

WELFARE OF PEOPLE LIVING IN NIGERIA

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Article describes the main obstacles to improved well-being of the Nigerian people. Factors analyzed in three areas of socio-economic development: security, health, education and employment.

Welfare concerns in Nigeria were primarily related to its general lack of development and the effects on the society of the economic stringency of the 1980s. Given the steady population growth and the decline in urban services and incomes since 1980, it was difficult not to conclude that for the mass of the people at the lower income level, malnutrition, poor health, and overcrowded housing were perpetual problems.

Nigeria had no social security system. Less than 1 percent of the population older than sixty years received pensions. Because of the younger age of urban migrants, there were fewer older people per family unit in urban areas.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate what constitute welfare in Nigeria and the problem facing the development of welfare in Nigeria.

Official statistics were questionable, however, because at least one survey indicated a number of elderly living alone in northern cities or homeless persons living on the streets and begging. There was some evidence that the traditional practice of caring for parents was beginning to erode under harsh conditions of scarcity in urban areas. In rural Nigeria, it was still the rule that older people were cared for by their children, grandchildren, spouses, siblings, or even ex-spouses. The ubiquity of this tradition left open, however, the possibility of real hardship for urban elderly whose families had moved away or abandoned them.

The table below shows measure value and names of older people in Nigeria conducted by Agewatch (table 1).

Table 1 – Measure value and names of older people in Nigeria [1]

Measure Names	Measure Values
Enabling environment	53.6
Employment and education	30.5
Health status	26.4
Overall	24.0
Income security	14.2

Traditionally, family problems with spouses or children were handled by extended kinship groups and local authorities. For the most part, this practice continued in the rural areas. In urban settings, social services were either absent or rare for family conflict, for

abandoned or runaway children, for foster children, or for children under the care of religious instructors.

As with many other Third World nations, Nigeria had many social welfare problems that needed attention. The existence of a relatively free press combined with a history of self-criticism - in journalism, the arts, the social sciences, and by religious and political leaders were promising indications of the awareness and public debate required for change and adaptive response to its social problems.

The Wikipedia defines welfare as “the provision of a minimal level of well-being and social support for all citizens, sometimes referred to as public aid.” From what I believe public aid can be inform of level of security, health, employments and educations.

Nigeria’s Security Challenges in recent times, Nigeria has been facing several security challenges. These include rise in armed robbery, kidnapping, insurgency by the Niger Delta militants, ethnic conflicts, and recently, activities of the B. Haram sect. Hundreds of Nigerians and some foreigners resident in the country have been killed as a result of one violent crime or the other, while property worth millions of naira has also been lost to insecurity in the country. Fundamentally, no one and place is considered totally safe within the country. While those in the southern parts of the country grapple with kidnapping and other violent crimes, Nigerians in the North live in utter terror not knowing where and when the next set of bombs will explode. The countries security challenge took a terrorism dimension with the 1 October 2010 bombing near the Eagle Square in Abuja, venue of the countries 50th independence celebration. Since then, series of bomb attacks have occurred in several parts of the country including Suleja in Niger state, Jos, Kaduna, Maiduguri, Bauchi and Kano.

Also, the general state of insecurity in the country is sending a wrong signal to the international community about traveling to Nigeria. Many international agencies and countries have intensified their warning to their citizens of the risks involved in traveling and doing business in some parts of the country. For instance, in a release dated 12 January 2012, the U.S. Department of State warned its citizens of the avoidable risk involved in traveling to some parts of Nigeria.

The Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to Nigeria, and continues to recommend U.S. citizens avoid all but essential travel to the Niger Delta states of A. Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers; the Southeastern states of Abia, Edo, Imo; the city of Jos in Plateau State, Bauchi and Borno States in the northeast; and the Gulf of Guinea because of the risks of kidnapping, robbery, and other armed attacks in these areas. Violent crime committed by individuals and gangs, as well as by persons wearing police and military uniforms, remains a problem throughout the country [2].

Also, according to the release, in 2011, there were five reported kidnappings of U.S. citizens in Nigeria. The most recent occurred in November when two U.S. citizens, along with a Mexican national, were taken hostage in international waters off the Nigerian coast and held captive for over two weeks in the Niger Delta. Others have occurred in Lagos and Imo States. Also, a British and an Italian national were kidnapped in Kebbi state in May 2011. Since January 2009, over 140 foreign nationals have been kidnapped in Nigeria, including seven U.S. citizens since November 2010. Six foreign nationals were killed during these abductions, while two U.S. citizens were also killed in separate kidnapping attempts in Port Harcourt in April 2010. Local authorities and expatriate businesses operating in Nigeria assert that the number of kidnapping incidents throughout Nigeria remains underreported. Though the security services are under intense pressure to address the security challenges, the problems can be overwhelming due to the high level of unemployment.

Nigeria was also listed in High Risk Listing [3]. An entire country may be classed as high risk when any one or a combination of the following conditions exist or there is strong potential for them to develop rapidly anywhere in the country. Terrorist/guerrilla groups pose a serious threat to the country's political and/or economic stability or a significant region of the country is experiencing a serious terrorist or guerrilla problems that the government cannot control. A pervasive problem exists regarding street violence due to political unrest, economic conditions, or general lawlessness and unrest. The country is involved in violent regional disputes with neighboring states. There is a serious potential for a military coup. The governmental institutions and/or general populous demonstrate evidence of prejudicial or harsh treatment against foreign visitors or business interests.

As for health care provision in Nigeria is a concurrent responsibility of the three tiers of government in the country. Private providers of health care have a visible role to play in health care delivery.

The federal government's role is mostly limited to coordinating the affairs of the university teaching hospitals, Federal Medical Centers (tertiary health care) while the state government manages the various general hospitals (secondary health care) and the local government focus on dispensaries (primary health care).

The total expenditure on health care as % of GDP is 4.6, while the percentage of federal government expenditure on health care is about 1.5%, a long run indicator of the ability of the country to provide food sustenance and avoid malnutrition is the rate of growth of per capita food production from 1970–1990, the rate for Nigeria was 0.25%, though small, the positive rate of per capita may be due to Nigeria's importation of food products [4].

The majority of mental health services is provided by 8 regional psychiatric centers and psychiatric departments and medical schools of 12 major universities. A few general hospitals also provide mental health services. The formal centers often face competition from native herbalists and faith healing centers. The ratio of psychologists and social workers is 0.02 to 100,000.

In 1989 legislation made effective a list of essential drugs. The regulation was also meant to limit the manufacture and import of fake or sub-standard drugs and to curtail false advertising. However, the section on essential drugs was later amended.

Drug quality is primarily controlled by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). Several major regulatory failures have produced international scandals [5]:

- in 1993 adulterated syrup entered into the health care system in Oyo and Benue State, the end result of was the death of 100 children. A year after the disaster, batches containing poisonous ethylene glycol, the major cause of the deaths, could still be purchased;
- in 1996 about 11 children died of contamination from an experimental trial of the drug;
- in 2008-2009 at least 84 children died from a brand of contaminated teething medication.

A new bone marrow donor program, the second in Africa, opened in 2012. In cooperation with the University of Nigeria, it collects DNA swabs from people who might want to help a person with leukemia, lymphoma, or sickle cell disease to find a compatible donor for a life-saving bone marrow transplant. It hopes to expand to include cord blood donations in the future. In 2011 Nigeria was ranked 187 out of 190 countries in World Health Organization

Education in Nigeria is overseen by the Ministry of Education. And the local authorities take responsibility for implementing policy for state-controlled public education and state schools at a regional level. The education system is divided into Kindergarten, primary education, secondary education and tertiary education.

Education in Nigeria is being taken care of by public and private sector. The public schools are owned by the government (federal and state) while the private schools by individual corporate etc

Majority of the universities in Nigeria are owned by the government but have a high risk of strike and not fully equipped like the private universities. Most companies in Nigeria always demand qualification of government universities than that of private universities not taking in consideration how expensive private institutes in Nigeria are

Employment in Nigeria. A national newspaper (PUNCH) in October 2013 posted an article on rate of unemployment in Nigeria. The National Population Commission (NPC) has said that the rate of unemployment in Nigeria rose from 21.1 per cent in 2010 to 23.9 per cent in 2011 [6]. In conclusion, the NPC, in the latest report on its website, said the nation's economic growth had not translated into job creation. The NPC said the lack of sufficient jobs resulted in additional 2.1 million unemployed persons in 2011, up from 1.5 million unemployed people produced in 2010. The Federal Ministry of Labor and Productivity, in a bid to maintain industrial peace and harmony, resolved 279 of the 328 labor complaints it received in 2011, indicating an 85 per cent rate of resolution of complaints.

In conclusion the government need to increase their effort in making sure that people in Nigeria live without fear and also take care of older population and the invalid.

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