This paper discusses the various attempts of the Federal Government of Nigeria has, since the beginning of the Fourth Republic, been making to reform various sectors of the economy through poverty reduction/elimination, employment generation, diversification of production away from oil/mineral resources, privatisation, commercialisation, deregulation and liberalisation of various spheres of the nation’s economy with resultant deregulation and liberalisation of training. The paper points out the issues and problems, which may hamper the actualisation of the reforms and puts forward suggestions that would contribute to the success of the reforms.

INTRODUCTION

The dawn of the new millennium marked the restoration of democracy in Nigeria – what came to be known as the Fourth Republic. In order to bring Nigeria into the civil society acceptable to the international community, government has been embarking on series of activities aimed at total reform of both the public and the private sectors of the economy. Various reformatory measures have been put in place to achieve this noble stride. Such measures include poverty reduction/elimination, employment generation, and diversification of production away from oil/mineral resources, privatisation, and liberalisation of various spheres of the nation’s economy.

Government, in its effort, to revitalise the economy extends its reform to MDIs. Hence, government deliberate attempts to liberalise and deregulate training. Before we delve into government reforms as they relate to the MDIs, it is pertinent to present a global view of the three organs involved in capacity building in Nigeria. The three bodies involved with the capacity building in Nigeria are: the universities (tertiary institutions); the management development institutions; and the research institutes. The universities provide education. The management development institutions provide training. The research institutes conduct studies or investigations. For the purpose of illustration, the university offers say Bachelors Degree in Business Administration. A management development institute offers knowledge, skills and attitudes required for the proper operations in public administration. In another parlance, the university offers say Bachelors Degree in

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Physics to an individual. The research institute provides the opportunity to the individual to carry out research on say solar energy. The management development institutes offer administrative knowledge, skills and attitude to the individual.

It has earlier been stated that capacity building is offered at tripartite levels: the university; the management development institute; and the research institute. One significant level of capacity building is the individual/private consultant. The individual/private consultant offers education, training and investigation/study. In other words, the individual/private consultant is equivalent to the other three levels. In short, the individual/private is three-in-one.

Similarly, there is another trend in capacity building – training departments in the ministries or parastatals. Training officers, who are usually administrative officers, assume the role of trainers and therefore train staff of their organisation. It should be noted that the function of the training officers is just the administration of training and NOT the execution of training.

**MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTES IN NIGERIA**

Management Development Institutes (MDIs) are primarily concerned with production of officers who can formulate as well as translate government policies effectively, efficiently and economically. Generally, Management Development Institutes provide the following services: i) managerial development (long-term programmes that assist managers learn how to function better), ii) managerial training (short-term programmes that help managers do their jobs better iii) organisation development (a systematic approach that assists individuals, groups or the whole organisation to improve operations).

In addition to provision of training be it on-the job training, train-the-trainer, training of women or training of entrepreneurs, management development institutes conduct research into problems of management and administration. Similarly, management development institutes offer consultancy in the areas of say, identification of training needs. Management development institutes provide consultancy on issues bordering on policy, organisation, and procedures. Management development institutes also provide advisory services to both the public sector and the private sector of the economy.

It is pertinent to mention some of the key management development institutes in Nigeria. They include Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Centre for Management Development (CMD), Agricultural Management Training Institute (ARMTI), and Industrial Training Fund.

Similarly, there are professional institutions, which are based on specialised membership. Such institutions include Nigerian Institute for Training and Development (NITAD), Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM), Institute of Personnel Management (IPM), and Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN).

**GOVERNMENT REFORMS AS THEY RELATE TO MDIS**

Government reforms are enshrined in document known as NEEDS (National Eco-
nomic Empowerment and Development Strategy). The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is focussed on the attainment of Nigeria’s long-term vision of becoming the largest and strongest economy in Africa as well as being a key player in the world economic arena. The literature on NEEDS is categorised into four components as follows:

I. Introduction and Macroeconomic Framework

- The real Sector
- Fiscal Operation and Policy
- Balance Payments
- Monetary and Exchange Rate Policies

The major thrusts under the macroeconomic framework include sustenance of a high but broad-based non-oil GDP growth rate, consistent with poverty reduction and employment generation; diversification of production away from oil/mineral resources; insuring international competitiveness of the productive sector; and systematic reduction of the role of government in direct production of goods and strengthening government facilitation and regulatory functions. Furthermore, the policy thrusts encompass predictable macroeconomic environment and efficiency of resource utilisation based on Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF); and pursuit of policies consistent with raising domestic savings and increasing private investment.

To achieve all the stated policy thrusts, certain indices have been enunciated as strategies or key instruments. They include privatisation, deregulation and liberalisation; coordinated national sectoral development strategies for agriculture, industry and services; infrastructural development; effective regulatory regimes; reformed budget process with early involvement of all the stakeholders; tax reforms; reformed and strengthened procurement process; and public expenditure rule with not more than 3% of GDP.

II. Reforming Government Institutions

- Towards a more efficient and responsive public sector
- Security and administration of justice
- Tackling corruption, and promoting transparency and accountability

The major thrusts under reforming government and its institutions include restructuring, rationalizing and strengthening institutions; right-sizing the public sector; re-professionalizing the public service; tackling corruption and improving transparency of government expenditure. Furthermore, the thrusts include capacity building, training and re-training; increased use of scientific methods of policy formulation; discipline and strong work ethics; integrity and good citizenship at individual and corporate levels; and pride in the spirit of Nigeria.

In order to achieve these policy thrusts some key strategies are forwarded. They include enforcing anti corruption law; reforming and strengthening the public procurement – DUE PROCESS; reforming office bureaucracy and red-tapism; ensuring transparency and accountability especially in the privatisation and liberalisation process; economic coordination and institutional reforms; redefining the role of gov-
ernment in terms of public-private partnership; monetization of fringe benefits; stepping up measures to check financial and economic crimes; and reforming institutions whose duty is to foster compliance to government policies and directives.

III. Growing the Private Sector

- Towards a competitive private sector
- Specific sectoral strategy
- Trade and regional integration

The major thrusts under growing the private sector include rapid privatisation of key infrastructural services, encouraging private sector initiation and participation in provision of infrastructure, encouraging private sector to be counterpart funder of major infrastructural projects as well as other areas of national interest (agriculture, security, tourism, water and so on); make the power sector (electric supply) to generate capacity beyond nation’s need.

In order to achieve these thrusts government intends to review legislation and institutional framework and provide incentives to the private sector, commercialise the non-real assets of the railways and other parastatals as well as provision of viable road maintenance agency. Action has already started in some areas. Involvement of the private sector in manufacturing, including micro, small and medium enterprises is a key instrument used in NEEDS. Establishing aggressive trade promotion through regular hosting of trade fairs at local, state, national and international levels is yet another key instruments articulated in NEEDS.

IV. The Social Charter and Implementation Strategy

- The social charter: human development agenda
- Implementation and financing

The major policy thrusts under the social charter: human development agenda includes significant increase in average per capita consumption growth, increase in immunization, adult literacy, ensure gender sensitivity in all government institutions, protection and nurturing the youth to grow.

In order to achieve the thrusts under the social charter certain measures have been put in place. Such measures include promoting the emergence of a vibrant mortgage and housing scheme development system, and focus on integrated rural development. The strategic efforts are focussed on re-orientation of Nigerians with an enduring national as well as African value system through the institutions of socio-cultural traditions.

The interesting thing about NEEDS is that it is rooted in the lessons of experiences of the past plans. NEEDS has comprehensive participatory process, scope and coordination as well as realistic control mechanisms.

NEEDS appreciates the fact that all sectors of the economy as well as ministries, extra-ministerial departments and parastatals are crucial to its success. Hence, specific roles have been assigned to each stakeholder. It should be added that the role of government is mostly that of coordination and facilitation.

Government, especially at the federal level, has commenced reforms aimed at revitalising the nation’s economy. Such
reforms include commercialisation (paying for goods and services with very little or no subsidy from government), deregulation (removing rules that give advantage to government organisation, especially within the territorial scope of Nigeria), and liberalisation (making government institutions to compete outside the territorial borders of the nation). The main aspect that affects MDIs is deregulation. The deregulation simply implies that government would no longer enforce the patronage of MDIs. Furthermore, it connotes that government organisations are at liberty to patronise individual consultants, usually briefcase carrying consultants. The objective of government in deregulation is to allow for competition, which would improve service delivery in capacity building. But the current trends and happenings are counter productive. The situation is far from productive in terms of realisation of government objectives as they relate to the success of the reform.

CURRENT ISSUES IN CAPACITY BUILDING IN NIGERIA

The public service remains the pillar with which government actualises its policies. This is done through capacity building, which is the sole jurisdiction of Management Development Institutes. Capacity building can be viewed from institutional as well as individual/human perspective. Institutional capacity building entails strengthening of the organisational structures processes, which facilitate the achievement of developmental goals and objectives of that organisation. The individual/human capacity building entails stocking an organisation with trained, skilled and productive individuals capable of performing the essential tasks necessary for the achievement of the goals and objectives of the organization. In a nutshell we can deduce that capacity building entails development of a workforce through the acquisition of technical, administrative and managerial effectiveness, efficiency and economy in the overall performance of the organization. In fact, capacity building entails investment in human, capital institutional and practices to enhance corporate performance.

Capacity building is undertaken through any or the combination of the following:
- On-the-job training
- Off-the-job training
- Formal apprenticeship
- Rotation among series of job
- Job enlargement or enrichment programmes
- Correspondence courses, etc.

The Management Development Institutes (MDIs) face series of problems in Nigeria. These problems are associated with the ongoing liberalisation and deregulation of training. Such problems include:
- Capacity building is now the affairs of anybody who tags himself as a consultant. In most cases roadside consultants win big assignments from the government agencies, thereby leaving the MDIs at disadvantage.
- All institutions (universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, management development institutes, and professional bodies) partake in all kinds of training (within and outside their mandate). In fact, it is now the rule rather than an exception.
• Training officers now have turned into consultants conducting on-the-job training, short duration training, long duration training and so on.
• Significant insufficient funding of MDIs, which has multiplier negative effects such as lack of qualified staff, modern equipment and so on.
• Well-trained staff being redundant as most jobs have been awarded to "convenient-consultants".
• Proliferation of capacity building institutions.
• Lack of proper monitoring and evaluation of training programmes
• Lack of coordination between the MDIs and the organisations on capacity building.
• Politicisation of capacity building.
• Unnecessary conflicts between the bureaucrats and the politicians.
• MDIs professional staffs have turned into consultancy beggars/chasers.
• As the result of chasing consultancy MDIs professional staffs hardly update their skills, knowledge and expertise.
• Government agencies call for proposals from MDIs and later give the assignment to the “convenient consultants” to carry out.

THE WAYS FORWARD

In order to actualise government’s vision of reforming the nation’s socio-politico-economic environment there is the need to have public service that is capable of translating government visions into practice. This can only be done through institutional as well as human capacity building conducted by accredited institutions that have the expertise to train. In this respect the following suggestions are proffered:

• promulgate human resource development policy/legislation
• career progression in the public service should be tied to specific nature and number of training attained in designated MDIs.
• emphasise on local rather than foreign training
• rationalise/segment training to relevant training institutions
• provide the enabling environment for the designated training institutions
• create forum where management and training institutions interact
• all institutions involved in the training consultancy should have their distinctive mandate like was recently done for universities (degrees awarding); polytechnics (diploma awarding). In other words, training institutions such as ASCON, CMD and others should be provided with distinct statutory responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

In this presentation, an attempt has been made to analyse the roles of MDIs in the current reforms embarked upon by the government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The MDIs should be the vanguard of actualising government goals and objectives in reforming the country. MDIs can only play this role if government provides enabling environment for them to operate. And this should be done. The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is, undoubtedly, a sound policy document. But the policy-
document, unless it is backed up with competent, trained and committed public service, it will just be like the past policies. In other words, NEEDS as a policy, requires informed practitioners to operate it. And this can only be done through appropriate capacity building. And only credible MDIs can provide that service. Government should therefore ensure that only institutions/organisations designated as trainers conduct the training of the public service.

REFERENCES