degree to which redistributive policies and access to services allow the poor to profit from growth will determine how much growth eliminates severe poverty.When resource dependency and inequality are taken into account, there is a less difference between the growth elasticities of poverty globally and in Africa (World Bank, 2013).

**Poverty Dynamics**

With time, it will get harder and harder to reduce poverty. After the first surge until around 2017, all possibilities predict that improvement will sluggish (Figure 7). Lifting individuals out of poverty will demand greater resources in the latter years as the poverty rate decreases and the median rises above the poverty line. To put it another way, semi-growth elasticity tends to decrease as poverty decreases, also in SSA (Table 2). This measure of dynamics is more helpful than elasticity from the standpoint of policymakers, who gauge their success in reducing poverty in percentage points.

**Table 2.** Sub-Saharan Africa: semi-growth elasticity of consumption, 2010 – 2030

| Poverty rates | (Mean) growth semi-elasticity of poverty (%) |
|---|---|
| 45 | -0,465 |
| 40 | -0,454 |
| 35 | -0,424 |
| 30 | -0,398 |
| 25 | -0,368 |

**Source:** Authors' calculations based on the AfDB, World Bank, and EIU databases. **Note:** Calculations were carried out under 2010 Africa distribution from PovcalNet for the baseline scenario.

**Figure 11.** Poverty rate dynamics: Alternative scenarios, 2012 - 2030 (percentage change)

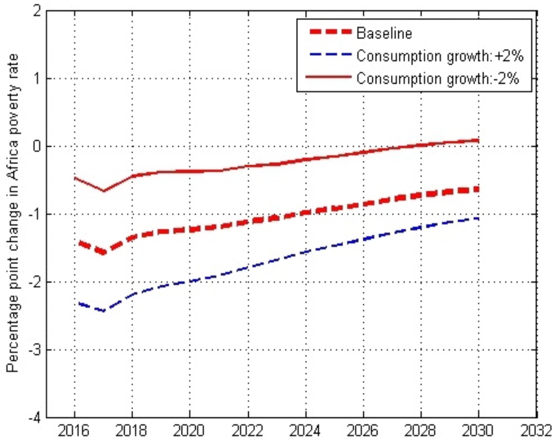



**Figure 11a.** Consumption growth

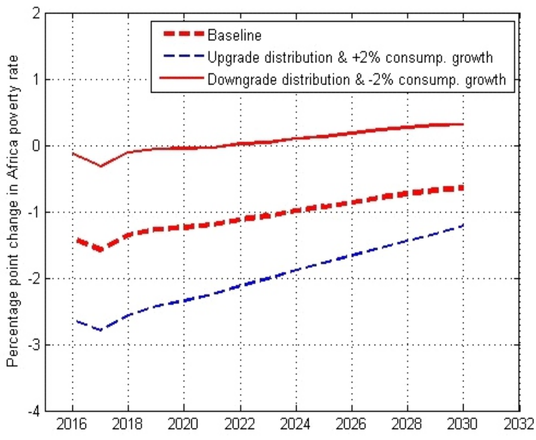



**Figure 11b.** Consumption growth & distribution

**Source:** Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015 based on the AfDB, World Bank and EIU databases

## Beyond the Aggregates

The results as a whole obscure regional and group differences. This Part investigates these variations with a focus on unstable governments and nations with the greatest rates of poverty.

## Differences across Sub-SaharanAfrican Countries

The overall amount of poverty in SSA was disproportionately concentrated in a few big countries in 2010, and this trend will continue over time. More specifically, in 2010 the top five donors comprised more than half of the region's impoverished (Table 3a). According to the baseline scenario, Tanzania, Nigeria, and the Congo Democratic Republic will still be home to about half of the region's poor in 2030. In addition, the most extreme levels of poverty are anticipated to occur in 2030 in today's unstable states (Table 3b).

Major African nations with high rates of poverty, such as Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), where the majority of the continent's impoverished will reside, cannot be disregarded in attempts by policymakers to combat poverty. Growth's effects on reducing poverty vary over time, both within and within nations, depending on a variety of factors, including how money is distributed. It will be particularly difficult in fragile nations with a high frequency and depth of poverty, like the DRC (Figures 14a and 14b), where eradicating poverty will take decades of sustained, inclusive growth.

**Table 3.** Africa: Differences in Poverty Rates, 2010 and 2030(p), the baseline scenario

**Table 3a.** Countries contributing the most to Sub-Saharan Africa's poverty, 2010 and 2030

| Country | 2010-Share of the poor % of SSA poor | Poverty rate % of total population | Country | 2030- Share of the poor % of SSA poor | Poverty rate % of total population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nigeria | 26.2 | 68.0 | Nigeria | 20.8 | 28.3 |
| Congo DR | 12.9 | 86.3 | Congo, DR | 20.1 | 70.7 |
| Tanzania | 7.3 | 67.0 | Tanzania | 8 | 36.0 |
| Ethiopia | 6.6 | 31.4 | Madagascar | 5.9 | 58.9 |
| Madagascar | 4.1 | 81.3 | Mozambique | 5.2 | 47.5 |
| Total | 57.1 | | Total | 60.0 | |

**Table 3b.** Countries with highest projected poverty rates in 2030 (baseline)

| | 2010 | 2030 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Country | Actual | Baseline | High growth | Low growth | Best case | Worst case |
| | | | (percent of population) | | | |
| Congo DR | 86.3 | 70.7 | 51.9 | 85.4 | 44.8 | 86.2 |
| Madagascar | 81.3 | 58.9 | 38.7 | 77.4 | 29.2 | 79.1 |
| Chad | 44.3 | 53.9 | 32.3 | 75.1 | 21.7 | 77.1 |
| Central Afr. Rep. | 62.9 | 51.9 | 35.1 | 68.8 | 27.1 | 71.3 |
| Liberia | 83.2 | 50.5 | 26.7 | 74.8 | 15.7 | 76.9 |
| Average | 71.6 | 57.2 | 36.9 | 76.3 | 27.7 | 76.1 |

Source: Authors' calculations based on the AfDB, World Bank and EIU databases.

It's important to emphasize the unreliability of poverty figures in Africa. For instance, in 2010 estimates placed Ethiopia's poverty rate at almost 30%. Nevertheless, the multidimensional poverty index, which considers the components of the human development index, places Ethiopia with Niger and Mali as one of the world's poorest nations in 2010. (Alkire & Santos, 2010). This shows how it's important to go beyond aggregates and basic indicators, both at the regional and national levels.

Following the signing of the National Peace and Reconciliation Accord in 2002, the DRC's Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy Paper (PRGSP) was drafted amid difficult economic and security circumstances. The investigation showed that poverty in the DRC is complicated and multifaceted, and that war has detrimental psychological effects on people's wellbeing (IMF, 2007). Poverty is concentrated among the illiterate people living in rural regions and being a member of big households in Nigeria, which also has a disproportionate amount of Africa's impoverished. Because of significant disparities in access to social services, the country's fast development has not translated into a reduction in poverty (Anyanwu, 2013).

Figure 12: Democratic Republic of the Congo's poverty rates from 2000 to 2030

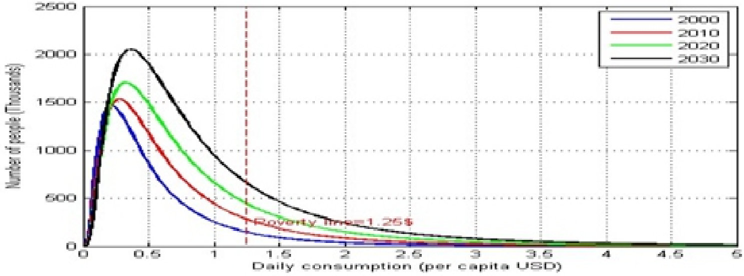



**Figure 12a.** Congo Democratic Republic: Probability density functions, various years

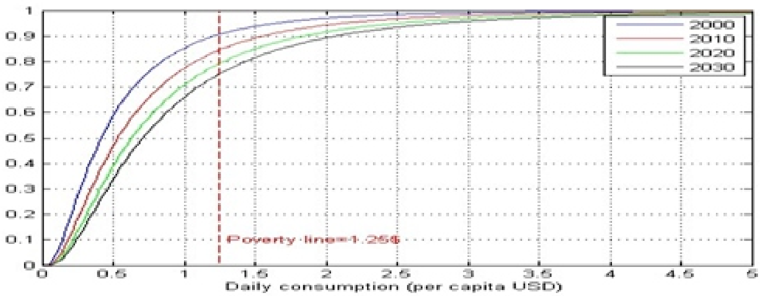



**Figure 12b.** Congo Democratic Republic: Cumulative density functions, various years

**Source:**Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015based on the AfDB, UN, World Bank and the EIU databases.

## Differences across Africa's sub-groups

To understand the drivers of poverty reduction in Africa, we examine the performance of the main sub-groups: (i) oil exporters; (i) frontier markets; (iii) fragile countries; and (iv) others. Denoting $H_{jt}$ as the headcount poverty

rate of country $j$ at time $t$ (as percent of the country's population), $P_{jt}$ the population of this country at time $t$, $P_{Gt}$ the population of Africa's group, $n$ the number of countries in a group, and $m$the number of groups, the weighted headcount
poverty rate for each analytical group, $H_{Gt}^{w}$ is obtained as:

$$H_{Gt}^{w} = \sum_{j=1}^{n} H_{jt} \frac{P_{jt}}{P_{Gt}} \qquad \text{with} \quad P_{Gt} = \sum_{j=1}^{n} P_{jt}$$

where in turn $H_{At}^{w} = \sum_{G=1} H_{Gt}^{w} \frac{P_{Gt}}{P_{At}}$. The contribution of a group to the change in Africa's poverty rate depends on the evolution of its share Africa and the evolution of its poverty rate.

According to a classification of African nations into oil exporters, frontier markets, unstable governments, and other groupings, the average poverty rate in the area is predicted to rise to nearly double that of the other groups by 2030. (Figures 15). Fragile nations are predicted to sustain the greatest poverty rate even in 2030, with an estimated 40% of the population, compared to 20% in other countries, starting from a high rate in 2010 (almost 60% of the population). Extreme poverty will affect more than 25% of the population in unstable nations even in the case of increased consumption growth (Figure 16).Also, it is anticipated that the poverty gap (depth) would continue to be significantly larger in fragile states than in other nations; in 2030, it is predicted to be 15% of the poverty line compared to 7% in non-fragile states.

High levels of poverty in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which are expected to make up more than a third of the population in fragile states, have a significant negative influence on these findings. Yet, fragile states - defined as having a high risk of violent conflicts, social collapse, or institutional breakdown - represent a crucial focal group for targeted poverty initiatives in Africa (AfDB, 2014).

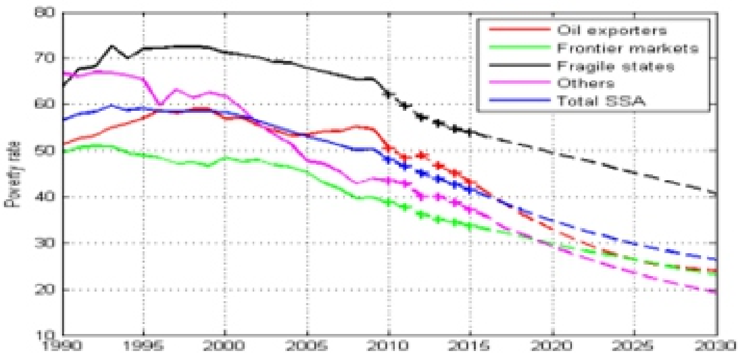



**Figure 13:** Poverty rates by SSA's sub-groups, % of population, 1990 - 2030
**Source:** Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015

**Figure 14.** Poverty rates: The baseline and different growth rates scenarios, (percent of relevant population)

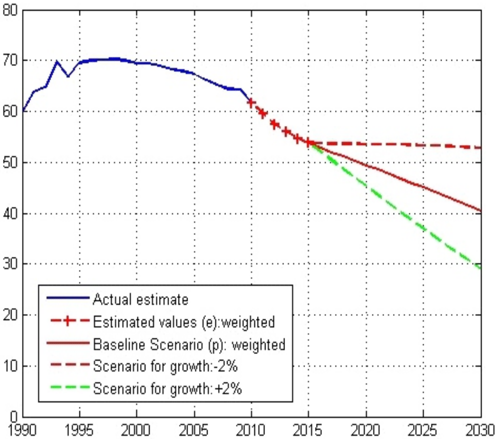



**Figure 14a.** Fragile states

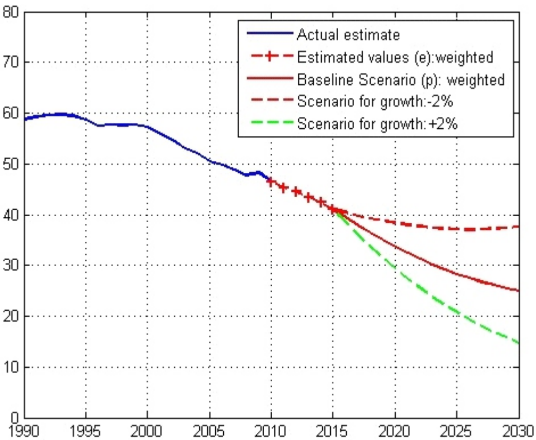



**Figure 14b.** Other countries

**Source:**Adopted from Zorobabel, et al. 2015based on the AfDB, UN, World Bank and the EIU databases.

War and instability are expensive and hinder efforts to fight poverty. To put it another way, the vicious cycle of fragility and armed conflict only serves to increase severe poverty (AfDB, 2009). Military wars have terrible effects on human lives and financial expenses (e.g., destroyed infrastructure, people and capital flight, reduced activities that depend on trust, etc.). Along with dealing with damaged institutions and policy frameworks, post-conflict nations also need to cope with this legacy. Policymakers and development partners should thus pay special attention to fragile nations, especially as Africa is the continent most affected by fragility. Crosswell (2014) adds subtlety to this basic advice by highlighting the fact that ineffective policy implementation and/or high levels of conflict and instability constitute significant barrierstogrowth.

**Who are the Africa's Poorest?**

Given its high poverty rates, despite the recent drop, SSA faces a significant challenge in eradicating extreme poverty. Also, in contrast to other areas, the PovcalNet data show that the number of individuals in SSA who live on less than $1.25 a day has not been declining. The extent of poverty, whose average income for the severely poor is $0.71 and is again below that of any other emerging area, will also affect future progress. Also, the $1.25 poverty threshold calculated using PPP and incorporating the costs of all items in the consumer basket may not be suitable for the lowest.One reason is that food prices often rise faster than the general price level while food takes up a disproportionate share of the poor's budget (ADB, 2014).

Rural locations tend to have higher rates of poverty among the very poor. However, the least productive sector—agriculture—provides 78 percent of impoverished people' incomes in Africa and roughly 60 percent of the continent's jobs (Chuhan-Pole & Ferreira, 2014). This emphasizes how crucial it is to reform it and develop alternate sources of income.

## Long-term Trends, Realistic Goals and Policy Options

### Long-Term Trends

African governments and development partners—both established and new—will need to foresee long-term change drivers in order to combat severe poverty. The backdrop provided by a number of recent studies that looked at megatrends helps to better comprehend the macroeconomic possibilities for growth, poverty, and inequality outlined in the preceding section. The African Development Bank (AfDB, 2011b) has highlighted the following major transformative forces and long-term trends affecting the continent:

- Changing structure of global markets and shift in economic power, with expanding middle class and private sector, and declining importance of traditional aid;
- New technologies and innovation, especially in health, agriculture and energy;
- Changes to physical environment such as climate change contributing to land, energy and water scarcity; massive and pervasive infrastructure deficit;
- Delayed demographic transition, continued heavy burden of HIV;
- Private sector development and democratization.

The African Development Bank's emphasis on long-term trends is aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063: The Future We Want for Africa. Moreover, they support long-term economic patterns that have been noted in recent US National Intelligence Council or Oxford Martin Commission for Future Generations reports (NIC, 2012). (Oxford Martin School, 2013).

These long-term patterns will probably have a negative effect on the underlying trend growth in SSA, as will the fallout from the global financial crisis and the slow pace of the global recovery. Growth is anticipated to fuel the elimination of poverty, as shown in simulations. Furthermore, as noted in Rodrik (2015) and other sources, policymakers will need to make investments in the forces behind long-term growth, including both crucial core competencies and forces behind structural transformation.

**Setting Realistic Goals**

The difficulties that SSA would face in trying to end extreme poverty were alluded to in earlier sections of this talk. According to reasonable estimates, the region is unlikely to decrease poverty to 3% of the population by 2030, although it can lower it to low levels. Based on the numerous numerical models shown above, a more practical objective would be to reduce poverty in SSA by between 50 and 70 percent by 2030. To bring down poverty rates to low levels, rapid growth and reduced inequality between the poorest 40% of the population and the top 10% of earners are both required (e.g., around 10 percent of the population).

The analysis has several immediate consequences. Secondly, Nigeria and other sizable low-income nations must be included in attempts to decrease poverty in SSA to extremely low levels. That does not, however, imply that Swaziland or other tiny, middle-income nations with high rates of poverty should be ignored. Second, because of the Democratic Republic of Congo's rapid population increase and current vulnerability, poverty in SSA will progressively be concentrated there. The protection of stability and peacebuilding in the DRC and other fragile nations with high rates of poverty, like Liberia, cannot be neglected by policymakers. The African Development Bank's (AfDB, 2014) Plan for Fragile States lays out strategies for reducing poverty and preserving stability in these nations.Finally, the problems in trying to increase growth from the present 5 to 7 percent a year are highlighted by variables affecting the global economy and Africa that hint to certain negative pressures on the region's trend growth (Table 4).

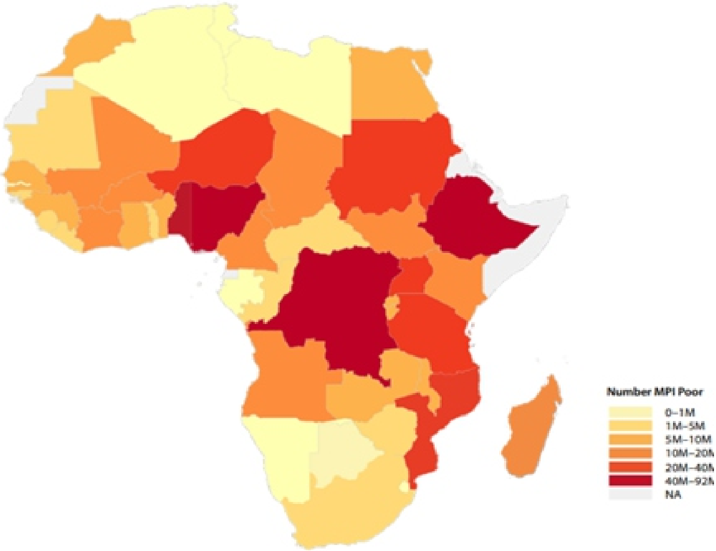
**How many are poor in Africa?**

975 million (68%) of Africa's 1.25 billion people—for whom data are available—are Extremely poor (AfDB, 2022). The extent of poverty varies widely across the

continent. Nine out of 10 Nigerians (90%) and South Sudanese (92%), respectively, live in poverty. This is true for 50% of people in Angola (51%), 50% of people in Mauritania (51%), and just 26% of people in Zimbabwe (26%), and 24% of people in the Republic of the Congo (24%). The Seychelles and Tunisia have the lowest rates of poverty (both at 1%).

Ethiopia, which makes up approximately one in ten (9%) of the world's population and has a population of close to 110 million, is the second most populous country in Africa. With more than 200 million people, Nigeria has the highest population on the continent and accounts for 16% of all people. Yet, 91 million of Africa's poorest people live in each of these nations, which together make up 15% of the continent's impoverished. These five nations together with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (where 9% of the population lives in poverty), Tanzania (5%) and Uganda (4%), are home to over half of all Africans who live in poverty.

Egypt and South Africa, two of the continent's most populated nations, have comparatively low rates of poverty. Although making up 12% of Africa's overall population, these two nations are only home to 1% of the continent's impoverished.




Source: Christian Oldiges using data published by Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa.[5]

**Table 4. MPI poverty by region of Africa**

| Region | Pop. share (%) | Share of poor people (%) | Number of poor people (millions) | MPI | Incidence (H) % | Intensity (A) % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| East Africa | 28 | 38 | 223 | 0.343 | 63.4 | 54.2 |
| West Africa | 30 | 33 | 198 | 0.293 | 52.7 | 55.6 |
| Central Africa | 12 | 16 | 93 | 0.335 | 62.5 | 53.6 |
| Southern Africa | 14 | 11 | 64 | 0.188 | 36.5 | 51.5 |
| North Africa | 16 | 3 | 15 | 0.033 | 7.6 | 43.3 |

Source: adopted from Jenning and Oldiges (2020) based on data published by Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

**Who is Poor?**

Young people experience poverty the most. Children (defined as everyone under the age of 18) are disproportionately prevalent among the impoverished across the whole continent. While they make up 31% of the population, children aged 0 to 9 account for 38% of the impoverished. Along with children between the ages of 10 and 17, they make up half (50%) of Africa's population, but 57% of its poverty. A clarion call for action, 240 million African children under the age of 18 and 225 million under the age of ten live in poverty.

As might be expected, the nations in Africa with the greatest rates of overall poverty also have the highest rates of child poverty. In Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, and Chad, nine out of 10 0 to 9-year-old children are destitute; in Niger and South Sudan, the number is even worse.

The younger generations not only have the greatest rates of poverty, but their degrees of poverty are also more severe. In Niger and South Sudan, impoverished children ages 0 to 9 often endure two thirds of all potential deprivations. This is the greatest score on the continent for any age group.

As a result, South Sudan (0.620) and Niger (0.627) have the highest MPIs for children ages 0 to 9 of any country. All efforts to reduce poverty are likely to help children in these nations since it is so widespread and pervasive there. Yet, given that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically target children, it is crucial that all initiatives for reducing poverty include them as a core component. Children are poorer than adults in every nation, with the exception of Seychelles, which has relatively low levels of poverty according to the global MPI.

Sudan has the highest MPI disparity between children and adults; Ethiopia and Burkina Faso are two of the ten nations with the worst MPI gaps (Figure). In the upcoming years, it will be necessary to bridge these gaps through child-centered policies.

**Table 5: MPI poverty by age group**

| Age group | Population share (%) | Share of poor people (%) | Number of poor people (millions) | MPI | Incidence (H) | Intensity (A) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0–9 | 31 | 38 | 225 | 0.323 | 57.7 | 56 |
| 10–17 | 18 | 19 | 115 | 0.27 | 49.8 | 54.2 |
| 18–59 | 44 | 37 | 220 | 0.209 | 39.8 | 52.6 |
| 60+ | 6 | 6 | 34 | 0.211 | 42.5 | 49.6 |

Source: adopted from Jenning and Oldigesbased on data published by Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Whether one lives in rural or urban areas in Africa also influences the likelihood of being poor. Six out of every ten (62%) Africans live in rural areas and yet these areas contain a disproportionate share of the poor.

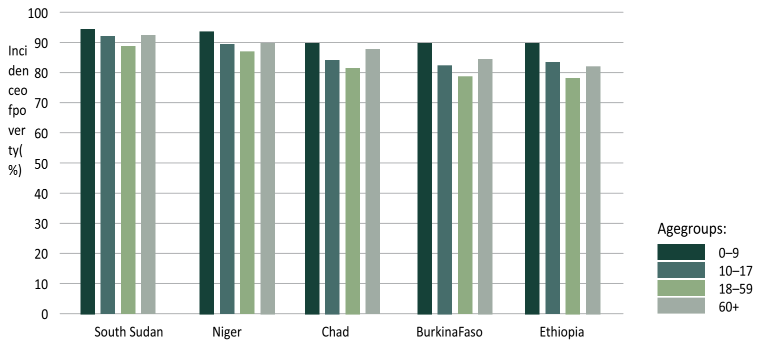



Figure 15. Highest incidence of MPI poverty by age group
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

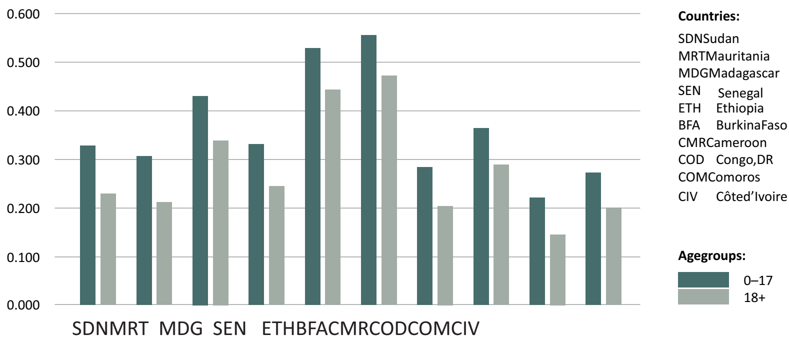



Figure 16. Largest difference between children and adults in MPI (ranked from left to right in terms of difference)
Source: Adopted from Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

More thaneight of every ten (83%) poor people in Africa live in rural areas, which translates into almost half a billion people. Still, 100 million poor people are to be found in urban areas on the continent.

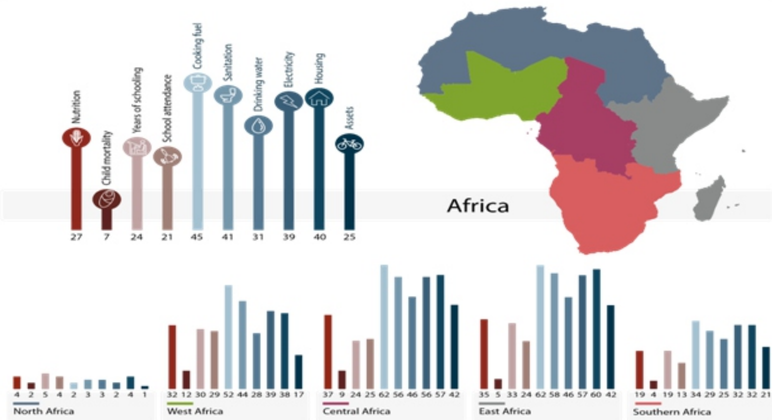
Compared to just 0.095 in urban areas, the MPI for rural regions is 0.355. This is indicative of the greater prevalence of poverty in rural regions. More over three fifths (64%) of rural inhabitants are poor, compared to barely a fifth (21%) of urban dwellers. In addition to having a greater prevalence of poverty, rural regions also have a higher average level of poverty among the poor (56% compared to 46% in urban areas) (or, the rural poor are, on average, deprived in the equivalent of two additional living standards indicators).

**How are they Poor?**

Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, By seeing poverty via the MPI lens, we are able to go beyond simply counting the number of impoverished individuals and locating their homes. The MPI is significant because it allows for a focus on how individuals become poor, offering proof for the notion that poverty varies from home to household, country to country, or region to region.

A more complex knowledge of the poverty condition may be gained by concentrating on the indicators. The MPI consists of eleven variables that reflect the many drawbacks that characterize poverty. The proportion of persons who are poor and disadvantaged in each of the variables that make up the MPI is reflected in the filtered headcount ratios, which provide a preliminary view of levels of deprivation.

Figure 17. Proportion of the population who are MPI poor and deprived in each indicator in Africa and by region




Source: adopted from Jenning and Oldiges (2020)

Across the continent, two-fifths of the population reside in low-income homes with no access to power, shared or unimproved sanitation, or in subpar housing.

According to the regional graphs, East Africa and Central Africa have the greatest levels of deprivation for the majority of the indices of living conditions. When it comes to child mortality and school attendance, West Africa's population exhibits the highest level of poverty and deprivation. Less than one in 20 persons are poor and in need across all 10 of the metrics, which reflects the lower levels of poverty in North Africa as a whole.

The 10 indicators of the global MPI are classified across three dimensions—the conceptual groupings of the indicators—of health, education, and living conditions, but the filtered headcount ratios do not take this into account. Look into the weighted contributions that each indicator provides to the MPI to understand the root causes of poverty in - and throughout - Africa (as the MPI value is always equal to the sum of the censored headcount ratio of each indicator multiplied by its weight).

The two education variables of years of schooling (16%) and school attendance (14%), which together account for the second and third greatest single contributors to the MPI in Africa, are closely behind nutrition (18%).
Cooking fuel (which accounts for 10% of all indicators in the living standards dimension) was the largest contribution, reflecting the degree of deprivation found in the filtered headcounts. The two factors that contributed the least to MPI across the continent were asset ownership and child mortality (5%). Both parallels

and variations may be seen in the actual contributions of each indicator to the MPIs of the five regions of Africa. With relatively minor changes in child mortality and years of schooling, the indices that contribute to the MPIs of the two poorest areas in Africa—East and Central Africa—are comparable. The contributions of the indicators are nearly equal to those in East Africa, despite a lower MPI in Southern Africa.

Contrarily, compared to the other areas, West Africa and North Africa's MPIs are more impacted by child mortality. The biggest causes in these two areas are also lack of school attendance and years of schooling. As a result, metrics that measure living conditions contribute less in West Africa and especially North Africa.

**Poverty in Nigeria**

A multifaceted phenomena, poverty. Lack of opportunity, lack of empowerment, and lack of security are three ways that the many elements are summed up in the Global Development Report 2000/2001 (see World Bank, 2001). The impoverished majority's window of opportunity stays closed, thus rendering them inactive in society. Their lack of control severely restricts their options, and their lack of protection leaves them open to dangers like sickness and violence. In a similar vein, the United Nations claims:

*"Poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to; not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation".*

Widespread and extreme poverty are facts of life in Nigeria. It is a reality that shows a lack of fundamental necessities including food, clothing, and education. Those who live in extreme poverty sometimes go without even the most basic requirements, leaving one to wonder how they manage to exist. Poverty in Nigeria has a number of consequences and shortcomings. Poor health is one of the major consequences of poverty, as seen by Nigeria's high infant mortality and short life expectancy. Due to a lack of access to basic healthcare resources and qualified medical professionals, the poor in Nigeria confront a variety of health problems. The majority of kids don't get the chance to get vaccinated, which causes some of the kids to have physical flaws. Their health has become low priority and as they have little or no choices, and they live with whatever they are provided with, whether healthy or not.

## Types of Poverty Prevailing in Nigeria

**Absolute Poverty:** Absolute poverty occurs when the consumption level of anindividual household is below a minimum acceptable level which has been fixed over time as global standard for meaningful human existence, known as the poverty line (i.e., less than two dollars a day).Anyone below this amount is regarded as poor. In this context using the current official exchange rate of N461.50 as at March 2023, it is about N923.00 per day or at the black rate of N736.67, it is about N1,473.34 per day. Often times those in government and other middle and high level bureaucrats never believe that such group of people exist. But the reality of it is that so many people live within or below this income bracket both in some urban and rural areas. According to Aliyu (2003), Absolute poverty is a condition where a person or group of persons, are unable to satisfy their most basic and elementary requirement for human survival in terms of food, cloth, shelter, health, transportation, education and recreation.

**Relative Poverty:** The position of the particular family in relation to the national average income or by members of a society of what is deemed a normal and acceptable living state, which varies from country to country, is being discussed. (Ajie & Akekere, 2010)

**Spatial/Location Poverty:** The prevalence and geographic distribution of this kind of poverty are dependent. Here, we have urban squalor or poverty, which is distinguished by the presence of ghettos, slums, and shanties in major cities and is marked by social and economic disadvantages, poor welfare services, low per capita income, cramped living conditions, participation in illegal trade, illiteracy, etc.

**Chronic/Structural Poverty:** This is a persistent or long-term form of poverty brought on by events like natural or man-made disasters, bomb blasts or wounds, militancy, flooding, building collapse, etc., or structural changes brought on by policy reforms that result in the loss of employment or the loss of real or valid assets. To compare the poor and non-poor in a given society, the explanation's core is useful. In actuality, there is a theme that connects all of these poverty indicators. They emphasize how poverty is a pervasive state of deprivation that reduces its victims to the level of their civilizations.According to Zupi (2007), poverty has been viewed as a dynamic process rather than a static phenomena that encompasses the many types of deprivation in well-being. It suggests a discernible disadvantage in comparison to the neighbourhood, the larger society, or the country to which a disadvantaged person, family, household, or group belongs.

The concept of poverty is also connected to inequality, or distribution based on economic distance. He contends that distribution cannot, by itself, determine one's capacity to live comfortably. A better distribution will often be more pro-poor but contrary to the notion that inequality and poverty are connected. Castel (1996) distinguishes between a static and dynamic understanding of poverty. The cycle-like notion of poverty highlights both its dynamic character and its connection to social exclusion and marginalization. According to Castel (1995), marginalization raises the overall degree of poverty in society. Regarding poverty, the fundamental right to the bare necessities for survival does not suffice to mobilize a societal reaction to its escalation. Social exclusion confirms a dual society and appears more as symptom of a social fracture rather than as a solution to it.

As a result, by addressing poverty from a variety of angles, current development plans under the Millennium Development Goals attempt to call into question the causal relationship between growth and inequality (Akekere, 2013). This inescapably calls for the targeting of numerous factors that cause poverty throughout the society rather than just severe poverty and individual trajectories. If fundamental requirements are not addressed and a bigger segment of the population is maintained in a dependent state, no true progress can take place.

According to Manning (2007), "pro-poor growth" is a rate and pattern of growth that improves the capacity of poor women and men to participate in, contribute to, and profit from growth. This is necessary for quick and sustainable poverty reduction.

In essence, growth should be broadly spread across industries and geographic areas and inclusive of the significant portion of the workforce that is made up of low-income men and women. In order for impoverished people to participate in and profit from growth, policies for sustaining growth such as those focused at strengthening institutional capacity and supporting democratic and effective governance should boost their incentives, opportunities, and job potential.

The UNDP (2003) summarizes and described the extent of poverty around the world as pervasive. Today, more than one billion people - one person in every five live in abject poverty. UNDP (2003) stated that globally, infrastructure gap is currently wide. According to them,

*"more than one billion people have no access to roads, 12 billion do not have safe drinking water 2.3 billion lack reliable energy, 2.4 billion have no sanitation facilities and 4 billion without modem communication services" (pg 48).*

The poor pay a high price in terms of time, money, and health when there is no reliable transportation, energy, or water (Manning, 2007). Growth has been slow in many emerging nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, and as a result, the poor have not reaped many rewards. These nations' governments are now unable to provide enough formal jobs to accommodate the growth in the non-agricultural labour force. Because of this, hundreds of millions of poor people rely on informal means of subsistence. According to estimates, 72% of Africa's non-agricultural workforce relies on informal means of subsistence, making this one of the most crucial policy concerns for the growth of the private sector.

In truth, these nations' infrastructure has suffered greatly from sharp reductions in government investment. The prevailing notion that greater public spending is necessary to advance human growth is at odds with this tendency. Without a question, social development was a primary priority of many nations' national poverty reduction policies for a long time. The ways in which the poor would profit from and participate in the process of progress, however, were not highlighted. Agriculture, which is a crucial industry for the poor to grow their economic activities, is really underutilized. Policies must address a wide range of issues, including infrastructure development, research and development, education, and land reforms, in order to fully achieve the agricultural sector's potential.

## Magnitude of Poverty in Nigeria

Crude oil is one of the abundant mineral resources in Nigeria. Strangely, despite having enough, the residents remain hungry and in poverty. According to the Human Development Index, the country is among the 141 poorest in the world, according to the UNDP. According to the research, Nigeria is one of the world's poorest nations, with 70% of the population classed as poor and 54.4% of people living in absolute poverty (UNDP-HD, 2006). The information that is now available demonstrates that poverty has been a major issue for Nigeria since its independence. Recently, Nigeria has declined into one of the poorest nations in the world rather than progressing.

The country's poverty rate was around 15% in 1960; by 1980, it had increased to 28.1%. The poverty rate was 46.3% in 1985 but fell to 42.7 percent in 1992 (Edoumiekumo, Akekere, Karimo, Krokeyi, Ekainsai, 2019).

Over 67.1 million Nigerians, or roughly 65 percent of the population, lived in poverty in 1995. According to the UN Development Reports from 1999 and 2000, 87% of Nigeria's population was living in poverty, and the country was ranked 154 out of 172 in terms of global marginal poverty. As seen, there are geographical differences in poverty in Nigeria. For instance, Sokoto State is adjudged to be the poorest and Niger State has the poorest poverty rate according to National Bureau of Statistics.

## Poverty Alleviation Strategies Adopted in Nigeria

By poverty alleviation, we mean all efforts aimed at reducing the harsh economic conditions plaguing men and women including children (Gbarabe, 2009). The government of Nigeria has never been in short supply of policies and programmes, aimed at reducing poverty. Some of these strategies include the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies (NEEDS). Others are State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategies, (SEEDS) and other specific reforms associated with poverty alleviation and sustainable development as interventionist programmes over the years, but have all failed to deliver the expected results needed to provide a substantial impact on poverty and livelihood insecurity (Akekere & Yousuo, 2014).

The major flaws in these policies and programmes developed over the years, as intervention for poverty reduction and livelihood security, hinge on corruption, lack of political will, and lack of continuity in policy implementation, a weak private sector to augment such policies and programmes, absence or lack of due process, and ethnic and political divides in the body polity of the nation's economic development.

The policies and programmes are also fraught with pitfalls, such as the absence of consistent enabling framework! regulations and infrastructure, finance and funding of small and medium enterprises, especially road transportation networks and power supply to support any development effort on other sectors within the country, weak institutions/market infrastructure to regulate business activities and enforce contracts including commercial transactions. We also have issues relating to transparency and good corporate governance, poor accountability, and perennial misappropriation of public funds added to an unpredictable political and social environment (Onakuse & Eaman, 2007). Ajie and Ewubare (2011) and Gbarabe (2009) stated that the macroeconomic policies and programmes put in place by the federal government of Nigeria over the years include:

1. Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), responsible for financing construction and rehabilitation of rural infrastructure-roads, water supply, earth dams and rural electrification.

2. National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA), initiated to encourage small holder farmer to bring more land under cultivation and improve agricultural outputs.

3. River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA), with the principal objective to raise agricultural productivity as well as the living standards of the rural dwellers.

4. Strategic Grain Reserve Programmes (SGRP),with the objective to achieve stable prices for grains by buying large quantities at harvest period, storing, and releasing them during off season periods, when prices are high because of scarcity, SGRP is also used for providing emergency assistance whenever it may needed in the country.

5. Agricultural Development Projects (ADP), the main purpose was to stimulate increased food production and enhance the income of the rural population.

6. National Directorate of Employment (NDE), responsible for vocational skills development and small-scale enterprise programmes designed to combat

unemployment.

7. Mass Mobilization for Social and Economic Reconstruction (MAMSER), a macro approach at mass mobilization whose aim was to encourage the participation of rural people in their development.

8. National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND), provides long term loans at concessionaire interest rates to small and medium scale industrial projects.

9. Community Action Programme for Poverty Alleviation (CAPPA), the objectives were:

   a. Improvement to the living condition of the poor, through targeted, cost effective, demand driven, and promptly, delivered programmes.

   b. Enhancement of the productivity of the poor through skills improvement and

   c. Improvement of the nutritional status of the poor through improved household food security and health practices.

Other programmes include:

10. Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), established to compliment (CAPPA),

11. Peoples Bank and Community Bank Programmes were designed to make banking services more accessible and extend credit to the poor.

12. Better Life Programme/Family Support Programmes (BLP/FSP) aimed at alleviating rural poverty, particularly among women.

13. Primary Healthcare Scheme was aimed at providing one health centre in every local government area.

14. Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), as advocated by W.H.O and U.N.I.C.E.F. Infants below the ages of one year are provided immunization coverage for BCG, DPT Oral polio vaccines and measles as well as immunization of pregnant women with two or more doses of Tetanus toxoid.

15. The Nomadic Education Programme (NEP), aims at making primary education available to nomadic children without endangering the sustainability of pastoralism.

16. National Urban Mass Transit Programme, is to ease the problem of transport congestion for workers in the urban areas.

17. Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), responsible for providing special aid to the oil producing areas.

18. The programmes under the social development policy disadvantage groups, these are rehabilitation programmes for the physically challenged, beggars, children, the aged and juvenile delinquents.

19. N-Power

20. Conditional Cash Transfer, NAPEP, Trader Moni, National Cash, etc.

These policies and progammes never achieved the desired objectives, either in Bayelsa State or in Nigeria as a whole (Akekere & Yousuo, 2014). The current democratic dispensation in the past twelve years has continuously promised citizens reforms and transformation in the power sector for regular, if not uninterrupted power supply, to boost the economy and to facilitate opportunities in both industry and society. The huge investment of capital in the power sector vanished into corrupt hands resulting in monumental failure. The government handling of the power supply has been phlegmatic while the 2004 expectation of the deregulation did not attract investors into the power industry. About 39.6 billion Naira meant for the MDGs programme is reported to have been misappropriated.

**Indices of Measuring Poverty**

According to World Bank (2002), poverty is the inability to attain **a** minimum standard of living. The report constructed some indices based a minimum level of consumption in order to showthe practical aspect of poverty. These include;

1. Lack of access to resources,
2. lack of education and skills,
3. Poor health,
4. Malnutrition,
5. Lack of political freedom and voice
6. lack of shelter,
7. Poor access to water and sanitation,
8. Vulnerability to shocks,
9. Violence and crime,
10. Political discrimination and marginalization.

Similarly, the United Nations Human Development (UNHD) has introduced the use of such other indices as:

a. Life expectancy,
b. Infant mortality rate,
c. Primary school enrolment ratio and

d. Number of persons per physician to measure poverty in a country (UNDP HDI: 2002).

According to Aluko (1995), poverty is the result of not being able to meet one's essential requirements. Because there is not enough food, clothes, or housing, there is an insufficient degree of consumption. He pointed out that the common understanding of poverty defines it as a state in which individuals fall below a certain minimal income threshold and are unable to care for or meet their fundamental needs for an acceptable standard of living. But, the explanation falls short of painting a clear image of individuals who are impoverished, how to improve their circumstances, and what to do. Shaffer (2001) noted four shifts to the idea of poverty during the previous ten years.The physiological model of deprivation has given way to a social model of deprivation, first. The social model aims to integrate social justice, economic and political rights, and anti-poverty programming challenges.

Second, the idea of vulnerability and its connection to poverty have received fresh attention. Finally, the issue of inequality and how it relates to poverty has come back into focus. Fourth, UN system organizations have laboriously argued that poverty should be understood as a violation of fundamental human rights (Akekere & Yousuo, 2013).

Similar to this, Duru (2008) believed that a successful campaign against poverty needed to engage both physical and non-physical obstacles. Policies for reducing poverty must take into account each of these factors in order to be effective and comprehensive. The amount of resources and effort required to try to address citizens' physiological needs alone is enormous, let alone mounting a broad-based war on poverty, which demonstrates that the socio-economic issues that policies target cannot be resolved by the government acting alone and are not the sole purview of one industry.

**Key Factors Contributing to Poverty in Nigeria**

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, some of the key factors that contribute to poverty in Nigeria:

1. Unemployment, especially among young graduates;
2. Corruption, especially among political office holders;
3. Non-diversification of the economy;
4. Income inequality;
5. Laziness, especially among those who come

from wealthy households;

6. A poor education system. Some of these could also be considered to be causes of poverty;
7. Poor reward system;
8. Poor and uncoordinated fiscal and monetary policies; and
9. Inappropriate and unsustainable government policies.

While the distinction between causes and effects of poverty is fuzzy, our discussion below will show that these factors seem more likely to be causes than effects of poverty in Nigeria.

**Unemployment**

In Nigeria, unemployment is a major cause of poverty. Poverty and unemployment are strongly correlated. People's sources of income dwindle over time while they are unemployed. The level of life declines as living expenses rise. In Nigeria, a large number of individuals lack access to employment. According to World Bank estimates from 2007, Nigeria's official unemployment rate was 4.9 percent, placing it 61st among all nations (CIA Factbook).Teshome (2008) said that the World Bank's recently published African Development Indicators report demonstrated that "education, previously viewed as the surest, unquestionable route to work, no longer appears so assured." In the case of Nigeria, this is essentially true. The fact that you are a Nigerian with a degree does not ensure that you will find work. Moreover, the World Bank research claims that unemployment rates in Africa are greater for those with higher educations of any type and for people who come from rich families since these people are totally dependent on the wealth of their family and do not prioritize finding a job.

In Nigeria, a large number of graduates are jobless and prowl the streets. While capable, the government is hesitant to provide them work. In Nigeria, employment is frequently determined by your connections to influential people rather than your qualifications. Due to the fact that it seems like no one is interested in learning what highly skilled individuals are capable of, many of them live in poverty. These folks are not earning the money they would have if they had a job. There aren't enough high-quality employment available in the economy, and a lot of government funds are misused.
Poverty brought on by unemployment often raises crime and violence levels in a nation. Most young people without jobs turn to criminal activity such armed

robbery, abduction for ransom, computer fraud, and other types of deception. They often earn just enough money from these activities on the reserve to cover their basic needs.

## Corruption

Corruption is defined by Transparency International as "the abuse of entrusted power for private benefit". In Nigeria, this is now a prevalent practice that has severely destabilized the political system. The leaders, who only have the interests of their family and friends and ignore the needs of the people, misappropriate government monies on a regular basis. The corruption has permeated the government and economy so thoroughly that it appears to have blinded everyone. In Nigeria, corruption has all but assimilated into daily life (Akekere, Krokeyi & Karimo, 2019).

The majority of Nigeria's government revenue comes from the sale of natural resources. The political office holders and their families get this revenue instead of being distributed for economic growth, allowing the remainder of the population to live in abject poverty. The affairs and welfare of the people who elected political leaders are essentially ignored. They mismanage money and steal it. Bad governance in Nigeria involves a number of challenges, including the application of incorrect policies, adaptation to incorrect policies, and execution of incorrect policies. In any event, it is obvious that corruption in Nigeria has worsened inequality and poverty while also fuelling high crime rates.

**Non-Diversification of the Economy – Oil Over-Dependency**

Nigeria's lack of economic diversification may be considered as a key element in the country's poverty, which has been linked to a number of issues. Until 1970, Nigeria's economy was based primarily on agriculture. Since 1984, the oil sector's share of export earnings, which was just 1% in 1958, has risen to 97% and has never fallen below 90%. Around 97.5 percent of its export income, 81 percent of government revenues, and roughly 17 percent of GDP were derived from the oil and gas industry in 2008 (Ajie & Akekere, 2005).

The ruling class in Nigeria has largely disregarded alternative revenue streams, thus the country now heavily depends on oil exports. This reliance on natural resources, which reduces a nation's competitiveness, is sometimes referred to as the "Dutch sickness." The bulk of the population has fallen into poverty as their goods have lost relevance, with the exception of the few who work in the oil industry. Prior to the discovery of oil, their primary source of revenue was the agricultural sector, which is now viewed as being almost worthless.

Nigeria's wealth of natural resources has caused what is known as a resource course, which is evident in the “Niger Delta Crisis”, in addition to the Dutch sickness (reflecting the region of the country where most of the oil is coming from). People in this region are fighting for resource control because they believe the government has broken its commitment to provide them a significant portion of the profits from oil.The Nigerian government has a derivation policy in place to manage the country's natural resource wealth, but this policy is not operating as intended because the oil-producing states are still very poor, even though it is intended that they receive a significant portion of the country's revenue given their significant contribution to the nation's wealth.

Collier (2007) asserts that the abundance of natural resources can occasionally lead to a conflict trap and that the surplus from resource exports slows economic growth. He then discusses the situation of Nigeria in the 1970s, when rising oil income made other exports from the nation, such agriculture, nonprofitable. He illustrates how the Dutch illness might hinder economic progress by blocking exports from other potential economic areas.

Nigeria experienced a significant oil boom in the first half of the 1980s, which also resulted in excessive government borrowing and spending on needless projects that highlighted the corruption in the nation. Nigeria's oil income significantly decreased when the price of oil fell globally in 1986, and its external debt significantly grew. One of the government measures promoted by the international financial institutions to lessen Nigeria's reliance on oil was the implementation of the structural adjustment program (SAP). Although higher non-oil sector output, Nigeria's poverty and social indices worsened as much of the income was utilized to pay down its foreign debt.Nigerians attribute the advent of the reforms and programs in the late 1980s as the cause of the country's rising poverty rate despite a rise in output. So, Nigerians grew to believe that there was a plot by international financial organizations to destroy their nation.

**Inequality**

Whether one looks at income, consumption, or other welfare indicators or qualities, inequality implies a concentration of a distribution (see Oyekale, Oyekale and Adeoti, 2007). With the economic boom Nigeria saw between 1965 and 1975, there was an increase in income disparity, and this income inequality has widened the scope of poverty in the nation (Oluwatayo, 2008). The economic gap between rural and urban dwellers in Nigeria is astonishingly wide since individuals who reside in the countryside rely only on agriculture, which is no longer a booming industry in that country as oil has taken over the economy.Because they don't spend their money in acquiring skills the way individuals in metropolitan regions do, they are more susceptible to poverty and experience social and economic issues including violence, corruption, and other issues (Oluwatayo, 2008).

The income differences between the richest 10–20% of Nigerians and the poorest 10–20% are quite large. The income of Nigeria's poorest 10% was only 1.9 percent of the country's total income in 2003, while it was 33.2 percent for the richest 10%. Compared to 1996 (37.1%), the income share of the top 10 percent has marginally fallen, but the percentage in 2003 is still larger than it was in 1993. (32.5 percent). A more equitable distribution of money in Nigeria would significantly lower the percentage of poverty, but because wealthy individuals are frequently either linked to or occupy political authority, the country's wealth remains concentrated among the wealthy (Ajie & Akekere 2004).

**Laziness**

Laziness is a widespread illness that affects many Nigerians today, especially those who come from affluent families. Everyone wants to feel at ease, but they aren't willing to put any effort into getting there. This frequently results in greed, as individuals will take whatever measure necessary to protect their personal fortune. Everyone in most families depends on the breadwinner, who puts in a lot of labour to support the family, and when he passes away, the family is likely to fall into financial ruin due to bad money management. Because everyone in most Nigerian households relied on the breadwinner to take care of everything, the death of the breadwinner essentially spells the end of the family fortunes.

## Poor Education System

Poverty reduction may be significantly aided by education. The World Bank claims that the key to development is education. It supports national innovation, productivity, and economic growth as well as democratic and socially cohesive ideals. The majority of the impoverished in Nigeria are those without a formal education. In comparison to other nations, Nigeria's educational system might be viewed as a failure. Everyone has the right to an education, according to the International Declaration of Human Rights. Many Nigerians, many of whom might today be regarded as invisible to society, have had their right to education denied. Because women are viewed as the lesser sex, they are more likely to be denied an education than men. Hence educating them is seen as unnecessary as they are expected to marry as early as possible.

## Effects of Poverty in Nigeria

Whatever its root causes, poverty has terrible consequences for those who live in it. The consequences of poverty (and near poverty) on the lives of the poor have been extensively studied and/or examined by academics, government agencies, and non-profit groups. Most of these researches concentrate on child poverty and make it abundantly evident that it has long-lasting effects. In general, impoverished children are more likely to remain poor as adults, to drop out of high school, to become parents while still in their teen years, and to experience difficulties finding jobs.Just 1% of children who are never impoverished become poor as young adults, while 32% of poor children also become poor as young adults, according to Ratcliffe and McKernan (2010).

Poor children are more likely to remain poor as adults and are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviour while they are younger. When they are adolescents and young adults, they are also more likely to experience unemployment, criminal activity, and other issues.

Growing data suggests that one reason poverty has these impacts is due to particular brain changes in impoverished children that affect their cognitive ability, which in turn affects their behaviour and learning capacity. Emerging research in developmental psychology and neuroscience indicates that poverty early in a child's life may be particularly damaging since young children's developing brains make them sensitive (and vulnerable) to environmental factors, as noted by Duncan and Magnuson (2011, p. 23).

In summary, poverty can affect how young children's brains grow. Stress is a crucial factor in this phenomenon. Many stressful occurrences affect children growing up in poverty, including drug use and crime in the community, parental conflict, divorce, and other family issues, such as parental abuse and neglect, as well as parental financial difficulties and unemployment. Their high levels of stress have negative effects on their bodies as a result. As two poverty scholars note, “It's not just that poverty-induced stress is mentally taxing. If it's experienced early enough in childhood, it can in fact get 'under the skin' and change the way in which the body copes with the environment and the way in which the brain develops. These deep, enduring, and sometimes irreversible physiological changes are the very human price of running a high-poverty society” (Grusky&Wimer, 2011, p. 2).

Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, at this point it is pertinent that we elucidate on some of the specific effects of poverty in our land.

**Family Problems**

The poor are at greater risk for family problems, including divorce and domestic violence. A major reason for many of the problems families experience is stress. Even in families that are not poor, running a household can cause stress, children can cause stress, and paying the bills can cause stress. Families that are poor have more stress because of their poverty, and the ordinary stresses of family life become even more intense in poor families. The various kinds of family problems thus happen more commonly in poor families than in wealthier families. Compounding this situation, when these problems occur, poor families have fewer resources than wealthier families to deal with these problems.

**Health, Illness and Medical Care**

As elucidated by Ajie and Akekere (2004), the poor along with receiving subpar medical care are also more prone to experience a variety of health issues, such as early adult death, mental illness, and newborn mortality. Children from low-income families are more likely to experience poor nutrition, which contributes to their increased risk of developing health, behavioural, and cognitive issues. Their inability to succeed academically and find stable work as adults as a result of these issues contributes to the perpetuation of poverty across generations.

## Education

'Rundown' schools with inadequate facilities are the norm for poor students, where they get subpar education. They are far less likely than children from affluent families to complete high school or enrol in college. Their lack of education further consigns them and their offspring to poverty, so continuing the cycle of poverty for future generations. Many have argued over whether or not impoverished children's subpar academic performance is more a result of the inadequate nature of their schools and education than it is of their own poverty. Regardless of the precise reason why impoverished children are more likely to struggle in school and achieve low levels of education, these educational issues are another significant effect of poverty.

## Housing and Homelessness

Not surprisingly, the poor are more likely to be homeless, live in substandard housing, and be unable to afford their own houses than non-poor people. Many low-income families spend more than half of their income on rent, and they frequently reside in areas with few employment possibilities, high-quality schools, and other amenities that individuals from wealthier backgrounds take for granted. The poor's lack of suitable housing continues to be a significant national issue. Homelessness in its purest form is terrible.

## Crime and Victimization

The majority of crimes in the nation (including robberies, break-ins, kidnappings, insurrections, etc.) are committed by or against individuals who are poor or near poverty, and they also make up the majority of the victims of these crimes. The intense stress and frustration of living in poverty, as well as the fact that many poor individuals reside in high-crime areas, may be contributing factors to the relationship between poverty and crime. Children are more likely to grow up influenced by older classmates who are already in gangs or committing other crimes in such communities, and victims of crime of any age are more likely to become them.In addition, as poor and near-poor individuals are more inclined to commit crimes, they also make up the majority of those who are detained, found guilty, and sentenced to jail for crimes. The majority of the more than 2 million inmates now housed in prisons and jails around the country are from low-income or near-low-income households. Hence, additional significant effects of poverty include criminal behaviour and victimization by criminals.

## The Pressure of Poverty on the those outside the Poverty Trap

Mr. Vice chancellor Sir, in this lecture, the few who are outside the poverty trap (those few individuals who have escaped poverty) are the **'meat on the altar'**, who bears the 'heat' of poverty. In our society, they have to put up with the pressures from the many of the poor and vulnerable in our society. Sir, as an economist, you would agree with me that large number of the poor in the society have contributed to the very high dependency ratio in Nigeria. These few are subjected to a lot of financial and material demands by those who are within the poverty trap.

Mr. Vice Chancellor sir, it may interest you to know that the dependency rate in Africa as published by the African Development Bank in the year 2022 was 79%. This implies that there are about 79 persons out of every 100 persons who depends on others for sustenance. Interrogating this further, we could also come to the conclusion that in every 100 persons in Africa, 79 persons depends on the other 21 persons who are self-reliant. Thus, these 21 persons bear the heat of poverty from the 79 'poor' in Africa. And because of the unbalanced nature of this ratio, a number of the so-called self-reliant 21 may be pulled down below the poverty line.

Coming home to Nigeria, the rate of dependency was approximately 86% in 2022, which seemed to be highest in world, little wonder Nigeria was termed the poverty capital of the world. This also implies that there are about 86 persons out of every 100 persons who depends on other persons for sustenance. From this, we can also deduce that in every 100 persons in Nigeria, about 86 persons depends on the other 14 persons who are self-reliant. Thus, these 14 persons bear the heat of poverty from the 86 'poor' in Nigeria. These 14 so-called self-reliant people could also be dragged down below the poverty line/trap due to the undue pressure from the many persons who depends on them if things are not managed properly.

**Towards Reducing Poverty in Nigeria**

Mr. Vice Chancellor Sir, in my view, for any nation or society to reduce poverty, deliberate steps must be taken to tackle and counter those factors that contributes to poverty. Thus, the following are steps if well implemented would not only reduce the pressure of poverty on the few who are outside the poverty trap not only in Nigeria but in Africa.

1. Unemployment is a key driver of poverty in any society, therefore, it's imperativethat a concerted effort should be adopted in fighting this menace before they becomeinsurmountable. It is recommended that a structural shift in the macroeconomic policiestowards employment generation be taken. This should be accompanied with the comprehensive overhaulof educational curriculum to ensure that vocational training and entrepreneurial skills areincorporated into the programmes of educational institutions to make graduates capable ofrunning cottage industries, for instance. This will promote employment generation for teemingyouths and therefore, contribute to overall development in Nigeria. In this regard, I must commend you Mr. Vice-Chancellor for driving the entrepreneurship centre of this great university as a place where our students can learn and develop different vocational skills before leaving the institution. By this act, Niger Delta University is already contributing it quota to reduce the level of poverty in the country.

2. It is worthy of note that Education reduce poverty, we therefore recommendan increase in budgetary allocation to education as well as a review of the school curricula witha view to making the educational system more responsive to growth and poverty reduction inNigeria.

Other strategies that could be implemented to reduce poverty are;

a. Computer literacy and internet friendliness
b. Sustained self relianceprogrammes
c. Sincere government policy intervention and implementation
d. Change in attitude and cultural realignment (backward bending, supply curve), such as burials, marriages and child naming.
e. Periphery-centre model of development
f. Combating insecurity

Agricultural transformation and swift response to climate changes.

**Conclusion**

Vice Chancellor sir, poverty is a nightmare and no effort should be spared by all and sundry to work hands in gloves to reduce poverty to the barest minimum. Extreme poverty is an enigma to temporal and spiritual development, and a catalyst to slavery. When one moves out of the poverty line, he becomes self-reliant. The aim of becoming self-reliant, which is more than having a good job, food storage, or money in the bank, but being able to provide for the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family. Hand Book of Instruction (HBI) 2: Administering the Church (2010).

The formula for success to traject one out of poverty is as follows:

Act in Faith + Work hard + Work smart = Success

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For those that the names and institutions are not mentioned here, I pray that God who knows the heart of all men/women bless your righteous heart desires.

**NDU 54TH INAUGURAL LECTURER**

# JONAH AKEKERE

*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)*
B.Sc Econs (UPH), M.Sc Econs (UPH), Ph.D Econs (UPH)
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## A BRIEF PROFILE OF PROFESSOR JONAH AKEKERE

Professor Jonah Akekere was born on 6th June 1965 in Opume Town, Ogbia Local Government of Bayelsa State, Nigeria. He had his primary school education at State School, Opume between 1971 and 1977, where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate (FLSC). He then proceeded to Government Secondary School Anyama where he obtained his West African School Certificate (WASC) in the year 1982. To further his education, Professor Jonah Akekere gained admission into Rivers State College of Health Technology in 1985 and graduated with a Diploma in Public Health SUPT in 1988. In 1993, he was admitted into the prestigious University of Port Harcourt and later graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics. He also has a Master of Science (M.Sc) degree in Economics and a Doctor of Science Degree (PhD) in development Economics from the same University in 2005 and 2013 respectively.

Professor Jonah Akekere has worked in the health sector as an Environmental Health officer and as coordinator of the Expanded programme on Immunisation (EPI)both in Rivers and Bayelsa States. In 2006, he was employed as an Assistant lecturer(AL)in the department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State. Thus, Professor Akekere is well experienced in teaching, research and administration, including health management. He has also been a national trainer, Universal Drug Prevention Curriculum (UPC).

While in Niger Delta University, Prof. has held several positions. Some of which are; Department Examination Officer, 2010; Co-ordinator, Community Service Project, 2011; Economics Department Part-Time Co-ordinator; Faculty Representative to Senate (2013-2015); Acting Head of Department of Economics (2014-2019); Sub-Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences (2019); Acting Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences (2019-2021) and later became the substantive Dean of the Faculty between 2021 and March 2023. He is currently the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Niger Delta University (March 2023 to date).

Professor Jonah Akekere has risen through the ranks in his lecturing career as an Assistant lecturer (2006-2009); Lecturer 2 (2009-2011); Lecturer 1 (2011-2013); Senior Lecturer (2013-2016); Associate Professor of

Economics (2016-2019) and became a full Professor in October, 2020.

He has taught and supervised several students both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in the Department of Economics. Some of the courses he has taught are; Principles of Economics 1; Principles of Economics 2; Population and Demographic Economics; Petroleum and Energy Economics; Introduction to Microeconomics; Introduction to Macroeconomics, Public Sector Economics; Intermediate Macroeconomics; Advanced Macroeconomics; International Economics; Public Finance; Project Evaluation, Development Policies and Problems; and Environmental Health Economics. Prof. has also taught several PGD, M.Sc and PhD courses.

Professor Jonah Akekere is a member of several professional bodies and associations. Some of which are; Nigerian Economic Society; the Institute of Chartered Economists of Nigeria; Institute of Policy Management Development; Expert Technical Panel for Asian-African's Policy Review; Professional Association of Environmental Health of Nigeria; and Global Initiative on Substance Abuse (GISA).

Concerning his academic publications, Prof. has well over thirty-seven (37) journal articles, published in reputable journals locally and internationally. He also has over nine (9) textbooks to his credit, with three (3) presentations contributions in edited books.

Prof. Jonah Akekere is a dedicated Christian and he is the Stake President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints, Bayelsa Stake. He is also married with children. His hobbies are; reading, writing and travelling.

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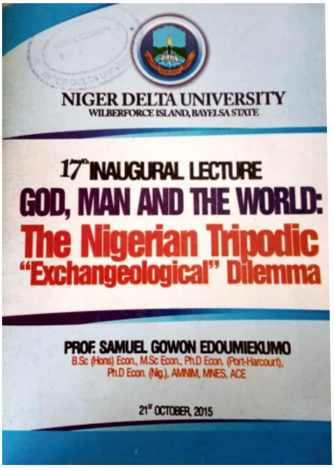


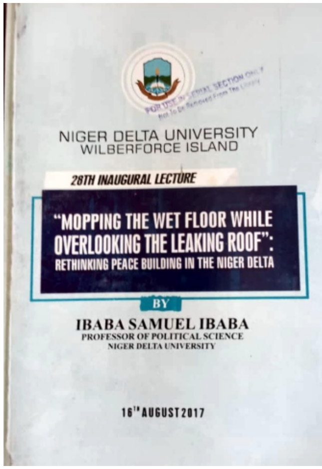


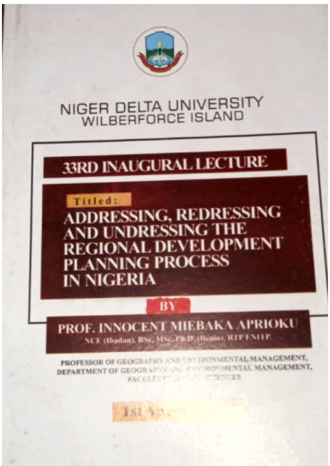


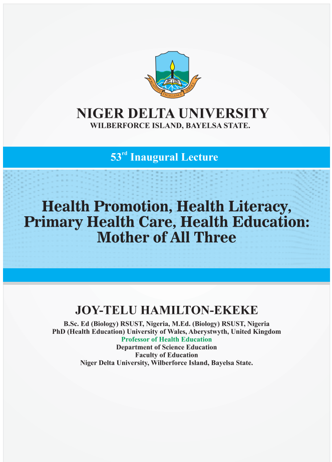


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