NIGERIA’S LONG TERM/STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A strategic or long term plan refers to the action plan of the government over a long period of time, usually more than 7 years and running up to 30 years or even longer.

Strategic plans exist in order for governments to carry out development agendas over the long run. Nigeria’s long-term development planning was initially established in 1996, with the setting up of the Vision 2010 committee. Comprising 248 members, including 25 foreign stakeholders resident in Nigeria the vision 2010 committee’s term of reference, among other things, was to develop a blue print to transform the nation along a path to becoming a developed nation by the year 2010.

 The major element of the Vision 2010 are as follows:

**VALUE SYSTEM**

It was envisaged that by 2010, the Nigerian people will rediscover themselves and revert to being God-conscious and God-fearing, caring, sincere, honest and accountable in their dealings with public trust and proud of their country and heritage.

**POLITICAL SITUATION**

A political transition system was under way aimed at ushering in a democratic rule. It was envisaged that by year 2010, Nigeria would have a stable democratic rule, within a full fleshed federal system, charaterised by comprehensive freedom for citizens and operating under the rule of law, openness, accountability as well as an orderly and predictable changes of government.

**THE ECONOMY**

Following a prolonged economic recession from the late 1970 by 1996 the Nigeria economy was set to reverse perennial economic decline. However, the structure of the economy remained unchanged, with its dependence on crude oil exports as the primary source of government revenue and foreign exchange earnings. It was envisaged with the plan that Nigeria’s annual economic growth would be projected at 10% per annum, as well as inflation rate pegged at about 5%. It was also projected that manufacturing sector should account for 24% of the nations annual Gross domestic product GDP.

**EDUCATION**

In 1996, only about 50% of children aged between 5 and 24 were enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions, with the highest enrollment ratio recorded for primary school children at 88%. It was envisaged that by 2010, primary school enrollment would be 100% and at least 26% of federal government annual budget would be devoted to education.

**POPULATION**

Nigerai’s annual population growth in the mid 1990’s was placed at 2.8%, outstripping annual GDP by about 1.6%. Also, about 45% of the population comprised of youths below 15 years of age. This is a manifestation of a “youth bulge” that has accompanied the nation’s demographic profile. Therefore under the vision plan, it was determined that the nation’s population growth should be limited to 2% per annum.

**HEALTH**

By 1996, less than 5% of the Federal government budget was allocated to the health services, resulting in poor health infrastructure across the nation. Therefore, life expectancy had declined to 52 years by 1993, compared to 62 years for other developing countries. Consequently, the vision plan proposed to restore health services at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels in line with international standards.

**AGRICULTURE**

By the 1990’s, agriculture was accountable for the employment of 65% of the working population, as well as 70% of non-oil exports and contributing about 30% to the annual GDP. Despite the litary of government subsidy programmes- River Basin Development Authorities, Agriculture Development Projects, Green Revolution, Operation Feed the Nation, DFFRI etc. The sector continued to be dominated by small holder peasant farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture, with little novel technologies, as well as lack of storage and preservation facilities. Under the vision plan, government intervention would become more selective, better focused and closely monitored, while creating an enabling environment to attract private capital to drive medium and large scale farming.

**MANUFACTURING**

The contribution of manufacturing to the nation’s annual GDP has been declining since the early 1980’s, pegged at 6% in 1996. The Section utilization of raw material adjust at the time (1996). However, under the vision document , manufacturing sector’s contribution to GDP was projected at 24%, with generous incentives aimed at the private sector to increase its investment in the manufacturing sector.

**PETROLEUM SECTOR**

By 1996, the nations oil production was put at 2.2 million barrels of oil per day, including condensates. The sector accounted for about 80% of government’s annual revenue and about 95% of foreign exchange earnings. However, the nation’s natural gas resources were relatively unexplored with about 90% of associated gas flared, creating a lot of economic and environmental challenges. Under the vision document, Nigeria’s proven oil reserves was projected at 40 billion barrels of crude oil, with 4 million daily production.The downstream sector was also set for deregulation, creating incentives for private sector investment and broader participation.

**SOLID MINERIALS**

Despite the nations general endowment with solid materials, the contributions of the sector to GDP remained very low by 1996. Rather, the nations continued to import various minerals, needed as raw materials to the manufacturing sector. The document proposed to address the issues of underinvestment in the solid minerals sector, with a view to increasing the foreign exchange generated by the sector.

**POVERTY ALLEVIATION**

By 1996, about 69% of the nations population was living in extreme poverty, the highest ever recorded for the country. Therefore, the vision document proposed a drastic reduction of poverty among the nation’s population, pegged at about 20% by the year 2010.