

Applied Ethics

To Issues of Development,
Culture, Religion
and Education

Obiora F. Ike

Globethics.net

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and Education**

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Globethics.net Co-Publications Series

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Table of Contents

Preface	7
Introduction	9
Chapter 1: Reflections on Culture and Development	21
Chapter 2: Development in Africa: Cultural, Ethical and Religious Considerations	31
Chapter 3: Potentialities for Development in Traditional, Social and Economic Structures in West Africa	49
Chapter 4: Poverty from the Viewpoint of the Church and the African Context	77
Chapter 5: African Renaissance: Solidarity and Renewal within Africa Today	95

Chapter 6: Property and Communal Ownership Structures in Traditional Africa: An Examination of Relevant Socio-Economic and Cultural Issues in Determining the Ownership of Community Based Telecommunication Businesses	117
Chapter 7: The Legacy of <i>Laborem Exercens</i> , the Meaning and Dimensions of Human Work in John Paul II Theology of Human Work: Challenges in Nigeria	147
Chapter 8: Nigeria Child Spacing Program Helping Women Meet the Challenges of their Community Concerns	159
Chapter 9: Towards a Self-Sustaining and Self-Reliant Church: Theological Perspectives from the Social Teaching of the Church and Local Experiences in Development	181
Chapter 10: Interreligious Ethics in Higher Education – Challenges for a New Paradigm of Life and Society - The Globethics.net Program as Model	201
Chapter 11: “Economy and Mission” as Solidarity and Stewardship in Financial Management – An African Point of View	221

Chapter 12:**233**

Globethics.net Voice to a Long Walk to Ethics
Education – The Imperative of Values-Based
Formation for Future Leaders – African and
Global Perspectives for Action

Chapter 13:**267**

Standing Up to the Ethical Challenges of Finance,
Technology and Governance to Enhance Africa's
Development Potentials in the 21st Century

Preface

The reflections in this book emanate from several lectures, speeches and conference papers delivered by the author on matters that impact Africa. They are now put together in one volume to fulfill the need of document reflected thought, the relevance of which continues to have validity for humankind.

We live at a time and in a period of massive global challenges that also influence the lives of millions of people in Africa. Questions are asked and answers proffered, even if in a modest way.

The focus in this collection is on the linkage between education, development and culture applied in the context of Africa. We have taken economic and religious structures in society as critical factors for a balanced and harmonious existence.

Fundamental however to all this is ethics, the principles of which lead to transformation since ethics determines what is ought, what is right, what adds value for the common good and what leads to sustainable development.

Introduction

On the importance of rereading major works of culture and history and the importance of connecting each other together

« À l'âge analytique – celui des divisions, décompositions, destructions, y compris celle de notre planète – succède celui de la synthèse et de la reconstruction. » M. Serres, 2019.

In his latest book, *Relire le relié* (2019)¹, the French philosopher Michel Serres explains that the spirit of synthesis is becoming important in our time, because we live in an era where a global perspective on things and people has become crucial. Perhaps one of the most important reasons could be the meeting between the visible world and an invisible world, in a “blinding” and “incandescent” new horizon offered by the semantic of both terms “relire” to *reread* and “relier” to *connect*. A meeting of a practical, a theoretical knowledge and faith, in an energetic and energizing transformation, is at the core of this book, where human beings might be invited to live in

¹ Serres, Michel (2019): *Relire le relié*, Paris: Ed. Le Pommier, ISBN: 978-2-7465-1938-1, 256pp.

closer proximity to books, culture and literary works *rereading* for better social integration in life. It is an invitation to *connect*, a friendly path toward the development of dynamic networks of cooperation. For these two reasons these two movements should be mentioned and placed at the center of this introduction to Msgr. Prof. Dr Obiora Ike's book, *Applied Ethics*, published by Globethics.net. It is as a second edition an invitation to *reread* a collection of themes, exposed to a wider audience; as profound thinking on religious and cultural ethical values this compendium is an exploration of how values help to connect within and across human communities.

As the author proposes to present his crucial thoughts on development, culture, religion and education in Africa - that is to say on the one hand from an ethics applied to the realities of the African continent - on the other hand the author also aims in particular at an ethics that effectively connects people. By using the notions of trust, justice and equal dignity, it follows that the choice of comparison seems judicious.

Ethics applied to different fields can be normatively based on a momentum that connects people and ideas - an approach concerned with establishing a common and concrete base of experience, across diverse human contexts. For Obiora Ike, applied ethics contributes to a religious experience, taking for granted the existence of an original impulse, a way of living what connects us to each other. This very inspiration, defined by traditional African culture as collective participation, is that which is uniting in

the experience of living in a community, experience mediated by art, culture, and religious discourse and practice itself, in the sense of a philosophy of sharing. We see that this very idea of Obiora Ike is similar to the one just presented, focusing on the binding virtue of *connecting* of the word “religion”, understood etymologically (“religare”: *to bind*), i.e. a basic anthropological culture:

[...] as “the way of life of a people. It includes the sum total of their mannerisms, beliefs, music, clothing, religion, languages, behavioral patterns, food, housing, agricultural methods, as well as their traditional behavior in a broad sense, including their ideas, arts and artifacts. It is the social heritage which an individual acquires” (Ch. 2, § 3).

On the other side, cultural anthropology and religion understood as the sustainable digestion of cultural and religious dogmas, invites you to *read a word over and over again*, in this sense it has happened, from one religious dogma as opposed to another dogma, that belief (taken as religion or culture) has been left blinded by violence and intolerance over history².

² Let us only remember that at the threshold of Reform in the fifteenth century, in Europe, the Church could force civil society to sentence someone to death whom civil society had nevertheless pardoned. See e.g.: “Philibert Berthelier”, Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Rereading is a *manducatio*, an act that relates our values with a practice similar to the way we eat. It connotes a power of symbolization, which places some distance away from the visible, from this primary link to the need for physical food, and to any other living being. Rather than conflict and sacrifice, religion should be seen as a means of resolving them, as a social instrument allowing greater social unity through symbolic sacrifice, and not through violence (legitimate or illegitimate) exerted against others. One should stop for a moment by reading what *manducatio* has to offer:

“[by *manducatio*] one can even speak of a process of access to one’s humanity which is a form of violence made to one’s selfishness, closed on oneself by the food pleasure; it is essentially the passage from eating to manducate. It thus learns to share first with our neighbor, and with the other members of his community, but especially with the Divine³.”

Religion remains an essential anthropological energy for the human being. Interestingly it could be defined as a seismic wave that continues to connect human beings, an “axial area” as Karl Jaspers liked to say⁴. It is a universal event which continues to metamorphose the world of East and

³ Bamony, P. *Structure apparente, structure invisible : l’ambivalence des pouvoirs chez les Lyéla du Burkina Faso*, Doctoral thesis quoted from the article : Manducation, https://www.hommes-et-faits.com/anthropsy/PB_Manducation.htm

⁴ Karl Jaspers, *Vom Ursprung und Ziel der Geschichte*. München/Zürich: R, Piper & Co. Verlag 1949. 8th Ed. 1983.

West since the sixth century (BC). It is an astonishing simultaneous emergence of new ways of thinking, new ethical codes, in China, India, Persia and in the West - connecting heaven, earth, but also faith, that many confusedly feel, without a clear symbolic language.

The emergence of the axial area is a concept proposed by Jaspers, which allowed words to be placed on a deep reality and on the spark of philosophical astonishment. Nowadays, large numbers of people, especially in the global space that should be called the great "Global South", cherish a more vivid notion of this common emotion, and do much more than save incandescent embers of religiosity at the bottom of their being since their childhood.

Faith and religion are not the disarray of reason in the face of the limits of existence - although religion takes its natural sources in such emotions as Cicero already described (*De Natura Deorum*, 45 BC).

It is not, as Obiora shows us, to imagine the turpitudes, the despair of a lost faith, as some romanticism in the 19th century had sketched it out. It is a question, as 19th century philosopher Kierkegaard said, of taking the gesture of linking or binding with others, because to share with others is to believe in the virtue of reason, without letting it dictate to us all of the most fundamental creative energies of our existence. Ethics is thus an "existential sphere, or

stage, which is superseded by the higher stage of the religious life⁵”.

Consequently, if we choose faith, we can legitimately suspend our reason in order to believe in something higher than reason. We should not fear a moral of transformative laughter, because the colossal challenges of our world deserve that we translate our feeling of uneasiness in the existence into affirmative laughter. Laughter is a double affirmation, a grateful affirmation of being there in the world, in this changing world, ready to react to the most honest of oneself; it is also affirmation in the answer because the joy of providing an answer is the energy of finding a positive resolution to a problem, which can tolerate different paths. For Jaspers, global axial paths in the world should be divided into: a “world history”, a projection focused on the “present and future”, and more centrally, our common destiny has to do with a reflection “on the meaning of history”.

The method of transformative theological education is the answer to the challenges of contemporary world for Obiora Ike. To find a solution is to pose the problem: it is to decide that transformative theological education is a way out of a poor system of reproduction of inequalities, a transmission of an unbalanced social capital from one generation to the other. Transforming education is showing, before launching actions and implementing any

⁵ McDonald, William, "Søren Kierkegaard", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2017 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2017/entries/kierkegaard/>>.

possible solution against socially unfair situations, that it is indeed this momentum of transformative faith, and of self-overcoming together with others, which is at the heart of the ethical and religious significant impulsions. The duty to work, and the idea of integrative catholic social teaching, are parts of a wider symbolic objective than the individual economic survival. Religious commitment and philosophical questioning is reminding us about the value of human work and dignity as being active and self-overcoming (see Chapt. 7). In Chapt. 9, this principle is applied to Church assets management, and in Chapt. 10 to higher education in an interreligious perspective, subordinated to the respect of the human person.

By allowing this personalist approach on the value of respect and dignity, ethics is applied in a Neo-Kantian sense, not in the sense of a return to the foundation on analytical ethics as such, nor in the sense of radical existential philosophy of the describing our being in the world. In an analytical optic ethic would be realigned on a properly speculative discipline of the reason, which finds in itself, in logic and constructive methods of science its cognitive value and energy. In such positivistic scientific tendencies, values related to faith are assessed by the yardstick of a) knowledge ontologies, b) knowledge methods, c) knowledge semantic, and ultimately on the questioning on d) the nature of knowledge in itself. By positioning the pretension to modally necessary knowledge, and the pretension to truth at the top of the hierarchy of

things, faith might get under valued. Indeed on a line developed critically by P. Engel:

“Faced with the absence of sufficient evidence and reasons, as well as contrary reasons, the believer may be tempted to fall back on no longer epistemic, but pragmatic reasons: believing because it reassures, makes happy, satisfies a need, ensures a family, social, historical, cultural identity, etc.⁶”

Attempting to re-enchant the faith in our secularized world, we might be tempted by playing a different game from the *Enlightenments*, based on a fideist and pragmatic abandon of the criteria of sufficient evidence (transparency) and the criteria of reasons, which means different from the serious focusing on the methods of proof (epistemology). But doing so is not at all meaningless, a person could have good practical reasons for believing in God, provided he/she could be assured on advantageous consequences for this choice and commitment, even if he/she is convinced that he/she does not have good intellectual reasons for doing so.

Instead, Obiora Ike puts faith and the human person at the center of existence, because faith and respect for the person amount to realizing that becoming a scholar, and mastering intellectual knowledge is not enough. Being a scholar in various fields (as it is the case for the author who

⁶ Pouivet, Roger « Le droit de (ne pas) croire. Une réponse à Pascal Engel », *Philosophia Scientiæ*, 21-3, 2017, accessed 27 January 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/philosophiascientiae/1307> ; DOI : 10.4000/philosophiascientiae.1307

is theologian, activist, journalist, philosopher...) does not yet allow us to compare what in the various contexts can apply to the same situation *in practice*. Knowing better and knowing more is not intrinsically related to a transformative empowering of others, although knowledge brings always a positive impact in a world dominated by mere ignorance, because practical and subjective implications might overall be compared against contrary options.

If denying the difference between religious beliefs and ordinary or scientific beliefs, to the extent that all obey the norms of belief is sound, then prudential calculus should have transparent and evidence based justification too.

As we can be sure, transformative theological education can be based on good reasons, even from the line of argument taken from previous meta-ethical analysis. As Engel shows, the connecting force of religion and culture is precisely this very condition that believing in fact is seen to be “an attitude of trust or faith towards a person or an entity that we consider reliable”⁷. The French philosopher recognizes that “to believe in Barack Obama, in Europe, in his lucky star, in eternal life and... in God - not believe propositional content”, might be a way to admit the value of faith based education. It is not enough to recognize the value of truth across different disciplines of knowledge,

⁷ Pascal Engel, « Le droit de ne pas croire », *ThéoRèmes*, 2, 2012, accessed 27 Jan. 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/theoremes/295> ; DOI : 10.4000/theoremes.295

according to definable methods for Obiora Ike. There are, on this long path, which connect the human being through different contexts significant indications of a fascinating journey in the History of the Self, which eventually corresponds to the development of the metaphysical subject after Kant's philosophy toward Max Weber's work, and eventually even to economical and sociological accents similar to Pierre Bourdieu⁸. But, in many places around the world, rational thinking may have inadvertently suppressed Christianity, without at all being fully aware of it, risking to suppress transformative thinking and commitment as well. Consequently, applied ethical knowledge and in particular in education, should be following the reaffirmation of the religious path for Obiora Ike, which has been presented by S. Kierkegaard, but on a line sympathetic to the Reformed and Lutheran Church. Reaffirming religious ethics as transformative power in education is to realize that if something has to be done, it is that one should try again to introduce Christianity after secular crisis, or affirm the importance of global ethical transformative thinking.

Since our world is changing so much, that in sixty years, we are living through unprecedented upheavals in the world, and that everyone should reinvent intelligence, as condition for integrating digital disruption in society, not fearing technology, rereading religious perspectives and bridging

⁸ Obiora Ike shared with us, across our informal discussions, how important Kant's Critique and philosophy of freedom has been, since his first Master dissertation.

people together seems to be a well-informed position in favour of an essential mutual intelligence.

It is an impetus which links what by nature should be perceived as distinct, it is first of all a political ethical position: it is the equalitarian philosophical point of view of an equal consideration and respect for others as R. Dworkin may have developed it in legal philosophy. It is to realize the importance of a firm resolution for life, which is the same across different people, different genders, and different cultures. We give the last word to Kierkegaard:

"Now it is certainly true that the good [...] is different for different people, but resolution, which is the true acknowledgment, is still the same. This is a very upbuilding thought. Someone who wants to erect a tower sits down and roughly estimates how high he can erect the tower. Alas, how different it appears at the time of the rough estimate, but how similar in the moment of resolution, and if there is no resolution there will be no tower, however imaginary or however really splendid the estimate was! The good resolution is to will to do everything in one's power, so serve it to the utmost of one's capability." (Kierkegaard, *Four Upbuilding Discourses 1844, Against Cowardiness*).

Ignace Haaz, *Globethics.net Publications Manager, Ph.D.*
Geneva, January 2020,

CHAPTER 1

Reflections on Culture and Development

“People who do not look back to posterity and their ancestors cannot comfortably look forward to prosperity and their children’s future”.

Ozor Neife Ozoike (100 year-old man) from
Umana Ndiagu, Nigeria

I. The Debate and Confusion around Culture

There is a lot of confusion in present times in our society because of the lack of orientation and certainty as to what constitutes CULTURE or even the concept of the ‘Common Good’. This situation mirrors the lack of a definite and sure guide for people’s lives, lifestyles and social destiny as to what is useful, correct, ethically imperative, humanly elevating, culturally acceptable and socially unifying.

Today, we cannot remain unconcerned by the debate that is going on around us on culture, on our cultural heritage; on the Church and culture, and the adaptation of Christianity to indigenous cultures; on the relationship between religions, cultures and civilisations; on whether or not Christianity, as we got it from Europe, is trans-

culturally viable; and on whether or not missionary work as we have known it is still justifiable. There were times, commonly referred to as, 'in those days', when people were sure of their beliefs and the customs of their ancestors and motherland. The traditional answers in the present times seem redundant. Thorny questions occur with ever-increasing frequency. Somehow, in many societies, the vocabulary of 'Right and Wrong', of 'Duty' and 'Neglect of Duty', of 'Sin and Shame' and of 'Good and Bad' has become difficult to use.

Our age is confronted with decisions that previous generations did not really have to face. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that many people have rejected the traditional sources of ethical illumination. Today, the old certainties are virtually gone. Shame is seemingly gone. Truth is somehow not fashionable. Integrity and credibility are strange words for some. Dignity and decency are no longer very clear, and living in deceit and debauchery happen to be relatively fashionable, albeit for just a short period, because truth and its search are unquenchable in the human soul and psyche, no matter what pretense any person may try to make of it.

2. Culture Matters in the Realm of Meaning

History records show that culture matters and the relationship and interaction of the world of human beings to transcendence translates to the search for meaning and happiness, which all people seek. It also translates to lasting values that concern God and the metaphysical beyond the

physical; the noumenon beyond the phenomenon; the *Kairos* beyond the *Kronos*.

Several questions emerge and some people say, “Culture is a thing of the past”. Yet, questions need to be asked: “In the light of the moral diversity and the proliferation of moral languages issuing from our plural and global world, what must remain central to humanity after the fact of relativity is acknowledged? Nothing? Something? What could it be? Could legislation cover these ambiguities in life? Are any ethical principles universally applicable and what are they? How do we cope with the contending characteristics of our age? Is it ethical pluralism, rapid social change or linguistic distrust of centralistic claims?”

This is the challenge young people face as they leave home for the first time from their parents during one week or semester in school. They imbibe new slogans, lose their roots and end up being neither European nor authentically African, like the bird called ‘*Usu*’ (Bat). Some join bad company and lose direction.

3. The Philosophical Definitions and Concept of Culture

Let me begin with some analysis and interpretation of the philosophical hermeneutics concerning the concept of culture. In his ‘Notes towards the Definition of Culture’, the Nobel prize winning poet and literary critic T.S. Eliot

asserts that the term culture has three different associations according to whether we have in mind the development of an individual, of a social class or of a whole society. As my teacher, Prof. Monsignor Theophilus Okere, has written in his book 'Culture and Religion' (1974; pp 9 ff), "When we talk of culture here, we mean it first and foremost, but not exclusively, in the sense it is understood by cultural anthropologists".

In this meaning, culture is the way of life of a people. It includes the sum total of their mannerisms, beliefs, music, clothing, religions, languages, behavioural patterns, food, housing, agricultural methods, as well as their traditional behaviour in a broad sense, including their ideas, arts and artifacts. It is the social heritage which an individual acquires from his or her group and which heritage classifies a people as belonging to a group. Culture makes it possible for us to distinguish between a Chinese, Briton, Swede, Russian, American, German, Frenchman, Igbo, Yoruba and Idoma to mention but a few.

Culture "denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitude towards life" ('Religion as a Cultural System', C. Geertz in 'Anthropological Approach to the Study of Religion').

Culture in contra-distinction from nature is that part of his milieu which man himself created. Why we must eat in order to survive, is a question of nature. Why the Igbo fulfils this duty with 'Ukwa' and 'Okwuru' and the English with 'Bread and Tea', is a matter of culture. That man must enter into marriage with a woman is altogether natural. But that an Englishman thinks monogamy the only reasonable and normal type of marriage whereas an Igbo-man thinks polygamy just as reasonable and normal, if not more so, this is a matter of culture, which always means: this is the way they have been brought up.

“Culture is a way of thinking, feeling, believing. It is the accumulated experience, knowledge and lore of social group stored, for future use, in the memories of men, in books, in objects” (Okere, T; Ibid).

Since culture is a way of life, the form in which culture is expressed, through its symbols, are the objectivities of the life of a people. Though incarnate in symbols and the various elements of culture, the very heterogeneous character of these elements - social organisation, art, religion, ideas, etc, show that the idea of culture is an abstraction, a working hypothesis, like evolution or relativity. No one can see them, but they help explain observable facts. Culture is, therefore, a theory designed to yoke together these heterogeneous elements into one

common system, purposely described vaguely as 'a people's way of life'.

Culture is distinct from society. It is society's way of life. Hence, society can remain when its culture has changed. Culture is specifically human. It is learned and not instinctive. It varies from group to group and from one period of time to another within a single group. Customs, beliefs, social structures and institutions can change. In the functionalist view, all these elements of culture are closely integrated and any change will involve a dislocation of their delicate equilibrium, a modification of the entire culture.

Though cultures are continuously changing, they are essentially conservative. There is no change except in continuity. No African culture has remained totally unaffected by European contact (Bascom and Herskovits: 'Continuity and Change in African Culture'), but there is none that has entirely given way before it. Here in Igbo land, we have incorporated foreign elements like tobacco, cassava and maize, the school and the motor car, to name a few. But native law and custom exist side by side with European law, just as European medical practice exists parallel to indigenous medicine. Polygamy is still competing with monogamy and traditional religion coexists with Christianity, often in the same individual, but especially in society at large where religious pluralism has emerged as a social *novum*. These examples show not only that all change is in continuity, but also that most changes are selective.

And rather than substitute a new item for an old one, cultures often prefer to add the new one to the old. *Akwete* cloth has not been chased out of the market by European made cloths, nor have 'Awka' blacksmith gone out of market because of the influx of European made ironware. Our people reckon their week according to both the European and native calendars (*Afor, Nkwo, Eke, Oye*), and many of us have learned to enjoy the music of Beethoven without growing any less enthusiastic of *Atilogwu, Ijele dance, Egwu Ukwu and Nwokorobia*.

4. Culture and Development

Culture change is a principle of cultural development. For culture, the law also holds that “unless a grain of seed dies, it remaineth alone, but if it dies, it generates new life” (Wisdom words of Jesus Christ in the Bible).

Development means self-unfolding of what is contained in germ, and who would deny that some cultures need this development? For too long, African cultures remained alone and isolated, merely identical with them, and cut off from the mainstream of world cultural development. They could be called cultures only in the most general sense of the term, the way of life of a people. Thus, invited though without justifying it, the terrible indictment for Hegel on Africa, the continent, he said, where the spirit has not yet become conscious of itself.

Of Africa, Hegel writes *“It has no historical interest of its own except that we see man here living in barbarism, in savagery and where he does not yet furnish any ingredient of culture. Africa is, as far back as history goes, separated from the rest of the world. It is El Dorado closed in upon itself, the land of children, which lying on the antipodes of the daylight of conscious history is hidden in the black colour of the night”* (*‘Vernunft in der Geschichte’* P. 214). Here Hegel is, of course, a philosophical racist, but I used this rather brutal example to introduce another meaning of the concept of culture. Here, we associate it with conscious development.

But to think of culture in terms of development is to think of culture with a richer meaning, beyond the merely descriptive, qualitative and neutral *“way of life of a people”*. It is culture in the original sense of culture, *colo- colere- colui-cultum* to cultivate; to till; to tend from where we have agriculture and horticulture. Culture, here, involves a conscious effort, a common pursuit, and a forward march towards higher values, towards more refinement.

It is in this sense that Herbert Marcuse defines culture as *“A humanizing process, characterized by the collective effort to preserve human life, pacify the struggle for existence, hold it down to controllable limits, secure a productive organization of society, develop the spiritual capabilities of man and minimize and sublimate aggression, brute force and misery”* (H. Marcuse: *Kultur und Gesellschaft II* P. 148). Here, culture comes very near to being synonymous with civilisation. In this sense, culture is guided by development. It is a conscious and

collective effort, a productive appropriation of one's social heritage, with a view to refining, to humanizing it.

Culture is a project, and as such, is not merely what it actually is, a people's way of life, but also what it can become, the level it can attain, its potentialities yet to be developed. To pursue the vocation of culture is to heed the injunction of Goethe: "*Mensch werde was Du schon bist*". - *Man become what you already are!* (quoted in M. Heidegger: *Sein und Zeit* P. 145). It is in the light of such cultural development that cultural change is understandable and desirable. If it were so understood, there would be less lamentation and wailing as "things fall apart", since this can be a prelude to a stronger and higher synthesis.

5. Absence of Culture Leads to the Denial of Truth

In an earlier piece of work, I wrote on the theme of "Development is People; Business is Ethics" (Ike/Nnoli 2003, p. 95), I stated that a source of complication in these discussions around culture is the new global and pluralistic environment. We live in a meeting point and a global village environment.

As Henry Novak, the American Christian theologian and founder of the 'Enterprise Institute' has written and argued, to undermine culture is to undermine truth and, therefore, perform the work of tyrants. In his 'Templeton Address', Novak argues that the arguments teachers give the young

today are completely misleading, saying, “there is no such thing as truth, they teach even the little children at school. Truth is bondage. Believe what seems right to you. There are many truths as there are individuals. Follow your feelings. Do as you please. Get in touch with yourself. Do what feels comfortable. This is the language of the times and they speak, thus, who prepare the jails for the young. Even under conditions of nihilism, ‘Fidelity to Truth’ is better than cowardice. If we remain faithful to the truth, inner liberty is obtained. Vulgar relativism and its subjective culture so undermines the culture of liberty and knowledge that it is preferable to take a position on an issue than to remain neutral. Even for those unsure whether there is a God or not, a truth is different from a lie”.

In conclusion, Novak notes that torturers can twist your mind and even reduce you to a vegetable. But as long as you retain the ability to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’, as truth alone commands, they cannot own you. To obey truth is to be free, and in certain extremities, nothing is dearer to the tormented mind, nothing more vital to the survival of self-respect, nothing so important to one’s sense of remaining a worthy human being, of being no one’s log, part of no one’s machine, and register to death against the kingdom of lies – nothing is so dear as to hold to the truth. These reflections correspond to the philosophical consequences of cultural debates, their denial, acceptance or adherence. It is, therefore, important for humanity in international dialogue and debates to engage in dialogue around culture for CULTURE MATTERS.

CHAPTER 2

Development in Africa: Cultural, Ethical and Religious Considerations

Statement of the Problem

For a long time now, many have conceived development solely in economic and technological terms. The religious, cultural, and ethical dimensions were seldom recognised. Seldom did experts consider that religious and cultural conditions are important for any development strategy that is geared towards human promotion.

The failure of so many development projects and strategies and the consequent critiques or rejections of the very idea of development by many in recent times can be attributed largely to this lopsided and anti-cultural understanding of development. The euphoria of modernisation carried many African countries with their elites away. Consequently, they lost touch with original sources of African culture yet they did not succeed in becoming European.

The wise saying among the Igbo applies, “People who do not look back to posterity, cannot take forward to prosperity”. The development models conceived in Western nations and transported to African nations failed woefully. Attempts by people of non-Western cultures to

develop themselves according to their priorities and their own innovative rationale, have all too often been dismissed as irrelevant. Efforts at cultural authenticity have in many cases been repressed in spite of the cosmetic and external show of readiness for inter-cultural dialogue.

However, there is a growing agreement today that there is much scope for closer investigation of the ways in which developmental choices are sustained in their turn by religious world-views of widely differing cultural origins. By way of analogy, one could draw from a reminder the need to search for innovative potentials from the cultures of the 'third world' that have the ability to carry on and sustain a self-reliant and independent rationalisation and modernisation process.

Because of the specific affinity of religion to rationality, Max Weber accorded religion a primary role in this process of rationalisation and modernisation, and this is what could be new in the contextual reading of Weber's writings considered in other cultures. It is not just the transfer of economy or technology from the West to African nations that is at stake.

Rather, it is the search for categories for the definition and evaluation of cultural, ethical and religious conditionality relevant for the development and modernisation potentials of Africa. The evidence of cultural change attests to the well-known fact that culture is not static. As society and history progress, people interact and modify existing

traditions to suit new situations. Cultural change, therefore, is a constant challenge for one to redefine one's identity anew. This challenge can hold where there is a preservation of cultural continuity. This is the 'internal logic', which, according to Weber, is the basis of all societal rationalisation.

Thus, mastery cannot be achieved only through economic or technological transfer. What we need in Africa are avenues for creating a basis for categories necessary for the determination of religious and cultural conditions of development potential. This would form the base upon which a society could revolve. Consequently, authentic development is given ethical, cultural and religious grounding.

Development in the Context of Africa

Africa is a continent of striking features and embarrassing paradoxes and contradictions. It is the second largest continent in the world and perhaps the richest continent in terms of natural resources and potential wealth. Yet, Africa is perhaps also the weakest continent on the globe. Her sons and daughters rank amongst the poorest of the world and her societies among the least developed. It is peripheral in the world's geopolitics and economics, and is characterised by the paradoxes of rehabilitation, acculturation, fragmentation, retardation and location.

Socio-Economic Environment

In the socio-economic sphere, the African condition is a painful and disgraceful reality, a distressing scene of a vast majority of desperately poor people living side by side with an aristocratic, privileged and shamelessly opulent few. In its mid-term review of 'Africa's Recovery Programme' (1985-1990) an ad hoc United Nations Committee submitted that:

The African situation is characterized by unsustainable, crushing burdens of external debt, substantial declines in export earnings due to several depressed commodity prices and significant decline in resource transfers and private investment and land.

As in the rest of the 'third world', this situation is traceable to two broad categories of reasons: firstly, natural factors of inclement conditions and, secondly, human factors of an unjust world economic order, corruption and the incompetence of political office holders. For, as Paul Harrison points out, "*the astronomical order is as unfair to the third world as the economic order*".

Problems of Africa's Geographical Location

At the centre of this "unfair astronomical order" is the unrelenting sun whose debilitating rays fall with unremitting intensity on the world with the two tropics, Cancer and Capricorn, cutting across the continent and making of it the world's hottest zone comparable in heat only to some of the desert areas of Asia. To be habitable, the earth has to

maintain a radiation balance, that is, to reflect back as much heat as it receives from the sun.

Different parts of the globe, however, do not do so at the same rate. The temperate zones have a radiation deficit, sending back more heat than they receive, while the hot zones have radiation surplus, absorbing more heat than they return. A balance is maintained through a global weather machine consisting of winds, rains and storms. All the poor nations of the world, including virtually all of Africa, belong to the hot zones and pay a high price for holding mankind's "front line" against the sun.

Most parts of Africa have a temperature average of well over 25 degrees Celsius at which level humus is broken down much more quickly than it forms. The effect is that most parts do not have good agricultural soil. There is an explosion of life from hostile animals to humans. For example, mosquitoes, tsetse flies, black flies, sand flies along with their diseases, weaken or kill humans, wilt and blight plants, eat up crops alive in the fields or quietly feast on them in granaries and storerooms.

Finally, Africa suffers from an irate pattern of rainfall. It is always the typical tropical weather: "Never moderate, always extreme. Too much rain, or too little". This, too, is linked to the tropical sun. The net result of all this is that several parts of the continent get flooded and suffer

drought at different times of the year. The floods create enormous erosion problems with gaping gullies dotting the landscape in several parts of the continent, and the attendant loss of arable lands and plant nutrients.

Human Factors Impeding Africa's Integral Development

The human angle to Africa's deplorable socio-economic status can be divided into two: the external factors of an unjust world economic order and the international division of labour, and the internal factors of corruption, incompetence and mismanagement. The external factors are easily traceable to Africa's colonial past and neo-colonial present. The success of the 19th-century Industrial Revolution in Europe created the need for ready markets and secure sources of raw materials for her nascent capitalist and industrial economies. Slave trade was forcibly suppressed.

At the instance of the then German Chancellor, Von Bismarck, the infamous Berlin Conference (1884-85) was held during which African colonies were divided and made the dumping ground for European industrial manufactures and the economies of Africa were carefully tailored to meet European industrial needs. World War II (1939-45) generated sufficient momentum for nationalistic demands for change, which brought political independence to most countries of Africa in the 1960s.

This momentum was, however, not strong enough to alter the essentials of the colonial economic relations with the West. The essence of this colonial order was the exploitation of the 'men and materials' of the colonies for the benefit of the metropolis. In the past, colonial administrators supervised Africa's production of raw materials and minerals for European industries.

Today, under the dutiful supervision of native leaders, African still produces raw materials and extracts minerals which are hauled away mainly to Western industrial nerve-centres. Thus, the exploitation continues on two broad platforms, through an international division of labour affected during colonialism which assigned to Africa the task of producing low-priced minerals and raw materials; and through an unjust economic order in which the West determines, much to Africa's disadvantage, the prices of our own exports as well as their own industrial manufactures.

The Kenyan novelist, Ngugu Wa Thiongo in his book, '*Devil on the Cross*' graphically portrays the nature of this unhealthy relationship of exploitation in a moving parable about a peasant farmer and an ogre. He writes:

The old man told me of a peasant farmer who used to carry an ogre on his back. The ogre had sunk its long nails into the neck and shoulders of the peasant. The peasant was the one who went to the fields to get food,

the one who went into the valleys to fetch water, the one who went to the forest to get firewood and the one who did the cooking. The ogre's job was to eat and thereafter to sleep soundly on the back of the peasant who became progressively thinner and more depressed at heart. The ogre prospered and flourished, the extent of being inspired to sing hymns that exhorted the peasant to endure his lot on earth with fortitude for he would later find his rest in heaven. One day, the peasant went to a diviner. The diviner told him that the solution was for the peasant to boil some oil and to pour it on the nails of the ogre when he was fast asleep. The peasant said: "What if I should burn my back". The diviner said, "Nothing good was ever born of perfect conditions. Go home". The peasant was saved from death only when he did what he had been advised to do by the diviner.

Our continent has found neither the pluck nor the wits to free itself from the stranglehold of various exploitative tendencies. Nothing demonstrates the truth of this affirmation more clearly than the insuperable debt burdens of the various nations of Africa. It is, according to Babu, a pathetic situation of 'institutionalised colonialism'. By 1985, the total debts of sub-Saharan Africa were put at between 130 and 135 billion dollars. Reports by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the Bank for International Settlements indicate that by the end of 1984, Nigeria, Sudan, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Congo and Mauritania owed net debts of 20.8b, 7.1b, 2.1b and 1.8b dollars

respectively to Western creditors. These debts average at \$1,170, \$1,230 and \$2,003 per head in Mauritania, Congo and Gabon respectively.

Today, Africa's worsening economic crisis has resulted in the deepening of her debt crisis. In Nigeria, for example, the total external debts have risen from 20.8 billion dollars in 1984 to 32.2 billion dollars by the end of 1990. Nigeria spent over 3.2 billion naira in servicing those debts. Far more worrisome and, perhaps, more damaging than any harm done from without either by nature or by the human agent is the sufferings which Africa's political leaders and public office holders inflict on their people through a growing culture of corruption, mismanagement and gross incompetence. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, whose history is said to be "a story of missed opportunities, of how a nation could snatch defeat from the jaws of victory" will suffice for an illustration. Assessing Nigeria's thirty years of nationhood, C. Don Adinuba writes:

Mobilization and utilization of human resources have become the world's technology and economic miracle, Nigeria has an abundance of natural resources, but owing to gross inefficiency in management, remains a typical 'third world' country. Unlike the mountainous South Korea whose arable land is only 22 percent of its 98, 484 square kilometer but today exports food,

Nigeria with 87 percent of its 923,768 square kilometers arable, import food items. Unlike Malaysia which some three decades ago began to plant Nigerian palm trees and cocoa seeds in its soil and has since become the world's largest exporters of palm produce and coca, Nigeria has in the recent past had cause to import palm oil from the Asian country. Unlike the Arab countries which have used their petro-dollars to invest massively in different countries, thereby diversifying their revenue sources, Nigeria, at the height of its oil boom in the 1970's... preferred to play Father Christmas by paying the salaries of striking workers in the Caribbean, by sponsoring expensive jamborees and embarking on white elephant projects with its head of state telling the world that money is not our problem but how to spend it.

These white elephants or abandoned projects can be seen scattered around the country and are valued at several billions of naira. In Kaduna state alone, the total value of abandoned projects was placed at 5.5 billion naira in 1987.

It is, thus, the case that after three decades of independence and the launching of five national development plans, Nigeria still lacks most of the basic amenities of a modern state, such as dependable sources of good drinking water, steady supply of electricity, mass-transit systems and good roads. Most Nigerians still live in rural huts or in urban slums under very poor sanitary conditions. More than 30% of school-age children are not in

school because their parents cannot afford the fees paid in the nation's poorly equipped and ill-staffed primary and secondary schools.

Yet, Nigeria has spent billions of naira importing five-star hotels, modern stadia, television stations, and more than fifteen non-viable local airports and three international airports. Millions of scarce foreign exchange has also been wasted in sponsoring expensive sports jamborees, unnecessary foreign travels by ministers and government officials and in maintaining bloated foreign services around the world. With the growth of profligacy in government spending, corruption in public office has also increased.

In 1983, for example, the then communications minister, Mr. Audu Ogbah, in a newspaper interview, revealed to a bewildered nation that Nigeria was losing 50 million naira monthly in the Post-Office and Telecommunication department as salaries to non-existent workers. In other words, in one year, Nigeria would have lost a whopping 600 million naira in this single racket alone. And, of course, that says nothing of corruption and looting in other federal ministries and in the civil service of the thirty six states of the federation nor does it speak of the customs department and of the private sector.

In sum, the above factors (inclement weather, an unfair world economic order, corruption, incompetence and

mismangement in public office and political instability) have combined to drive Africa into a very severe socio-economic crisis. Consequently, hunger and malnutrition are the greatest killers in Africa. According to figures provided by the United Nation's Economic for Africa, 100 million Africans, a quarter of the continent's population, get less than 80 percent of their daily food needs, while thousands, died every day from malnutrition.

This situation reached a climatic head in 1984/85 and 1991/92 with several hundreds of thousands dying of hunger and starvation in Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia. Only the effective intervention of the international community and the highly successful fund-raising efforts of leading pop musicians prevented catastrophe from reaching the proportions of the Nazi holocaust. Human misery of such proportions calls for a programme of development that is ethically grounded.

Development Cooperation and Ethical Propositions

The problems of the North and the South are interlinked. Many of the problems that exist in the South and characterise the so-called 'under-development' are also to be found in the North. Some examples include destruction of the environment, health problems, and refugees. Many of the goals that have been set in the context of cooperative development work for the South are equally important for the North, for example, strengthening democratic structures and environmentally supportable food production. A lot of the problems that currently exist in

the South can be traced back to structures and modes of behavior found in the North, for example, the debt problem, unequal trade relations and culture alienation.

Development must take place in the North and in the South simultaneously, and on a reciprocal basis. 'Development' can no longer be understood as something that is almost exclusively necessary for the so-called 'developing countries'. Cooperation development work can no longer be regarded as something that is applied by the North to the South. Cooperative work only makes sense and is justifiable when it is viewed from a global standpoint and when its activities are defined on a reciprocal basis.

Development has to be redefined through a more democratic process, socially, politically and economically, with simultaneous interdependent changes in the North and in the South. For example, the analysis of the problems, the discovery of the potentials and the definition of the goals in a particular area must take place simultaneously with regard to the North and to the South. Parallel measures to realise the collectively defined aims have to be undertaken in the West as well as in the 'third world'.

Interference in Foreign Society is Justifiable on the Basis of Reciprocity

The dominance of the North over the South is based on economic and military supremacy. A solely economic viewpoint that prevails in cooperation and development has thereby justified the one-sided interference by the North. This standpoint reflects a hidden Euro-centric ideology that requires the South to evolve along the same lines as the North and accept the 'logic' of market-based economic thinking. The industrialised countries are regarded as the centre of the world and the model to which the developing countries as marginal and subordinated areas are adjoined. It is in this sense that cooperative work has to be decolonised.

Cooperative Development Work Requires New Forms of Communication and Analysis

Development is a complex social process in which a very large number of different influences and powers interfere. Cultural, social, emotional and symbolic aspects are, therefore, as important as the economic dimension. Development models cannot completely take account of the role played by these powers. For comprehensive cooperative development work, the intensification and distinction of the communication between partners in the North and the South is important. Democratically organised structures and forms of communication and analysis have to be developed cooperatively, in which vision, openness and willingness to learn have a place, and values, as measured by the North, do not dominate. This

also requires that existing power differences are made transparent and subject of discussion.

Cooperative Development Work has to be Engaged in Just Distribution

The worldwide prevalence of the market economy system also integrates the so-called developing countries more strongly into the world market. The exception is the poorest countries that tend to be dissociated from the world economy. Attempts at delinking from the world market as a chance to pursue self-reliant development, have to lead to a dead one. It is the task of cooperative development work to counteract the continuing concentration of economic power in the North. The aims in the South as in the North are the limitation of unchecked market forces, the redistribution of power and wealth at all levels and the strengthening of local and regional structure.

Decision Making to Lie with Mixed Bodies

The competence to take decisions has to lie with bodies in which South and North have equal representation. The democratic functioning of these organs and the realisation of common criteria for the implementation of the measures have to be guaranteed. The interdependence of problems of both the North and the South require specific strategies for resolution. Cooperative work between two countries, regions, and partners can, in practice, take on different

forms. Change should be realised by targeted measures that have positive effect on global problems.

For example, alliance with the same objectives between partners in the North and South who can attain the goal through the use of specific measures. An example of such a goal is the reduction of carbon monoxide emissions. In both regions, appropriate measures should be adopted to improve a situation that has a particularly negative effect in the South although the problem is rooted in the North. For example, the prevention of the flight of capital from a 'third world' country to Switzerland is another.

Cooperative Development Work is Not Only the Business of Aid Organisations

Cooperative development work that is based on a double approach cannot remain the business of aid organisations alone. It demands cooperation with movements, organisations and institutions in the North and in the South, that are accordingly active in the area. Governments, Churches, trade unions, etc, cannot delegate the responsibility for balanced development between the North and South to aid organizations. The aim of this broad-based cooperation is an improved coherence in the relationship between the West and the countries of the 'third world'.

Making Contacts are Concrete Ways of Gaining New Experiences

The simultaneous realisation of activities that are by their definition interlinked makes possible a broader exchange between groups, organisations, villages and towns in the North and in the South. This means a further development in initial links that already exist today. What is important is the development of networks between individual projects and their foundation within a global framework.

CHAPTER 3

Potentialities for Development in Traditional, Social and Economic Structures in West Africa

Introduction

This topic is as exciting as it is difficult, for, what is Africa? Who is African? And where do the identities and the differences start or end? The answers to these questions expose a poor medley of contradictory answers.

Within the continent itself, there is a dramatic *petitio principii* in vogue. The Ogbunike Clansman, ignorant of the geography and politics of Africa, is categorised as an "African". But for him, he is an Ogbunike man, period.

The standard Massai or Kikuyu clansman who is antagonistic to the Kenya national idea and reality is also designated an 'African'.

The Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa tribesman who consider Nigeria not to be a nation, but merely a geographical expression, and who even fight the Nigerian Nation are, too, designated as 'African'.

In Uganda, there was a policy and praxis of 'Africanisation' that identified Tanzanians as aliens. Right now, there are religious, ethnic, political and tribal conflicts within Liberia, Togo, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, and all over the continent. Nigeria today, for example, is a country with over one hundred and fifty million people, and a notable external similarity is the colour of the black skin. Its people have about 250 languages, different values, ideas about life and cultural patterns, yet are seen in a similar way.

The Nigerian Society is so diversified that with a journey from the northern part to the south of the same 'united country', one actually feels like having travelled through so many nations. The difficulty in discussing a pan-African identity can be readily understood from this example.

You would, therefore, ladies and gentlemen, see with me, that to talk about Africa and its heritage, one has to trail on grounds that contain major *petitio principii* and contradictions. We have before us the search, like Heidegger would say, "for knowledge which is capable of being on the lookout for something and seeing it as it really is". The search for, and the seizure of, that being (knowledge) which can be properly called and identified as African seems to be as ontological as the description of this ontology may be phenomenological.

In June this year, Theology Interkulturel of the Faculty of Theology, University of Frankfurt, organised a Colloquium

which focused on determining the rationality inherent in cultures with the aim of finding the basis for the one Human Right for all and the Right to indigenous development.

The participants discussed elaborately and intensively, from various backgrounds and experiences, the cultural, ethical and religious aspects of development. The present situation of events in Africa, the pre-colonial and colonial tragedies which have virtually paralysed growth in the continent coupled with man-made and natural hindrances to full development were discussed. The Colloquium, I understood, was part of the preparations for this dignified International Symposium.

As a participant of this Colloquium, I maintained, as I still do, that the failure of so many development projects and strategies in Africa could be attributed largely to the fact that many Westerners ('European experts') and genuine agencies concerned with justice and development, unfortunately, are concerned with development solely in economic and technological terms, seldom recognizing the place of other important elements inherent in the idea of development such understanding of the term. Could there ever be authentic development without man? That is, without the human society's ethical, cultural, social and religious background in view?

One fact that confirms the foregoing is the idea that many economic development models conceived in Western nations and found workable there, when transported to African nations failed woefully. They failed because the 'experts' considered in isolation the concept of development primarily from the point of view of economy and technology, when this idea was rather broad and integral.

Of course, such models did work in the industrialised northern developed nations themselves, but failed upon trial elsewhere. One of Germany's greatest sons and thinkers, Max Weber, recognised decades ago that there is much scope for closer investigation of the ways in which development entails ethical choices that are sustained in their turn by religious worldviews of widely differing cultural origins.

Max Weber demanded in an analogical fashion, that there is need to search for innovative potentials in other cultures of the world, that have the ability to carry on and sustain a self-reliant (independent) rationalisation and modernisation. Because of the specific affinity of religion to rationality, Max Weber accorded religion a primary role in this process of rationalisation and modernisation.⁹

⁹ Ref. Weber, Max, *Gesammelte Aufsätze Zur Wissenschaftslehre*, 3. Aufl. Tübingen, 1968, pp. 594(f).

Culture of Course is not Static

Even though culture refers to the entire way of life of a people, past and present, there is always evidence of a dynamic interplay of factors necessitating progress, adaptation and interaction. Cultural change, therefore, is a constant challenge for a people to maintain cultural continuity in the face of new conditions.

It is not just the transfer of technology or economy that is at stake. More at stake is the search for categories for the definition and evaluation of cultural, ethical and religious conditionalities relevant for the development and potentials of modernisation of Africa.

What we need in Africa are avenues for creating a basis of categories, which determine development potentials forming the basis for authentic development. Attempts by people of non-Western cultures to develop themselves according to their priorities, innovative rationality, cultures and worldview have all too often been discussed as irrelevant, interrupted and stopped as history records testify to the abrupt abortions via the pre-colonial (slave trade), colonial (foreign imposition) and neo-colonial (internal alienation) strategies which interrupted the political, economic, social, cultural and technological possibilities for development within Africa. This is not the place to narrate the multifarious tragedies of the black man. History books and our own practical experiences have a lot

in stock about this anomaly, which Anierobi Ngwube describes as "ethical savagery, moral barbarism and moral cannibalism".

Persistent Ignorance about Africa

Let me focus on another matter of major importance, as it is in itself a *petitio principii*. There exists within Europe, an embarrassing ignorance of what Africa is - its culture, its people and its destiny. We do not blame Europe. We blame ignorance of the fact that much of what is known or written about Africa has been produced by non-Africans, most of whom are European intellectuals and 'experts', and much of it is blackmail. A general tendency has been to 'look down' on Africa and Africans as the 'continent of hunger', 'the white man's grave', 'the land inhabited by lions, scorpions, and reptiles and monstrous animals', 'the cannibal peoples of the forest and equatorial regions', 'the land of slaves', 'the continent of heat', 'dumping ground for the wastes of the Western world', 'continent to exploit its mineral resources', 'the land of black people with black souls as dark as the devil and destined to be the wretched of the earth', 'the dark-skinned people whose religion, culture, politics, art etc., is uncivilised and primitive', in its degrading understanding. Thus, whatever is bad is given the term 'black'.

- Black Magic,
- Black Market,
- Black Money,
- Black Business,

- Black Devil,
- Black Religion,
- Black Is BAD

This, and many others prejudices (sometimes done in good will and good faith), have been formulated by Western anthropologists, scientists, historians, travelers, adventurists, writers, cultural ethnologists, politicians, traders, and missionaries, among a host of those whose prejudices, misleading books and false authority about the continent have led many innocent truth-searching and interested listeners astray.

A Mirage, therefore, Hangs over the Continent

Such negative, misleading and false views about Africa seem nonetheless to prevail in some quarters still, despite several attempts by honest, good willing and objective persons to present AFRICA as it is in its entire practice and ethical views. Africa was already great even before Greek Civilisation arrived.¹⁰

The Igbo people of Nigeria worked already on iron at a time when historically, Europe was still in the stone age, as Ngwuibe Anierobi has written elsewhere. “In every civilisation, you find the African Architect”.

¹⁰ Davidson, B., *Discovering Africa's Past*, London, 1978.

For us Africans, a Symposium of this nature has its worth and value strongly in the fact that it grants us the opportunity before policymakers to say ourselves, without an interpreter, what is and what is not AFRICA. We can reverse the frames of reference, establish our values differently, give new definitions from African frames of reference, leading to interpretations, perceptions, goals, responses and behaviour patterns which portray Africans as authentic, without necessarily contradicting the university truths that guide mankind.

The reality of Africa is more complex than many think. It is dangerous to treat the continent as one piece. It is clearly not a famine-stricken continent, even if natural and man-made causes have unleashed famine in some areas over time.

Africa is the name of the continent located in the Eastern hemisphere of the earth, South of Caucasian Europe, South of Mongoloid Asia, between the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. It is the continent where scientists teach us that man first arose, where art, religion and philosophy commenced, where civilisation began. It is the fatherland of the dark-skinned people, who, beginning in the Fifteenth Century A.D. were massively, racially and globally taken by aliens into slavery. It is the continent that poses itself aesthetically as a question mark and which from time immemorial has attracted men of all races and continues to call on its descendants by all means to embrace its fatherhood.

Africa is the continent inhabited largely by, and belonging to, the race of dark-skinned people. Africa continues to claim its children by investing its colour on its children wherever they may be and however they are 'produced'. Africa also marks out its children by investing its clear physical and cultural features on them, no matter the continent or country in which they possess legal 'citizenship.'

Section II

Potentialities for Development in Traditional, Social and Economic Structures in West Africa

"People who do not look back to their ancestral-cultural heritage cannot look forward to posterity"¹¹. The Kenyan novelist, Ngugi Wa Thiongu, in his book 'Devil on the Cross', graphically portrays the nature of Africa's tragedy in the face of the continent's present problems of internal and external degradation in a moving parable about the peasant farmer and Ogre. He writes

The Old man told me... of a peasant farmer who used to carry an Ogre on his back. The Ogre had sunk his long nails into the neck and shoulders of the peasant.

¹¹ Ozor Neife Ozoike, 100 year old man from Umana Ndiagu, Nigeria

The peasant was the one who went into the fields to get food, the one who went into the valleys to fetch water, the one who went to the forest to get firewood and the one who did the cooking. The Ogre's job was to eat and thereafter sleep soundly at the back of the peasant. As the peasant became progressively thinner and more depressed at heart, the Ogre prospered and flourished, to the extent of being inspired to sing hymns that exhorted the peasant to endure his lot on earth with fortitude for he would later find his rest in heaven. One day the peasant went to the diviner, the diviner told him that the solution was for the peasant to boil some oil and pour it on the nails of the Ogre when he was fast asleep. The peasant said: "What if I should burn my back?" The diviner said; "Nothing good was ever born of perfect conditions. Go home". The peasant was saved from certain death only when he did what he had been advised to do by the diviner. ('Ngugi Wa Thiongo'. Devil on the Cross, London, 1988, p.62).

It is sad and tragic to note that while the peasant farmer in Ngugi's parable found the courage to follow the diviner's advice unto salvation by burning part of his back with oil and successfully killing the Ogre, many people on the continent have neither found the wits nor the pluck to free themselves from certain alienating, anti-cultural and exploitative tendencies from the East, the West or even from introduced religion operating now in Africa, whether Christianity or Islam.

A return to the origins and a hard look into certain areas of our African culture should lead us to develop, out of these original sources, internal potentialities for development in economic, political and social fields.

This is my aim in this section, and I shall single out the family, art, religion, land, property, communality, law, political organisations, economic enterprise, birth and death, as areas for reflection. In the past, there is ample evidence to show that programmed efforts to develop Africa built on the basement of Euro-American and Arab-Islamic experiences and influences instead of via the peculiar history and culture of Africa boomeranged and did not benefit the citizens of the continent.

This has resulted in the total collapse of the external paradigms of development orchestrated and pursued by hosts of development advisers and experts. These models collapsed because, like the Marxist model in Eastern Europe, they were external make-ups, lacking in roots in the mind, culture and philosophy of the people and thereby side-stepping adaptation which is the only possibility, for assimilation of alien-cultures for internal progress.

As a result of this ill-adaptation, this paper has joined the call by many well-meaning researchers and social scientists in Africa and elsewhere to conclude that a long-lasting and effective development in Africa must work out its own

development models from our local civilisations. No matter how 'sub-standard', 'under-developed', primitive or slow it may be, Africa and Africans as things stand now cannot make long-term progress if we do not move at our own pace, learn from our past, slow as it may be, nonetheless gradually progressive, constructive and authentically African.

Thus, religion, ethics, technology, culture, social-structural organisational patterns existent in Africans' local cultures grow to become tap-rooted models of development which can last and lead to the much needed integral development of the continent.

I. Large Family

It is not easy to make generalisations about Africa. One area where many non-Africans see the original African lifestyle is in the family.

The essence of community sharing, 'live and let live' and togetherness was shown through the large family. The family was a sign of 'LIFE'. Loneliness was unknown. The large and extended family offered possibility for social security and social insurance. John Mbiti's famous saying still holds in Africa; "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am". Marriage showed in traditional society that LOVE is communal, not individual. Marriage was, thus, a union of two families, two clans, two villages and not just a love/private relationship between two persons (male and female). The communal dimension strengthened the

longevity of marriage and reduced separation/divorce. Egoism was reduced. Marital love and care was a societal responsibility.

Worldwide today, there is a crisis of the family expressed via divorces, population control, new models of child upbringing etc. Could these problems not receive a different solution method in the context of Africa?

2. Art

The people of the continent distinguish themselves from others in many forms and matters, art being one of them. African Art (in spite of variations in the many African Societies), share the same characteristic form, never embodies or presents suspense, essentially offers its music, artifacts, poetry drama, sculpture, folktales and paintings in such a way as to vividly establish equilibrium and to glorify harmony. African art often portrayed society. Its typical power was illustrated in terms of a specific philosophical pre-occupation, namely force. Force is, to the pure African, vital. It is a universal, omnipotent energy to which all thought and action are related.

To exist is to live vigorously, for active force is existence and existence is force. If existence and vital force are correspondents, then none of them may be overcome. Hence, the aesthetic establishment of symmetry, balance and equilibrium is essential to the production, distribution

and appreciation of African Art. Harmony is a fundamental aesthetic goal.

There is a need to discover original African Music and Art and the spirit of harmony behind it as a way of solving conflict situations on the continent today.

3. Religion

Art points beyond itself, from a philosophical point of view. Art points to the Divine and to religion, and every work of art says to the beholder, "Look beneath and beyond me for what I represent and say is more than what you see". Deeply expressive, yet modest, it concerns itself with life, in faces and figures showing man in his nature and activities in the stages of his ancestry, birth, life, death, mystery and power. Here again, it must be said that African Art, because of the said philosophical pre-occupations, is never a question of matter alone. The aliment of spirit, which is the breach of the Divine, of God, of God in man, is always present. For the African is everywhere a vehicle to religion, as John Mbiti reports:

Traditional religion permeates all the departments of life. There is no formal distinction between the sacred and the secular, between the religious and the non-religious, between the spiritual and the material areas of life. Wherever the African is, there is his religion.... In traditional Africa, there are no irreligious people. The human is to belong to the whole community, and to do so, involves participation in the beliefs, ceremonies,

rituals and festivals of the community.... African people do not know how to exist without religion."

Traditional African Religion is non-institutional. It is communal in the same way that African Art products are expressions of some community is peculiar. One exists in an African society through active participation in the art, religion and philosophy of the community. This *Geist* is here called 'Communality' - the theory of which is also called 'Communalism' by many African thinkers. In this communality, participation as theory and as praxis is of course of crucial importance. Because the earth provides the goods of this world (food, trees, sand, water) and also consumes the goods of this world (burial, decay, human beings taken back to the bowels of the earth), the earth was worshipped and respected. This worship was a female-oriented type of religious show, thus, the Earth was seen as a 'goddess', a constant recipient of water from heaven (male god), a giver and taker.

4. Land

In the pure African Society governed by a humanistic community spirit, LAND belongs to no one. Land belongs to the people. The individual and hence, the family, have the right to the sacred and secular utilisation of the land, but not appropriation in the absolute sense. For as Chancellor Williams observes:

Land is seen as God's gifts to man for use as a sacred heritage, transmitted by the forefathers as a bond between the living and the dead, to be held in trust by each generation for the unborn who will transmit it - thus to the last generation.

How could we reconcile this existent traditional view of land with border clashes prevalent now on the continent? What new interpretation could be given to the land that it assumes its original African connotation, namely, a mortgage to use and pass it on to the coming generations?

5. Property

In African Societies, property was a gift of God to someone. Property had no meaning if somebody accumulated too much for himself. The wealthy shared their wealth with others. In other words, property was a 'Social Mortgage', a thinking that could become very useful today. Respect for the environment, the trees, the water and nature was dynamically practiced. Only needs were tampered with in a religious sense. Exploitation was limited.

Is it possible in today's world to look at property less as acquisition and more from the point of need? Africa could avoid extreme materialism if only we looked inwards to discover our rich cultural heritage and place property in its right light as African culture shows.

6. Community

Taking the above together, pure African Society is fundamentally egalitarian, it is communalistic. In this society, every member has the right to a home, the right to equal protection before the law and traditions, the right to work, the right to care for others and be cared for whenever necessary, the right to protest and the right to rebel (even against the final decision of the community), the right to training, aid and other forms of education, the right to participation and leadership in government, art, religion and philosophy, and the right to inheritance and equitable sharing of all the benefits and undertakings of the community. These facts are part of the most remarkable achievements of the African - most remarkable because the African holds to these fundamentals, age after age, as if clutching to the last threads of life itself.

The African Communalism spiritually validates and establishes the psychological soundness, emotional sanity, social profitability and the individual benefaction the MULTIPLE-WIVES SYSTEM encourages. Its humanist quest for the fulfilment of all proper human instincts for the promotion of love and peace, to the satisfaction of the deep bio-social impulses of all women (not just a few women in a community) where women far outnumber men, and its will to perpetuate the family, the clan, the ethnic group, the 'Polls' and the race go far beyond the term 'polygamous' together with the infinite brood of wild

implications, racist connotations and libidinal overtones that attend this term.

7. Respect for Elders

Old age in African Culture is a gift of the gods, a sign of wisdom and a reward for good life. African societies generally respected the elderly and cared for them. The elderly lived within the given family milieu and guaranteed stability and historical presence. When an old man dies, it is like the tragic destruction of a library in Europe.

Among the requirements of the tradition is the principled respect for elders. For they are transmitters of past experiences, the existential links of the past and the present, and the nuclear bearers of tidings to the unborn, the ancestors, and the spirit-gods of the nether-world. The elder is the democratically chosen representative of each extended family or clan in the democratic government of the 'Polls'. He is a leader, and never a ruler, being an instrument for the execution of the religious, moral, philosophical and political will of the people. He remains the first and final source of governmental power. This form of respect for the elders and the inherent promotion thereby of continuity in tradition frowns at 'Methuselahian Authoritarianism', 'Foxy Machiavellianism' and 'wheel-chair romanticism'. Hence the assertion of Casely Hayford:

It is the duty of the head of the family to bring up the members thereof in the way they should go, and by family, you must understand the entire lineal

descendants of a head mater-families. It is expected of him by the state to bring up his charge in the knowledge of matters political and traditional. It is his Work to train up his wards in the ways of loyalty and obedience to the powers that be. He is held responsible for the freaks of recalcitrant members of his family, and is looked to keep them within bounds, and to insist upon conformity on their part with the customs, laws, and traditional observances of the community. Nor is the elder a candidate for dictatorship or tyranny, for to the degree that he represents the sovereign idea and receives the attendant homage and respect, to that same degree must he respect their time-honored laws, traditions, and sentiments. He may be called into account, should he act or talk otherwise, and may in serious cases, be deposed or asked to die. He leads but never rules, he guides but never governs.

8. Values

In African cultures, there was evidence that virtually the entirety of creation had a meaning, known or unknown to mankind. Creation was not meaningless.

The universe had a purpose in the mind of the creator. Thus, religion, sacrifice, worship and rites and rituals characterised mankind's response in Africa to the 'God of Creation' - 'Chineke'. Every Tree has a name and meaning. The seasons have names and meaning. Every individual

creature had a 'Chi' or personal deity (spirit) that was guiding it. There was no chance for accident. Value was given to sand, water, stars and in fact all nature. Agricultural seasons, economy, social life, culture, law, trade and art pointed beyond itself; "See beyond me - for I represent the deity among men". Thus, it was a deeply religious worldview.

(a) The Ancestors

Humanity had continuity and history. Ancestral worship expressed the respect and debt of the present generation to those who lived before, and this respect guaranteed to the present that the yet unborn would honour the dead. In other words, the living-DEAD, the ancestors and their worship showed belief in the continuity of LIFE (Eternal life) and the continuity of the human race in a historical respectful dimension.

(b) Faith Worship

Because the earth provides the good of this world, food, trees, sand, water and also consumes the goods of this world (burial, decay, human beings taken back to the bowels of the earth), the earth was worshipped and respected. This worship was a female-oriented type of religious show, thus, the earth as 'goddess' - a constant recipient of water from heaven (male god) a giver and taker.

(c) Social Roles

The gender issue (male or female) determined the roles of people in traditional society. In agriculture, trade, in economy, social life, politics and all aspects of culture, there was clarity as to the roles of men or women and their inter-dependent functions. Some of these roles were based on nature (e.g. the woman gives birth to children; the man climbs trees), or based on traditional roles (e.g. the man goes hunting, the woman plants greens around the house). The question of 'Emancipation of Women' (from what?) is a European question which came when roles became juxtaposed and confused.

(d) Celebration of Birth and Death and Events

The phenomenon of life, whether, in birth or in change of life through death was highly celebrated and an occasion for feasting. This attitude to life, seeing life and death as a gift, thus celebrating it enhances the dignity of human life and encourages the community. This practice is very persistent till today and is exemplary. Celebration via feasts and events encourages community harmony and peace.

(d) Love for Children and Procreation

African Societies loved children and still do. The barren are very sad. It is a curse for which religious rites are performed. In such a society, the future is guaranteed where there are children. The family is strengthened. Abortion is not a topic!

9. Human Rights/Ethics

The rights of the individual was guaranteed only within his clan or village milieu. Outside his clan or village, rights ceased to exist. The right to life, movement, freedom of speech and otherwise, the religious practice, were possible within the ambient of the immediate cultural existence and fully guaranteed. People outside this milieu were not automatic-recipients of those rights but could acquire it by good behaviour and peaceful co-existence. Ethics, 'do's' and 'don'ts', and morality were given a divine sanction, not rational/human explanation.

10. Law

The function of law was to preserve the given community. Law came either as a tradition handed over by the ancestors or as social construct agreed upon by the given-society. Law was not alien and obedience to it was not by grumble. The need for the law led to its obedience.

11. Political Organizations

Traditional African societies guaranteed full participation of all in the village communal responsibility of government, whether it was 'Republicanism' (Igbo Society), 'Controlled Monarchy' (Yoruba Society), or 'Theocratic-Feudalistic system' (Fulani). In all, the principle of PALAVER or communal debates for consensus was possible. Government and the affairs of the village concerned everyone. The age-grade system, the market, industry of arts and crafts, social checks and balances including the use

of moral, physical or otherwise SANCTIONS guaranteed the political existence of the UNIT.

SECTION III

Conclusion

The conclusion of this paper is a humble postulation that individual human beings living in a society are the basis of any meaningful development. Human resources, not just capital, income, technology, nor material resources constitute the ultimate basis of the wealth of nations.

The Catholic Social Teachings identified this noble truth during the Vatican Council for the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* explicitly states;

'Man is the author, the centre and the end of all social and economic life. Economic developments must remain under man's direction'.¹²

To put this in plain language: "Development is for man, not man for development".

A country which is unable to develop the skill and knowledge of its people and to utilise them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. In this connection, therefore, we can mention that Africa's search for progress certainly moves on in spite of

¹² *Gaudium et Spes* No.63

notable setbacks. There are many positive developments and we mention them briefly:

Here is a fresh look at Africa's signs of hope. Africa is a youthful continent, where two-thirds of the population are below 30 years of age and on the whole are better educated than their elders, more urbanised and more knowledgeable about the international scene.

The crisis of confidence and the broken psychology of the African after the colonial trauma seem to disappear gradually with the re-birth of self-confidence, through new African art and a mass of literature. People now think of their continent as the prime mover rather than the object of its own development.

Many people prefer to take an internalised critical view rather than copy other people, nay always blame other people for their problems. Africans are waking up to the fact that Africa must develop and not just survive with outside help or image. The 'MASSAI', the 'Igbo', the 'Nini', the 'Kikuyu', and the 'Fulani' never believed in self-pity or defeat.

There are signs of cultural revival in many countries. Local music is on the increase. African dresses and attire are in vogue. The use of local languages, aesthetics, art and various forms of culture are everywhere noticeable.

In the Christian Churches, there is a call to indigenisation and acculturation to elevate the African identity via local Church music and rites, despite a seemingly official opposition from the central authority of these Churches.

The economic record is more varied than is often imagined and fortunately does not always reflect decline and death except for war-ridden zones.

Improvement in living standards such as housing, food and education is taking place, even if new problems in the same areas are coming up due to inadequate policies, rising populations and official mismanagement. Nonetheless, resources abound if only they could be well utilised. Signs of economic recovery, using Western indices are there and many nations of Africa are resetting their priorities alongside economic reform.

Enterprise is a popular tradition in Africa as is the market economy. More effort should be channeled to move from "private survival to collective take-off". Africans have to wake up to the fact that self-development and self-reliance is the only guarantee for long-term economic survival, rather than surviving on the charity of the outside world solely.

Change and Challenges

The United Nation Deputy Secretary-General and interim Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) told the 18th meeting of the Conference of African Development and Economic Planning Ministers in Addis Ababa on 20th-24th April 1992, that change necessitates challenge (CREF. ISSA B. Y. Diallo, in the Courier, ACP-EEC, N. 134, July/August 1992, Bruxelles, ISSN 1013, 7335, P.59). "The world is changing and Africa particularly is changing with it. The most obvious signs of change there are at the moment basically, that many conflicts in and between states are being settled, notwithstanding, the resurgence of others, that a move is being made towards democratic systems of government, thanks to the will of the people themselves, and that there is increasing awareness that better inter-African co-operation will speed up economic integration like the signing of the charter setting up the African Economic Community in Abuja on 3rd June 1991" (Ibid, p. 59).

The big challenge for the rest of this decade is in encouraging economic and social change with both a forward-looking and inward-looking hindsight, promoting regional co-operation in a political, economic and social climate which is constantly changing, and this is already having noticeable effects in the countries of Africa.

After three decades, during which the United Nations adopted international development strategies, Africa has looked at its disappointing economic results and realised

that it has itself to do most of the work required to meet its growth targets. 'Afro-pessimism' is destructive and surely not a way to view the continent.

The current drive for economic, political and social reform in line with world-wide developments is to be encouraged and not greeted with polite expectation, resignation, fear, exclusion or worse still, division, Africa is on the move in spite of centuries of oppression and aggression. Not all that has been labelled development has been proven, after some time, to be development proper. After critical evaluations, we are able to see today that technology and its progress may lead to a higher level of communication and production among men including the mastering of the environment, but many human beings have become degraded, marginalised and reduced in their worth, basic dignity and in their rights because of this negative form of technology, but not at the cost of man's dignity.

It is not every development in America or everything called development that must qualify in Africa as development.

In other words, there is further need in Africa, based on our values, to set out new criteria for development within the continent.

CHAPTER 4

Poverty from the Viewpoint of the Church and the African Context

I. Poverty- Conceptual Clarifications

Poverty, like justice, is a much-misunderstood concept and in practice, much-neglected and abused. Our human societies have become increasingly divided, as philosophical schools continue their categorisations of society with definitions of absolute poverty, real poverty and relative poverty. It is agreeable to state that *poverty is not destiny, it is caused*. The Holy Book commonly accepted by the Great Religions of the Jews, Muslims and Christians in chapter one of Genesis records that “*the creator made all things in heaven, on the earth and under the earth in abundance and placed mankind within it to nurture and fill it with goodness*”.

The reality on the ground, however, shows that the responsible agents of creation, human beings, often do not allow that the goods of the earth are proportionately shared out, amidst wars, greed, corruption and the quest for inclusion and access by some alongside the continuing gap and exclusion caused by others. Yet, “the world is sufficiently endowed to cater for the basic needs of every human person”, and this situation repeats itself unfortunately in virtually all countries, differing only on the

grades, the quantity and the quality. Children die daily in Africa, up to the tune of forty thousand, because they have nothing to eat and no medicine to solve curable diseases, in a world presently capable of feeding everybody ten times over yet medications are bum off by pharmaceuticals as their prices are beyond reach by many considered poor. It is no secret that humanity stands before the cataclysmic woe of a possible nuclear war, for which huge resources on weapons are spent annually, capable of destroying human ecology, the environment and even entire life.

This situation of massive production and storage of arms makes a caricature of the human predicament which allows peoples and leaders of nations, and as a result, parties and policies to pursue an agenda to enjoy, “the wicked flan of dying each person ten times over, yet unwilling to feed its 7 billion citizens with just one meal a day”. On this human situation, the saintly Augustine of Hippo, who, several centuries ago in North Africa asked the question: “*Remota Justitia quid sunt regna sisi magna latrocinia? (Without Justice, are States not but a band of robbers enlarged?)*” (Cf. Augustine, ‘City of God’, IV, xv),

We submit in this paper that there is no generally accepted definition of the term, poverty. Yet, scientists and people seem to acknowledge and understand its presence and to refer to it generally as the “*absence of qualities, attributes or resources, but particularly to the absence of material and economic resources*” (cf. A Dictionary of Christian Ethics, edited by John Macquarie, SCM Press Ltd, London, 1967, p.

264). This understanding makes poverty relative, and expresses the reality of a certain lack of means, basic needs and resources necessary for human and economic development in each group, individual or context, which others do not lack in other contexts. Poverty is, therefore, a state of lack, mental, physical, socio-economic, spiritual or environmental.

An attempt to create a universally agreeable understanding of the term was first initiated in 1900 by B. Seebohm Rowntree in his book 'Poverty and Progress' (1941), where he defined poverty as "*the possession of an income insufficient to maintain merely physical efficiency*". Since then, research students and institutions have assumed levels acceptable as compliant to human needs standards, also known as basic needs, below which the community should not allow people to fall.

The United Nations and constitutions of various countries, international conventions, Christian groups, non-governmental organizations and the media in the modern world have sometimes referred to the *poverty line* as "*living below two USD per day*". For several years, genuine attempts at waging a war against poverty through various ideas, actions, targets, standards and measures considered dignifying enough for human beings, made in God's image and likeness have been established despite obvious challenges, partial successes, and many failures, The

Millennium Development Goals (MDG) propagated by the United Nations and signed unto by all Member States set a target date from 2000 to 2015 for poverty reduction and tackling the scourge of poverty universally.

As the UN target culminates in 2015, poverty continues as a reality for the existence of women, children and men, with its ugly nature and consequences challenging humanity, and especially the Church, to a more determined drive to continue its mission of love with the power of the Gospel to help eradicate the sources of poverty, or at the least, working in consort with others, enhance poverty reduction through a value and virtue orientation of humanity, in its theology, its mission and her action. The recent election of Pope Francis in March 2013, with his agenda to focus on poverty in all its forms, enlivens this hope and brings the topic of poverty, its eradication and the challenges on the Catholic Church at the centre stage of reflection.

2. The Reality of Poverty from the African Context

The reality of poverty is present in many countries and in manifold forms. Concerning the continent, President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania once said; "*Africa is on economic mess*" (Ref: Ike/Igboaja/Ani; 'Towards an indigenous African Church', CIDJAP, Enugu, 1996, p. 82). Africa, accepted by historians as the "*origin of mankind*" and the "*cradle of civilisation*" and the epitome of culture, religion, art and human values is today treated as a child in international matters. Others speak for the stand-in for Africans in their own affairs.

Of Africa, especially in the sub-Saharan parts, *physical poverty and lack of basic needs* are real in the lives of children who cannot be born and whose mothers die at childbirth. The statistics of the United Nations Development Index place the figures at one death per ten children and the same for the mothers in a horrific child and maternal mortality report. They die because they are sick and do not have access to medical care, doctors, hospitals, sanitation, money and nurses to save lives in the many villages, hovels and remote places where peoples of the continent still live in horrendous and primitive situations.

The scourge of HIV/AIDS in Africa is its largest clientele, with over 40 percent of the world's cases. In entire villages of Uganda, Kenya, the Congo and Central African Republic, an entire population of youth has been wiped away. Lack of access to food and water remains a major concern and the parlance by young university students for food intake in many cases is 0-1-0, meaning that of three meals per day, two fall off. Poverty is real in the absence of basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, water and housing, which are basic for civilisation to emerge. In the midst of plenty, with abundant mineral and natural resources, many African nations are endowed, yet, human weakness and the reality of sin make corruption, greed, violence and power struggles entrench poverty and deprive people of the

abundant wealth, throwing them into unimaginable forms of deprivation, hunger and want.

There is persistent *poverty caused by ecological and environmental degradation* in the landslides happening in the various valley and plains of the region, occasioned by heavy winds torrential equatorial rainfall, human invasion and deforestation. Even lack of rains for many years causes famine-stricken zones of the Sahel regions Africa resulting in the plight of women and widows. Youth who are unemployed, in some cases up to seventy percent of the workforce of the country, are without jobs and children, many of them street children who have no homes, and no family support are, therefore, without identity.

Wars caused by internal and external factors since the slave trade, the colonial period and the neo-colonial structures, as well as the world trade, imbalance of economic relations, the arms trade and the 'cold war', which was 'really hot' in Africa, has effects which continue to impoverish the continent. Due to these factors, poverty is not imagined, it is real in the lives of many people worldwide, but particularly of people in Africa, who merely physically live, but do not truly live, and are not regarded, not respected and not registered.

African nations still have the largest number of the world's 21 million refugees, with about 60 percent of displaced people forced to live outside their homes. They come from countries such as Mali, the Sahara and Maghreb regions,

Chad and Niger Republic, Somalia, Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Libya, to mention but a few. These refugees are abused, debased and denied their rights. Some of them make it to the other countries but land in their prisons, prostitute professions and asylum centres.

Poverty rears its ugly head in the teeming numbers of illiterate and uneducated people, including adults as well as children, who watch classrooms from the outside, as many have never entered into them to learn or to be certified, educated or trained. Thus, girls in the majority, and due to some cultural practices as in the Northern parts of Muslim Nigeria are married out young, without education and skills to make a living, while boys are sent to hawk on the streets during the day when others are in school and have no education.

The lack and abuse of human rights remains real in many African nations, without democratic dispensation, the ability for self-assertion, required freedom of movement, speech or even religion. This, for example, is the case with attempts to impose the Sharia legal system on non-Muslim citizens in twelve states of Nigeria since 2000. The prisons and detention centres are filled with stories of police and state brutality, misplaced justice and the cry for liberation from oppression.

It is this background that made Hyacinthe Cardinal Thiandoum of Dakar Senegal reflect in his speech at the First Plenary Assembly of the Bishops on Africa in 1994 with his rhetoric, *“In a continent full of bad news, how is the Christian message good news for our people? In a situation of all-pervading despair, where lies the hope and optimism which the Gospel brings?”* (Africa Synod, 1994, Vatican, ‘Relation Ante Disceptationem’ n, 2).

Saint Pope John Paul II, himself, in rendering the Apostolic Exhortation *‘Ecclesia in Africa’* also emphasised the fact of poverty in Africa and called for solidarity and human compassion, saying, *“Africa is a continent where countless human beings, men and women, children and young person, are lying, as it were, on the edge of the road, sick, injured, disabled, marginalized and abandoned. They are in dire need of the good Samaritan who will come to their aid”* (JP II, EIA. n. 41).

3. The Reality of Spiritual Poverty in the Western Hemisphere

Poverty has other ugly faces, experienced internationally as mental, social (absence of family and human care) and spiritual poverty which is the lack of faith in God or in man, and thus, the absence of any absolute meaning in God, nature or creation, expressed through the *“dictatorship of relativity”* (Pope Benedict XVI).

This is the type of poverty that not only involves a lack of resources, but of a lack of being fully free and human, and results in the lack of meaning in any transcendence and

absence of any hope for a fulfilling life outside the imminent. This is the situation of many people, particularly those living in the so-called Western industrialised and developed countries, who, though having adequate material, and economic, infrastructural resources and the needs satisfied, are internally empty, spiritually in search and without a deeper meaning of the essence of human life as an *'odumbrolio'*.

The growing atheism, nihilism and utilitarian hedonism practiced shows lack of faith in God and therefore, a lack of fulfillment and happiness. Many countries of the Western hemisphere such as the USA, Great Britain, Austria, Switzerland and Germany amongst others, have battled material and physical poverty comparatively, succeeding in reducing, if not completely eradicating, its effects and causes. These countries have achieved programs such as:

- a) A system of social insurance covering the whole population;
- b) A system of national assistance and supplementary benefits for those who have escaped insurance or for whom national insurance is insufficient;
- c) Family allowances;
- d) Health service which is nearly free and has virtually eliminated ill health as a major consequence and cause of poverty;

- e) Government's effort and undertaking to maintain full employment and;
- f) Distribution of private charity as support to public efforts, especially by the Church.

Despite these achievements in fulfilling the infrastructural space and providing for the means that end physical poverty, spiritual poverty appears as the worst and indeed the most acute for which the salvific mission of the Church is called to render urgent apostolic mission based on her mandate to "*go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to all creation*". (Matthew 28:20).

4. Poverty - the challenges upon the Church

The Second Vatican Council challenged the entire Church in the decree '*Gaudium et Spes*', "*to consider the signs of the times and translate them in the light of the Gospel*" (GS. 1965, n 1). Unlike previous theological approaches which drew attention to the scriptures and traditions as enough for knowing God's will, Vatican II pointed to a new source found in Catholic Social Thought and Theology, enunciated since the encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum* of 1891 by Pope Leo XIII which recognises events and situations amidst the aspirations of people. In this new theology, human beings cannot be separated from their social conditions where biblical references make sense in a contextually theological and social interpretation.

In 1971, the World Synod of Bishops held under Pope Paul VI on the topic "*Justice in the World*" added to this new

wholly, to the Gospel by maintaining that *“action for justice and peace and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us a constitutive dimension of the teaching of the Gospel, or in other words of the Church's mission for the salvation of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation”*.

This position makes it imperative to interpret the Christian message within the context of experience of those who are victims of a hostile society, those who have been denied the development and legitimate enjoyment of the fruits of our common human and material resource and reduced to the level of chattels, those who are the prisoners of human-inflicted permissive society, and those marginalised (Refer to Ike, Obiora, ‘Church and Society in Dialogue,’ 1990, p 22 ff).

What can the Church do for them? How can the Church in Nigeria, in Africa and indeed worldwide respond to the massive injustice and poverty in society to which she is called to be the salt and light? How do we turn to be disciples of Christ whose entire life was founded on the love of God, manifested in the mysteries of the incarnation and Crucifixion for the redemption of the human race from sin, thus his teaching: “I came that they may have life and have it in abundance” (John 10:10). The response to the above questions on the Church in Nigeria and elsewhere is

to simply say that "WE HAVE NOT DONE ENOUGH". The challenges ahead are, therefore, enormous.

5. Preferential Option for the Poor

The first action for the Christian churches as found in the teacher of the prophets of the old, the life and teaching of the master himself, Jesus Christ and the traditions of the Church found in the magisterial documents, is to make a preferential option for the poor. This implies a commitment of oneself and available energies and resources to resist injustice, oppression, exploitation and marginalisation of people that has permeated almost every aspect of public life. It is a commitment to transforming society into a place where human rights and the dignity of all are respected. This option can be made by individuals, by communities or even by the whole Church (Dwyer, I. A; the New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought; 1994. P. 755).

Options for the poor is a choice freely made by people as a personal choice, with people who are not poor themselves, becoming aware that their relative wealth and advantage imposes upon them a duty to cater for the less privileged and identify with the underprivileged. Options for the poor can also be made by those already poor, to be in solidarity with other underprivileged people, rather than trying to take advantage of them and to join the rich and powerful. This kind of choice is one that is deeply inspired from a deeper understanding of the Christian faith and spirituality, wishing to share in Christ's work of bringing salvation to

the world, understood in its totality, free from all forms of oppression, but non-violently.

It also has a political dimension which is the choice to refuse to identify with the oppressors at the top, whether economic, political, cultural, social or technological, and to disengage from serving or profiting from their interests and practices by a Gospel commitment that confronts evil with good and challenges the sinner to repent but does not condemn the sinner (John chapter 8 the woman caught in adultery, Luke chapter 15, the prodigal son).

This political type of preferential option for the poor is often misunderstood, resisted, rejected and accused as communist or given other media like cliches such as ‘liberation theology’ in a Marxist interpretation, and, therefore, made negative. This opposition comes mainly from the Western world with a widespread ‘tendency’ to “*empty religious faith of its public political dimension, reducing it largely to the sphere of personal and family morality*” (Dwyer, J; op- cit, p, 755)

The institutional Church itself, at every level, faces the challenge of making an option for the poor. This can be done by Church leaders who act on behalf of the faithful to take a stand and show acts that challenge structures of sin and, of course, the personal consciences of the sinner, from where the oppression itself begins.

A few examples are the documents on behalf of the people of God by the Catholic Bishops of Latin America at the Medellin Conference (1968), the World Council of Churches in Geneva with their document 'Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation', the African Church at the "Pan African Justice and Peace Conference in Roma, Lesotho (June 1988), the German Bishops Conference in their document on Poverty released by their group of experts, the USA Bishops Conference with their document 'Action For Justice' in 1983 challenging social exclusion, state laws that promote poverty (1983) and the Austrian Bishops Conference.

These such documents whose documents are several on the themes of poverty eradication, immigrant laws to be humane, and caritas care for the needy. The work of Mission International in Vienna to increase the awareness of love and solidarity within the European Churches and indeed worldwide shows such options for the poor, along with activities such as those earned out by Missio, Misereor, Kirche in justice and peace organs, Caritas and several innumerable parishes, individuals and Church institution and nongovernmental organizations that challenge physical, mental, spiritual and institutional structures that enhance poverty with concrete action and thought patterns, are agenda on the right path. They need all the encouragement possible.

All these go to show that the biblical injunction enunciated by Jesus Christ himself remains the sure path to go in

challenging poverty, for: *"I was hungry and you gave me to eat, naked you gave me to wear, sick and you visited me, in prison and you took care of me, homeless and you received me, in need and you came to my rescue"*.

6. Poverty in Spirit - a Voluntary Vocation

Poverty in the Old Testament was considered an object of sympathy (Psalm 41:1) and was not desirable for the righteous and the suffering of Yahweh who needed the intervention of God who stands on the side of the oppressed, especially His suffering people. The praise of poverty as bringing freedom from the burdens and temptations of sin is found in the teachings of Jesus Christ in the Bible. Jesus lived a very simple life, saying at a certain stage: *"Foxes have holes, birds at the air have their nests but the son of man has nowhere to lay his head"*.

He challenged the rich disciple to go "sell all he had" and come follow him, which was a tough challenge because the boy was attached to his wealth. The teachings of Jesus, also found in Hinduism, and in the early life of the prophets like John the Baptist who lived an ascetic life, did not condemn wealth but encouraged a dispassionate attitude and no attachment to wealth and worldly things. The beatitudes start with the first of eight blessings, namely: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God"* (Matthew Chapter 5) and points to a new image of the Solomonic

wisdom in the Old Testament: *“Vanity of vanities and all is vanity except to know God and to serve him alone”*.

Many Christian founders of Religious Orders like St. Francis of Assisi and St. Benedict of Nursia, to mention but only a few, chose freely to spend their lives in service of the poor, imitating Jesus Christ fully in his incarnation, the second Person of the Trinitarian Godhead who became human out of love for sinful man to save humankind and became truly poor. These saints denied wealth and its attractions yet used material means and resources to serve the people and empower the poor.

The early Church generally admired the solidarity of sharing the goods of the earth, and not its accumulation by only a few (Ananias and Saphira in Acts of the Apostles). This practice of the philosophic life of voluntary poverty and simplicity was studied by the early Fathers of the Church such as Eusebius and Origenes using the term *“Ascetism”* to describe it. The Benedictines for example, Cistercians, Franciscans and many other religious congregations of male and female foundations, including individual Christians, of lay and community lifestyles practice what is now termed ‘evangelical poverty’.

They accept and commit themselves to having no personal property whatsoever, but to have their needs provided for by the community adequately, though, not luxuriously. In some well administered and perhaps hard-working communities and religious congregations, individual property may be combined with corporate wealth, with the

excess going to the service of the poor in those areas where the religious found their ministries serving their apostolate. In essence, it was an act of free choice to work for the kingdom by denying oneself of one's fundamental rights that makes the Gospel what it is - a way of life beyond the earthly realistic towards eternal life.

7. Conclusion

“There shall be peace on earth, but not until each child shall daily eat his fill; Go warmly clad against the cold wind; and learn his lessons with a tranquil mind. And thus released from hunger, fear and need; Regardless of color, race or creed, look upwards to the skies; His faith in man reflected in his eyes”.

(Dorothy Roight; Ride with the Sun, McGraw Hill International Publishers)

CHAPTER 5

African Renaissance: Solidarity and Renewal within Africa Today

Introduction

"The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of men of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well" (Gaudium et Spes, No. 1).

The Platform for Dialogue:

1.1 Christianity and the Scandal of the African Predicament

The salvific mission of Christ was foreshadowed in the prophesy of Isaiah, where Christ's mandate included setting captives free, preaching the good news to the poor, and declaring the acceptable time of the Lord's favour¹³. The Church, in her social teachings, has always towed the line of her Master who became one of us in the mystery of the incarnation to give us the fullness of life in the Godhead (John 10:10) In spite of prevailing social stereotypes of his day, Christ broke new frontiers in a society steeped in

¹³ Obiora Ike; paper delivered at the Catholic University of Notre Dame, Chicago, Illinois, USA on the occasion of the USA - Africa Bishops Conference on "A Call to Solidarity with Africa" in November 2001.

ritualism, to make them realise that the glory of God is man fully alive (St. Ireneaus). Today the Church of Christ in America has not only heeded the Pauline call to “*come over to Macedonia and help us*”. She has raised her voice to question the terrible situation of ignorance, poverty and disease that has been the burden of Africa. In effect, the Church is once more fulfilling her social functions in fidelity to the gospel and the sacred traditions she received from the apostles. Today, the words of *Gaudium et Spes* has taken a living and breathing form in this hall. The joys and hopes and the pains and anguish of Africa have attracted universal attention. It has become that of the followers of Christ.

Africa, which is not a foreigner in the Church of Christ, came to the synodal attention of the Church, whose fruits have overflowed its banks to irrigate the perceptual universe of the American Bishops as they called America and the West to solidarity with Africa. This conference, therefore, presents in a remarkably unique way, an essential arena for the continuing dialogue between the ‘African’ predicament, the Church of Christ and men of goodwill.

For this, my thanks go to the Catholic Bishops Conference of America, as well as the organisers of this forum, who in fidelity to the gospel imperative have once more directed the searchlight of discourse on the plight of their less privileged brothers in Africa, bringing it up once more and refocusing the attention of the world on the scandalous plight of contemporary Africa. We pray that the fruits of

this conference will give birth to concrete actions directed towards ameliorating the trauma, pains and wounds of the African continent.

1.2 Africa and the West: Squaring up Accounts

The platform for dialogue and action availed us by the seminal document of the American Catholic Bishops Conference titled 'A Call to Solidarity with Africa' is a very timely action in the spirit of a preferential option for the poor. This document, which in fidelity to the traditions of the social teachings of the church went out in Christian empathy to the situation of gross deprivation presently entertained by millions of people in Africa, most providentially gave us equally, a platform for this conference in taking place in the heart of a country considered by many as the socio-economic and geopolitical epicentre of Western civilisation.

It is most providential that it is with the West that Africa has some accounts to square; an account which, if properly settled on terms gravitated by justice, the rights of man to dignity and development, solidarity and a renewed commitment to challenge the 'structures of sin', would see the emergence of a renascent Africa.

The interactions between the West and Africa did not originate in this hall. This interaction has spanned over five centuries. Our meeting today nevertheless is part of that

intercourse which has variously witnessed the good, the bad and the ugly. First, it was the exploratory trade, and then unequal exchange through slavery, colonisation and now neo-colonial exploitation and manipulation. In almost all instances of colonisation of African nations, this triumvirate pattern was manifest: first the traders, then the missionaries and finally the administrators. Thus, there seems always to be some ontological collaboration between commerce, religion and politics (government), nay a metaphysic that has always conduced to either development of people or conspired to exploit some others. Such a collaboration on the positive scale (solidarity) is what we intend to examine in erecting a base for the enthronement of an African renaissance.

With the West, Africa has ties that are deep and long rooted in history, ties from which we cannot easily disengage ourselves. The West brought us education, enlightenment, Christianity and Western civilisation, but also many other things among which exploitation and underdevelopment ranked high. African raw material has fed and continues to feed greedy entrails of Western industries, leaving Africa poor and scorched in the bargain. African markets have been the dumping ground of finished luxury goods which encourage non-productive consumerism as well as provide employment for the citizens of the West. The creme of African manpower was the yoke upon which the cultivation of the American plantations was laid.

Today equally, African manpower contributes in no small measure in the trained and semi-skilled manpower needs of many Western capitals, as the grim African predicament induces many sons of Africa into emigrating to some comfortable slavery in the West. It is with the West that Africa has the strongest economic, historical and political ties to date and the future of the African continent will be determined largely by the tenor of her relationship with the West, just as Africa's present economic climate is determined by the favor or policy indigestion of the London and Paris Clubs as well as their Breton Woods surrogates-IMF and World Bank.

In fact, any discussion on the fate and future of Africa, on the possibility of enthroning a sustainable base for an African Renaissance, must reckon with the West of which the American civilisation has assumed a central role. Indeed, it is largely with the West that we have to settle scores and balance accounts of the exploited peoples of Africa, with a view of liberating Africa from the clutches of underdevelopment.

1.3 Our Competence to Speak for Ourselves

There exists in many Western circles an embarrassing ignorance of what Africa is, through its culture, people and destiny. We do not blame the West. We blame ignorance. In these circles, Africa is seriously bad news, which serves no purpose save as a sad catharsis to a Western conceptual

scheme anesthetised by the narcotics of material hyperdevelopment. Most of these views are nourished by bias and a naive unwillingness to consider Africa from an empathic perspective. Much of what is known or written about Africa has been done by Non-Africans, most of whom are European intellectuals and 'experts', and much of it is undiluted blackmail.

A general tendency has been to 'look down' on Africa and Africans as the 'continent of hunger', a land inhabited by savages and cannibals that live on trees and arboreal arrangements, a dumping ground for the wastes of the Western world. The land of black people with black souls as dark as the devil and destined to be the wretched of the earth, a land where permissivity dwelt in its morbid dimensions, etc. Thus, whatever is bad is given the term black: black magic, black devil, black market, black business, black religion, etc. These views are advanced with such denigrative anthropology, which only a stranger to our milieu and *Weltanschauung* could entertain.

This misleading image-overhang prevails generously in Western conceptual schemes, quite oblivious of history that attested to Africa being the birthplace of man as well as human civilisation. The remnants of this epochal starting point of human social evolution are littered across the face of Africa, pervading many African cultural realities as well as social ambient, religious practices, beliefs and philosophy.

The Igbo people of South-Eastern Nigeria worked on iron ore at a time when historically, Europe was still in the Stone Age. This same people enjoyed, nourished and sustained a republican democracy when most of the Western world slumbered primitively. Coming from the heartland of Africa, this conference affords Africa an opportunity to say, without the suffocating expertise and traitorous competence of an interpreter, what is and what is not Africa or ourselves as well as what could best conduce to our development in lieu of our history and circumstance.

It equally grants us an essential arena to reverse the frames of reference, to establish and affirm our values differently, to give new and appropriate definitions from an African frame of reference, leading to interpretations, perceptions, goals, responses and actions which could facilitate the birth of a new dawn for Africa. Here our competence to speak for ourselves cannot be overemphasised. It is our own most possibility. No matter the depth of knowledge claimed by someone from without, no one can represent this angst in its entire grim and hopeful dimension, save someone who came from the circumstance in question. I most providentially and humbly represent the voice of Africa amongst other voices that would be raised on behalf of Africa in this hallowed sanctuary of learning. Welcome to our world.

2.0 Africa - The Hopes and Anguish

We share the vision and submissions of *Ecclesia in Africa* No. 40, which found some echo in the American Bishops' 'Call to Solidarity with Africa', "*that Africa is a huge continent where very diverse situations are found*". This situation as a matter of fact brooks, no generalisations in evaluating Africa's problems or recommending solutions. In spite of this, it would not amount to a horrendous presumption for one to reflect that the face of Africa today is a horrid patchwork of poverty and pain. About 25 million adults and children accounting for over 70% of the world total are HIV positive in sub-Saharan Africa alone.

2.1 The Hopes of Africa

Africa is a continent filled with life, dynamism and great potentials, and the African situation may be bad, but is not hopeless. She may be economically poor, but has a wealth of values and priceless qualities upon which her renaissance and sustainable development could be validly erected. It is the moral obligation of the entire world not to allow these bright hopes to be drowned by the anguish of her present predicament. Africa may be underdeveloped today, but that is only a stage in the socio-evolutionary unfolding of history. Moreover, I share the view that underdevelopment does not imply a lack of capacity but an embryonic stage and infinite potential for development.

3.0 Why the West Must Take Another Look at Africa: A Call to Solidarity with Africa

The African predicament, as well as the international social question, cannot be resolved without global solidarity. Africa is not an island unto itself; she is a part of the whole. The destitution and deprivation of so many Africans demands a more urgent response from the international community. The burden imposed on Africa by pervasive poverty, the annihilatory threats of disease (HIV/AIDS), strangulating debt profile, excruciating trade imbalance, Africa's heritage of inferiority complex, ignorance and functional illiteracy of a great percentage of Africans, wars, refugee problems, the phenomenon of child soldiers, natural disasters, famine, human rights abuses, irresponsible and kleptocratic governance as well as the consequent *“self-reinforcing circle of poverty, death, the breakdown of family and other traditional support systems, loss of social identity and deprivation”* (Call to Solidarity, P.13), which these portend, cannot hold out for long if the West and the entire world continue posing a Nelson's eye to this crisis.

It is my humble contention that no part of the world can master its problems by being indifferent to the fate of other regions. Widespread poverty in the southern hemisphere swells the northward flow of people trying to flee poverty. It drives people to over-exploit the natural resources of life, thus, threatening tremendous damage to the entire ecological system. Moreover, lasting mass poverty increases

the threat to world peace. Hence it is in the West's fundamental and enlightened interest to promote the development of poor countries and regions of the world. In order to ward off these global dangers together and safeguard their own future as well, the industrialised nations have no option but to form coalitions of solidarity with developing countries.

In this regard, the American bishops reechoed what the Church had always held close to her social doctrinal heart. The bishops told America, as well as the whole of the Western world that, *"Today there is less external intervention but more neglect and indifference. While the strategic rationale for intervention has diminished with the end of the Cold War, the ethical imperatives for engagement with Africa remain stronger than ever. The United States (West) must not write off Africa as having little relevance to our strategic priorities but rather must embrace a broader vision of our nation's interest in and obligation to, the World's poorest continent"* (Call to Solidarity, P. 19).

The fact must be reiterated that enlightened self-interest alone cannot suffice for an ethical and humane approximation of solidarity with Africa or resolve the international problem of development. The preferential option for the poor, which the Church has vigorously advocated and pursued as a sound principle of justice should be the propellant of the West's solidarity with Africa. This follows from the fact that enlightened self-interest cannot stimulate, but in fact limit, solidarity.

Only where the wealthy countries derive benefit, and only where they themselves will be affected by the long term global consequences of their failure to provide assistance, will they be prepared to assist the poor countries, the majority of which are in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. This is an inadequate way of easing the burden of poor countries. Furthermore, such a limited definition of solidarity translates into an inadequate conception of development. It leaves out of consideration legitimate aims and demands resulting from the personal dignity of the poor and, thus, lacks the central notion which ensures truly human development.

To this end, developmental concepts, content and context are not fully adequate unless they take cognizance and make allowance for the legitimate interests of others as such. In other words, only if the developed countries think less about their own interests and more about those of mankind as a whole, and they take the step from limited to global solidarity, would authentic and integral development in Africa find a rich humus of human solidarity upon which to thrive.

This global solidarity will reorient Western foreign aid policies to make a greater and more specific commitment to global poverty eradication and move the emphasis from some morally objectionable strings tied to Western aid.

4.0 Basis Upon which to Erect an Africa Renaissance

Technocrats the world over would contend that the development process is anchored on the pursuit of sound macro-economic policies that will promote sustainable economic growth, create more jobs, and ensure equitable distribution of income to raise the living standard of the populace. The successful pursuit of these goals they canvass requires policies that will promote openness in trade, efficient financial system, increased capital flows, development of information and communication technologies and increased technical ability. These are sound prescriptions from a lofty theoretical angle.

These shades of prescriptions may have propelled Western economies to world dominance, but Africa's development plans along these technocratic, IMF and World Bank orchestrated lines, according to Late Professor Claude Ake, *"have ended up in strategies by which a few people profit and use the gains for their own interests."* (The Plans Sanusi, J.O, 'Central Banking Authority, Economic Stability and the Rule of Law', a paper presented at the Ninth Annual Harvard International Development Conference, Boston, 4th April, 2003, BIS review 24/ 2003). There is no widespread participation of the people in decision-making in political and economic fields, nor has there ever been.

This leads us to believe that any meaningful and sustainable development of Africa that would serve as the threshold of

a new dawn must take its moments about certain fundamental considerations. Africa may be a continent in dilemma, but she has some priceless values that could propel her to greatness. These are potentialities for development that must be deeply rooted in the traditional, social and economic structures of Africa.

Our suggestions here may not be exhaustive, but they are at least fundamental:

a. Development must be about People

Any developmental policy or blueprint that is capable of lifting Africa out of the present doldrums must be centred in and around the people. In the CIDJAP experiment in Nigeria, our catchphrase is that development is about people while business is about ethics. This is the cardinal framework for any integral development of Africa. Such development must cater for the whole human person and encompass the people of Africa as a whole, developing their spiritual, religious, social, personal, moral, cultural, economic, political, mental, educational, physical and environmental dimensions of life.

This people-oriented framework would create a basis for categories, which determine development potentials forming the basis for authentic development. Attempts by non-Western cultures to develop themselves according to their priorities, initiative, innovative rationality and worldview have all too often been dismissed as irrelevant;

they have been interrupted and stopped as historical records testify, by abrupt abortions of pre-colonial (slave trade), colonial (foreign imposition) and neo-colonial (internal alienation) strategies, which interrupted the political, economic, socio-cultural and technological possibilities for development within Africa.

This we advocate its resuscitation. Africa must search for factors necessitating progress, adaptation and interaction. She must be challenged to go back to her roots, and preserve, and not auction off her cultural heritage in the face of new conditions. This scaffold for development leads us to the realisation that what is at stake here, is not simply the transfer of technology or economy, but more, a search for categories and bases for the definition and evaluation of cultural, ethical, social, economic and religious constructs relevant to the development and modernization potential of Africa.

African development must be built around African realities and heritage:

b. Solidarity must be decolonised

There exists this grossly penetrated logic that views development through a Euro-centric prism. This hidden ideology requires and demands Africa to evolve along the same lines as the West and accept the logic of the market-based economic thinking that the industrialised world is regarded as the centre of the world and the model to which developing countries as marginal subordinated areas

are adjoined. It is in this sense that co-operative development and solidarity has to be decolonised.

In the past, there has been ample evidence to show that programmed efforts to develop Africa on the basis of Euro-American and Arab-Islamic experiences and influences instead of on the peculiar history and culture of Africa boomeranged and did not benefit the citizens of the continent. This has resulted in the collapse of the external paradigm of development orchestrated and pursued by Western technocrats, development advisers, and experts. These models owed their collapse to the fact that like the Marxist model in Eastern Europe, they were external ideas lacking roots in the mind, culture and philosophy of the people and thereby side stepping adaptation which is the only possibility for assimilation of alien cultures for internal progress.

The attraction of business opportunities exists in Africa and for the continent to join the global economy on the foundations of justice and fair global competition, the West's relationship with Africa must be redefined. Suffice it to note here that as long as Western financial institutions such as IMF and the World Bank, which were set up to help weaker economies, but instead are seen to be indulging in the sabotaging of these economies continue in this practice, Africa and the rest of the 'third world' shall tarry longer on the road to economic progress.

Multinationals and greedy conglomerates that reap large profit from African resources, while in many cases demonstrate little concern for the negative impact their activities may have on peace, stability, human rights and the environment of Africa, (CS, P.17) must not be allowed to pollute the water supply only to exploit the minerals in their place of operation. Corporate social responsibility calls for responsible businesses. Africa expects this from the West especially at this stage of her history.

The Odious Debt Question must be revisited. Patricia Adams was correct on her incontrovertible assertion in 1991, that, “the single most strangulating shackle on Africa and much of the ‘Third World’ is the debts owed to the West amounting to over 1.4 Trillion dollars. The original loans were mostly put to uses of very dubious benefit to the countries concerned, and the repayments, which despite the hand-wringing and concern the North is insisting on, are stripping those countries of their assets and impoverishing their people and environments. This observation was made over a decade ago. Today Adams will shudder at the excruciating weight and terminal frustration that these odious debts have placed upon the hapless African peoples.

Today, many “*sub-Saharan African countries continue to service these debts to the tune averaging close to a quarter of government revenues, thereby shifting already limited resources away from vital health delivery services, education, and other*

efforts to eliminate poverty” (Call for Solidarity, P.15). Despite this, the West's concern remains notoriously inadequate. It behooves us to understand that unless this debt burden is revisited and resolved in the spirit of the jubilee call for debt cancellation by the American Bishops, African development will remain stillborn. Any serious developmental blueprint for Africa must first resolve this question before development can be firmly established on a sound footing.

Leadership Must be Responsible

Money can stimulate and finance development initiatives, but it is not enough. There is an indispensable need for enthronement of responsible leadership in African power corridors. Chinua Achebe located the trouble with Nigeria in the failure of leadership. The same seems to be an inglorious matrix of the African situation. Irresponsible and kleptocratic governance, more than any other factor, contributed in stifling and derailing Africa's rise to prominence. Abacha of Nigeria, Mobutu of Zaire, Jean Bedel Bokassa of Central African Republic, are perfect examples of leaders whose grotesque incompetence and legendary kleptomania are unparalleled. Premeditated fraud and systematic theft is what explains their stupendous wealth against the groveling poverty of their people. Without good and responsible leadership, resources mapped out for development can *“still be diverted from the urgent task of poverty elimination through corruption, regional*

conflicts, oppressive or weak governments, and poor economic management” (CS, P.20). Good leadership is an index that is indispensable to any attempt at moving Africa forward.

No Alternative to Self-Help

Our pain and angst are principally ours and that of the human race secondarily. Granted that Africa cannot develop in isolation in this increasingly interconnected world which globalisation has made of the earth, the main thrust of Africa's development or any formerly colonised or enslaved people must be in the direction of self-reliance. Africa will not be built only by foreign aid policies and expert-directed prescriptions from outside. She has been given, accepted gratefully and followed a lot of bad advice from the industrialised economies and their vestigial institutions. Many of these outside models have had disastrous consequences for African economies.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposes social and economic conditions which amount to nothing less than political decrees that ties Africa to the apron strings of Western technocrats. The current Nigerian experience with the IMF and the World Bank is a perfect example of foreign aid and foreign expert advice that are blind. Nigeria was in economic distress and approached the IMF and the World Bank for expert advice and assistance. The International Monetary fund (IMF) and the World Bank brought their desks into the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and told Nigerians they wanted a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), a massive devaluation of the naira, a

100% deregulation of the economy, privatization of government enterprises and removal of all forms of subsidy including the one on petroleum products.

We tried hard to please the big boss in the hope that he would put in a kind word for us on our debts, and forgive us our sins of profligacy. Like an incensed God, he was not appeased. We were further introduced to Second Tier Foreign Exchange market (SFEM), International Foreign Exchange Market (IFEM), Foreign Exchange Market (FEM) and International Bank Exchange (IBE), all in an effort to find a realistic rate for the naira.

The aim was to allow the currency to float and find its level. Being a currency without a lifebuoy, it sank. Today the cumulative effects of these expert measures on the lives of the Nigerian citizenry are enormous. There has been a massive loss of jobs both in the private and public sector, closures, takeovers, merger of companies and extremely low capacity and utilisation by the surviving companies. Real income has plummeted many times over since then and public utilities and amenities have deteriorated while their charges have gone up.

Wages are in arrears of some years. Agriculture is in a coma. Imports are increasing while exports are virtually non-existent, save for petroleum. The socio-economic triangle is getting much narrower at the apex denoting a small fabulously rich minority and broader at the base

denoting a mass exodus of the greater majority into a poverty trapezium from which no escape seems likely. This seems to be the lot of almost all African countries that patronise the competence of IMF and the World Bank.

This invariably informs our convictions that Africa cannot depend solely on the patron-mendicant relation between Western financial institutions, governmental aid agencies and the emasculated social economies of Africa. It is imperative that a deep-rooted development, long-lasting and effective development in Africa must work out its own models from our local civilisations. No matter how 'sub-standard', 'under-developed', 'primitive' and slow it may be, Africa and Africans, as things stand now cannot make long term progress, if we do not move at our own pace, learn from our past, as slow as it may be and gradually build a progressive, constructive, and authentic Africa.

Africa must urgently rise to the challenge in solidarity with the rest of the world and plot her own development within a composite framework located in a purely African reality, as well as a structured and interpretative understanding of the emerging constellation of global forces and their implications for Africa. In this regard, a word about globalisation may be apposite, if we are not to embrace another metaphysic of a new imperialism. Granted that it is a phenomenon which we cannot escape, but like Professor Amos Sawyer's warned: *"if we are not careful globalisation may be a new imperialism. Once again, we find ourselves grappling with a phenomenon to which we have been invited*

without our having any say... In fact if our response to globalisation is not an intensification of regional co-operation, then we are doomed". It is in this regard that NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) becomes a welcome initiative that should receive the support of all concerned in the human family that is presently facing an ugly and bleak existence in Africa.

Conclusion

Africa may be a poor, disease-ravaged continent, but its people are not forlorn dysfunctional people who are without hope. These are people who love life and celebrate it, and their joy of life is legendary. These are people who laugh heartily no matter the weight of the load on their shoulders, whose art deeply expresses their faith in God and man, a people that love, respect and revere elders as the bridge between the living and our ancestral roots as well as bastion of wisdom and experience, a people that love children and value relationships, all in an interconnected network of social insurance provided by their extended and large family systems.

Africa became a wretched continent when the Western capitalistic ethic that canonises profit at the expense of man met and spun a historical synthesis of all negative stereotypes that disemboweled and derailed African march to development (Machungo, M. 'The Road to Kampala' in 'Africa Forum', Vol 4 Nos 2&3, August, 2000, P.4)

In spite of this, Africans are waking up to the fact that Africa has to develop, and not just to survive. It is our opinion that with solidarity shorn of colonial and neo-colonial exploitative metaphysic and with a home-grown developmental model fashioned around the cultural values and the peculiar strengths of Africa, a new energy would be liberated to propel Africa to the much-desired renaissance.

CHAPTER 6

Property and Communal Ownership Structures in Traditional Africa

An Examination of Relevant Socio-Economic
and Cultural Issues in Determining the
Ownership of Community Based
Telecommunication Businesses

A Message of Hope

Can a people who do not look back to their ancestry actually lay claim to any posterity? As we reflect, therefore, on the related topics of development in Nigeria, specifically in the context of an emerging rural telecommunications business, the cultural ingredient of communal ownership assumes the pivotal point upon which the success and the sustainability of this enterprise has to be evaluated. For this is history, the continuity of the past, the present and the future, much of which is our heritage of ancient wisdom and its acknowledgment and practice by the present generation in the search for prosperity.

The Fulani Myth of Creation

At the beginning, there was a huge drop of milk,
Then Doondari came and created the stone.
Then the stone created iron;
And iron created fire;

And fire created water;
And water created air.
Then Doondari descended a second time.
And he took the five elements
And he shaped them into man.
But man was proud.
Then Doondari created blindness
And blindness defeated man.
But when blindness became too proud,
Doondari created sleep and sleep defeated blindness;
But when sleep became too proud,
Doondari created worry and worry defeated sleep;
But when worry became too proud,
Doondari created death, and death defeated worry;
But when death became too proud
Doondari descended for the third time
And he came as Gueno the eternal one
And Gueno defeated death.

This myth of creation demands an appropriate interpretation as it has many dimensions one of which is a message of hope. In the context of the ongoing dialogue on the adequacy and sustainability of rural telecommunications, already a universal phenomenon, it does seem that the time and the hour has come for Nigeria to rise again and join the rest of civilised humanity in the provision of essential basic needs for its citizens, one of which is universal access to communications and the fruits of the information era.

My reflection does not doubt the eventual ability of the stakeholders to deliver, but it offers the strategy and the methodology which makes it irrelevant to engage in an outdrawn but, usually fashionable, wasteful and doomed to failure trial and error dynamics associated with the Nigerian factor syndrome. It is offered with the hope, that unlike in the Fulani myth of creation, we do not become too proud and fail, but rather, take the right steps, do it the right way, follow the cultural and social-market tenets of sustainable development, the ingredient which was long laid down by our ancestors in making things work in the village and in the community, whether rural or otherwise. It is this strategy and methodology that the Catholic Institute for Development Justice and Peace (CIDJAP) and the Growing Businesses Foundation (GBF) identify as the secret of successful partnership in development co-operation in rural telecommunications businesses, namely; *Communal Ownership and Communal Participation*.

The Strategy and Methodology

Communal ownership and involvement at all levels is a *sine qua non* for success and delivery of market-oriented businesses and enterprises of this nature. The Catholic social doctrine calls it the '*principle of solidarity*' which has its sources of course in solidarity. Simply put, it is the theory and practice which allows competence and self-determination at the hands of those involved at any select level. People must be part of their own destiny. This, of

course, is also the basis of democracy in Greek antiquity and political historical evolutions into our own times. Every effort made by retrogressive elements to truncate it failed and shall always fail.

The age-old wisdom written on rugged highway lorries carry the message nearer, namely:

- *God helps those who help themselves;*
- *The best help is self-help.*

The Igbos of Nigeria use the term, *Igwe bu ike*. We are witnesses, however, to the fact that often times, the ‘experts’, technocrats and power brokers who have the decision-making apparatus in their hands presume that, ‘top-down’ models of development are still relevant. They lie.

Without the people, without their participation and communal identification on a project which affects their lives, no sustainable, relevant and adaptable development could survive at affordable costs. Just again, for the sake of emphasis, I repeat what I have tried to say earlier, that unless we practice what the ancients bequeathed to our rich cultures, much of which encourages hard work, initiative, investment, patience, honesty, self-reliance, self-respect the communal responsibility for the things we enjoy together in practical terms, unless we base the strategy for rural telecommunications in the communal ownership and communal determination of the people, with, of course, good leadership and planning, technical, educational and

resources assistance where necessary, failure is already pre-determined.

Socio-Economic and Cultural Issues

This reflection shall assume the method of socio-economic and historical analysis and give researched reasons for why things happen the way they do. It also points to the reasons why failures are noted and why we should not allow mistakes already proven to repeat themselves in our context.

I shall reflect on the issues of development and the central role of human beings in determining the scope and tempo of development. The thesis is that man is at the centre of development. The exercise shall focus on the fact of the failure of several development projects, asking why they fail as well as see what lessons we can learn from them. Much of it, of course, has a basis in not allowing the participation of the community. They were often top-bottom models.

We shall x-ray the alienation caused by a wrong understanding of government and state power and apparatus much of which policies have strangulated development and disenfranchised the citizenry. By monopolising even the simple things, citizens could do and later renege on all, the state and our several colonial and neo-colonial governments have committed crimes against the people and thrown our development back with several

decades, for which generations yet to come must still suffer from.

I shall then share my thoughts on the central issues of property and ownership structures in our pre-colonial and contemporary societies. Property was always understood as a *social mortgage* originating from individual enterprise and capital but extending to the community, which is, in reality, the owner of the land. Our experience in development projects shows that in the majority, only such projects survived where the community had a communal stake.

Sustainability is, therefore, the basis for any call for communal ownership. In examining the significant role of the private sector in making this enterprise work, we touch on a very essential ingredient of initiative, competition, the market and the fact of individual and social profit, which makes entrepreneurs perform. The utility of micro-enterprise and micro-financing corresponds to cultural patterns for economic activity. The need for intensified rural development as a key to national development shall be recalled.

The stand of this reflection is a humble postulation that the time has come for an enhanced public-private and community collaboration in development co-operation. Gone are the days when governments claimed to solve all problems. People must again reassert their rightful roles in being the architects of their own destinies. And the best

place for people to do this is in their own communities, their villages, the rural areas where history revolves. The monopoly by government, technocrats and elitist experts to have all the answers to questions is gone. The community has also a role, which is even a matter of respect to say how and what things should be or not be done and pay for it.

Communal participation, ownership and the involvement of the people in their own integral development based on indigenous African cultural patterns and historical experiences are identified. It is also the method and the strategy without which the realisation of this noble project of rural telecommunications businesses in Nigeria would suffer already at sunset. However, with the right steps taken, this hope becomes our common reality.

Man at the Centre of Development

The term development has so many dimensions, namely technological, economic, social, cultural, political, scientific, historical, physical, psychological, biological, religious and so on. Often, experts pick only one dimension and represent it as the entirety of development, leading to a lopsided understanding and therefore, to misapplication of development. For a working definition let us agree with the participants at the 4th National Theological Week held at Katigondo, Uganda, in January 1989 that:

While in the past, development was principally understood in terms of economic progress alone, we have now realized and become convinced that appropriate progress should be integral development. Such development must cater for the whole human person, and encompass the people of the nation as a whole: by developing their spiritual, religious, social, personal, moral, cultural, economic, political, mental, educational, physical and environmental dimensions of life.

Let us agree for the purposes of national cohesion and comprehensive planning that it only makes sense when development is seen as integral and holistic, each dimension balancing the other, animating the other and supplementing the other in order to produce an integral person and human society.

After several lost decades, if not centuries, during which development was defined in a faulty manner, over-emphasising one aspect at the expense of other equally important aspects, sanity now seems to have dawned, advocating a definition of development that is complete. The human person is at the centre of every development. The human being living in a community with other persons is the key to development, which is otherwise stated, the key to capital, to labour, and to resources, which form the basis of any production- material, spiritual or mental.

Man, therefore, is the originator and the eventual recipient of developmental initiatives. The practical consequences of these assertions are that man, not the government, or parastatal, or ideology, is at the centre of development. People develop themselves as you cannot develop them. Development takes time and it has its own internal rules.

Communal development and peoples' involvement fully in the identification, planning, implementation, management and evaluation of development agenda assures the highest success and sustainability of any initiative. Such is the development that can liberate Africa and other oppressed peoples everywhere. The basic question we must ask for any developmental programme is, *where are the people?*

The Failure of Many Development Projects

We are living witnesses to the irreparable waste and the failure of so many development projects and strategies in our country. Whichever way one chooses to look, the symptoms are the same. Failed housing projects, abandoned roads, bridges and other infrastructure, unworkable energy supply units such as PHCN, water and other utilities for which government assumed responsibility to deliver to the people, but failed woefully. Public services do not work with efficiency and corruption is widespread.

The educational and health delivery services monopolised by the government, have continued to leave its trademark

on the quality of lives of the people. Everywhere, myriads of abandoned white elephant projects adorn our highways, be they airports or seaports, the most nauseating being the dilapidated and lizard infested political houses for two parties constructed in each local government of the federation by an illegitimate military cabal that transcended its bounds, wanting to give democracy to the people which it did not possess.

The consequence of all these is that the people at large have suffered colossal loss of revenue, unquantifiable human and material waste and the irreparable retrogression of progress and the fruits of civilisation enjoyed by others elsewhere. A really great nation with a truly great people who inhabit Nigeria, blessed by the creator with abundant human and natural wealth have been condemned to be like kings sitting on golden stools, but yet shamefully hungry. Another example is the very common image of someone bathing under water and crying that soap has entered his eye.

One fact, which has been tested to be true is that most development models, be it political, economic, technological or social, conceived in the Western nations and transported to our shores by imposition and without consultation and local participation failed woefully when applied here. Such models would work in the industrialised countries but would fail in Africa because development was considered in isolation, as a cultural, technological and

economic export good, and without people's participation, initiative and of course internalised co-operation.

The people themselves, however uneducated in modern skills, are the basic source of knowledge of the life they lead and their attitudes to it. The life of any people can never be developed and improved without their positive consent and participation. In the attempt to improve life without people's participation, the elites, the experts, the technicians and the political adventurers have committed mistakes and crimes, which up to now leave their horrendous traces on the people. This is one strong source for the failure of so many development projects. People can be rural or urban, children, youth or adults, educated or illiterates, free or oppressed, able-bodied or disabled, yet, all of them have a right to be involved in their own development.

The mere right to be consulted and receive their consent is not enough. It is either full participation or none at all. Full participation means involvement from the inception till the end, including benefiting in the fruits or sharing the failure of the scheme. Any other approach in development is paternalism, exploitation or suffocation whose outright end-result is nothing but misconceived failure.

Failure to involve people in their own development is to reduce development to superficial cosmetics of the

external environment of the people. Such an approach could never merit the name authentic development. The result is normally failure. This has been the bane of all colonial governments, dictatorships and ideologies whether communistic tendencies or feudalistic and aristocratic gambles, including the completely misunderstood practice today by government and elected persons who abuse state power, looking upon the state as themselves.

Bad Government and Alienation of the People by the State

The second Vatican Council which ended in 1965 in the decree *Gaudium et Spes*, number 74, outlined the basis of government whose essential reason to be is the service of the common good;

Individuals, families and the various groups which make up the civil community are aware of their inability to achieve a truly human life by their own unaided efforts; they see the need for a wider community where each one will make a specific contribution to even broader implementation of the common good. For this reason, they set up various forms of political communities. The political community, then, exists for the common good. This is its justification and meaning and the source of its specific basic right to exist. The common good embraces the sum total of all those conditions of social life which enable individuals, families and organizations to achieve complete and efficacious fulfilment.

No one would doubt the need for a good government; sound reason and common sense dictate that. But when a people have experienced brutality, oppression, illegality and misrule through a series of oppressive leadership for a greater part of their corporate existence, questions arise as to the legitimacy of government at all, and to its continued relevance.

It is against this backdrop that I try in this section to justify even from a Christian conception of the world, that governments are ordained by God, not necessarily a particular government, but the institution of government itself, and that civil society needs order, direction and purpose for the protection of all. God has destined man for civil society according to the dictates of his very nature. In the plan of the creator, society is a natural means which man can and must use to reach his destined end.

Society exists by decision of divine wisdom since human beings must necessarily live in an ordered community of persons. Keeping, therefore, to its nature as ordained by the Almighty, that all is planned and has a divine cause and purpose and is not just the result of accident, the Catholic Church teaches that God planned government when he planned mankind. Yet, the state is not omnipotent crushing all legitimate authorities. Government is a perfectly natural institution in its origin for it is modelled on the family, the father and the mother being the leaders, and the children

and other family members the citizens. Regardless of its particular form, government derives its authority from God. The people confer that authority either through some form of direct or indirect suffrage or by mere acceptance, as in the case of a monarch or even a dictator. Pope Leo XIII in defining the nature of the state notes:

By the state we here understand, not the particular form of government which prevails in this or that nation, but the state as rightly understood, that is to say, any government conformable in its institutions to right reason and natural law and to the dictates of divine wisdom. In the eyes of the Church, no other social institution, after the family, is so vitally and essentially necessary as the state. It has its roots in the order of creation and is itself, one of the most constituent elements of the natural law.

Government, therefore, has a definable existence and is limited by its very nature. The state is the servant of order and exists for the common good. Actions by government contrary to divine wisdom or its own created purpose are not, in fact, governmental acts at all, but only pretensions at such acts. Here the purpose of government is clear, it serves human beings by aiding them to reach their end. It does in the temporal order what the Church does in the spiritual order, both providing the means for truly human living in keeping with the purpose and goal of humanity's creation. Any other activity is not proper or allowable for government. The aberration of government was established

in the colonial and neo-colonial governments and has continued into our times. History books tell of the anomalies caused by bad governments. This is why we now need good governments, one of which essential trademark is to be a *“government of the people, by the people, with the people and for the people”*.

Towards Less of Government Paternalism

From worldwide experiences, we have come to the rational conclusion, which shows that a good government is actually a people’s government. A good government allows people’s participation including a share in the costs and the benefits of the goods and services, which the people enjoy or share. A good government does not disenfranchise the people’s right to be communal managers and owners of the utilities, which is located in their community.

A good government does not allow a discrepancy or the anomaly which sees a dichotomy between ‘Oyibo work’ on one side and ‘community or personal work’ on the other, that is the split between ‘government thing’ and ‘our or my own thing’.

The ‘government there’ and the ‘people here’ is one of the wrong orientations, which the colonial heritage left behind for our country. It is time to correct this anomaly. The split personality syndrome or dichotomy, which leads the people into this division and dualism, needs to be addressed. A

good government, therefore, allows the initiative of the people, encourages and supports self-help of the people, which, in actuality, is a complementary extension of government initiatives and programs. The bane of some of our African societies is to have a government, which has gradually usurped the rights and the role of the people to oversee their own development. Why should people who do not pay tax receive favours from their government? What did they contribute to the common good? The term that it is a '*national cake*' is odious because the cake must first of all be baked. So, who baked the cake if citizens do not pay their obligations to the State? In my view, a proper understanding of government will lead us to assert;

that any government that gives to people what they did not pay for or contribute in substance, cash or kind, we are not referring to services, must say where it got those resources from.

In communally owned and managed rural telecommunications business, people responsible for the project are answerable to someone, to the people of the community. If it would be otherwise, something in the hands of an anonymous government or other monopolies, to whom would these be responsible to? Of course, to no one but to themselves. Here lies a great danger for sustainability, efficiency, fairness and all-round involvement based on African self-determination.

Property and Communal Ownership Structures in Traditional African Societies as Potential Determinant for Rural Telecommunications Businesses

One of the most fundamental cultural, social and economic realities in African societies is the basic understanding of property as a natural right, and therefore, a human right for the satisfaction and protection of the needs of the individual, the family and the clan as a whole. Property is seen as the basis of wealth and communal ownership makes everybody a stakeholder and rather than strangers in their own community. Although an individual has the right to own private property and in fact does own some property, it was the family and the entire community in an intrinsic manner that owns the individual. Whatever the individual acquired as private property (farm products, animals, skills and products, etc) was based on the right more of 'access' and of 'use' in a proximate but not ultimate sense.

Since private property was conducive to the security, life and survival of the family, it was understood as a 'social mortgage'. This meant that in traditional society, property had an intrinsically 'social function', as it still even till date does have. The destiny of the individual and the community was interlinked. The normal wisdom thought was, "*It belongs to me but I belong to the community*".

The rights to property, existent as they were, seem to have been limited by the overall social concerns and communal purposes, which profited every member of the community. It is this original African thought on the property which incidentally we find replicated in a Christian vision found in the teaching of the ‘*universal destination of created goods*’. This principle enunciated by Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican council states that:

God intended the earth with everything in it for the use of all human and peoples. Thus, under the guidance of justice together with charity, created goods should be in abundance for all in an equitable manner. Whatever the forms of property may be, as adapted to the legitimate institutions of peoples, according to diverse and changeable circumstances, attention must always be paid to this universal goal of earthly goods (Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, no. 69).

The Use of Land

Communal ownership and use of property, especially land, was a feature common to indigenous society before the arrival of migrant and itinerant settlers. Land, which is the most basic and tangible of all goods, belonged to one in an absolute manner. All land belonged to the people, the community of the ancestors, the present generation and those yet to be born. In Igbo land for example, the real custodians of the land were the living dead known as the ancestors. Community members on four levels, therefore, placed land at the disposal for use.

- Sacred land for religious purposes
- Evil forest, normally impenetrable and avoided
- Communal land from which families received their portions
- Family land from which individual members obtained their portions, often transferable from one generation to the next.

In this society described above, land was not sold in an inalienable and terminable manner. No, it was ceded out in a pact for use and held in trust to migrants, the needy and the foreigners or neighbours on tenure. But it was a taboo in traditional society to sell land. Much of this belief and practice still persists in many rural communities throughout Africa.

Other Communal Goods

There were other goods communally owned in African societies besides land. The streams and rivers, religious sites and market squares, village roads and festivity squares. Trees and mountains, village security and the human themselves including their sons and daughters, land and tangible property. One would, therefore, apply the principle of solidarity, or communal ownership to property relations in ancient African societies as well as the principle of subsidiarity to indigenous African understanding of ownership of property.

According to the principle of solidarity, each person as a member of a family and the society is indissolubly linked to the destiny of the community and society itself. Therefore, since the family is the original unit cell of society, the family in its extended forms was the final proprietor of specific goods in the community and was prior above the individual.

It meant that all members of the family could participate actively on different levels in the management of the activities of economic, political, social and cultural life in their community. A purely individualistic or Western cosmology and cosmos-vision was absent and one could not easily refuse to participate in communal matters. The 'we' consciousness was more prominent than the 'I', whether it was in matters of marriage, birth or the upbringing of the children; in name giving celebrations or religious rites; youths and men or women matters; in education, human work, polygamous marriages, members of the clan played a vital role.

Even the art of war and peace-making, government and political organisation, age grade activities, environmental affairs and sanitation trade relations, commerce and skills enterprise, communal agriculture and the harvesting of the products of the land, there was a dimension of solidarity and group participation. The rituals of prayer and ancestral worship, oral literature, wisdom proverbs, man's relationship to the divine, even matters of tragedy, sickness

and death all appeared to be moments of community sharing, partnership and interrelationship.

This also meant, of course, that the collective symbols of approval or disapproval and the consequent distribution of rewards or punishments and sanctions as was appropriate. And in traditional society, all this was workable and proved sustainable, providing, therefore, for the African of today, an indigenous positive and adaptable potential for the determination of modern development.

On the other hand, however, another important principle governing social life, which was practiced at the same time in traditional society, was subsidiarity, which is to be considered as a complement of solidarity. The principle of subsidiarity protects the individual human person, gives him/her a specific role or 'Chi' which is a 'unique destiny' (not identifiable with the communal *Chi* as there was, in fact, no communal *Chi* (destiny)). By so doing, African communities still gave respect to human dignity and protected the rights of individuality or small families and groups in relation to larger ones. In adaptable language, subsidiarity maintains that:

the State, the organisation, the family, or any other authority should not prevent or take over responsibility from a person, family, group or community where these have the ability and the competence to carry out such

activities and achieve expected results on their own level of competence.

It would seem that there was a tension between the individual and the community. Indeed, there was and it still does exist even in modern societies. However, a balance was sought for in traditional society to reduce the tension and balance individual and communal amnesty in such a way that the right to private property, natural and valid and necessary in itself was not made absolute and was restricted within the limits imposed by its social function. This original traditional view of communal ownership does, in fact, correspond to a Christian conception of the world and of life. Pope John Paul II postulates;

that the right to private property is absolute and untouchable, within the broader context of the right to common use of the goods of creation. The right to private property is thus subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone.¹⁴

Advantages of Communal Ownership

Applying the deliberations so far held to the issue of rural telecommunications in Nigeria, one would immediately see that the success of this enterprise must be linked to communal ownership and communal base since wealth is both individually and communally related and property is a

¹⁴ John Paul II Laborem Exercens no. 14

'social mortgage' in the rural areas. The inter-link between the individual and community was strong. The communal ownership structure and philosophy envisaged;

The success of the enterprise is our success and our pride". "The failure is our failure". "It belongs to me but I belong to the community". "Your security is our mutual security". "It is our thing; therefore it is our own project". "Because it is in our own interest, the management is provided and guaranteed". "Let us sustain it because we paid so much for it.

The Significant Role of the Private Sector

Investing in people and in human capacity is the most important investment that can be made by a nation. For the development of a just and prosperous society, there is the necessity for a sound economy based in the first place, on the human resources of the country, that is the people who take initiative and responsibility in finding new ways of production. Such individuals, groups or corporations belong to the private sector. Today economic thought stresses very much the concept of human capital. The social teaching of the Church has always stressed the centrality of the human person to the economic process.

Whereas at one time the decisive factor of production was land and later capital understood as a total complex of the instruments of production. Today the

*decisive factor is man himself that is his knowledge, especially his scientific knowledge, his capacity for interrelated and compact organisation as well as his ability to perceive the needs of others and to satisfy them.*¹⁵

It is very clear that human initiative, creativity and the capacity for innovation are the essential driving forces of a modern economy. It is such private sector initiative that has led to the growth of industrial market-oriented societies leading to their prosperity and growth. This denial of private sector free enterprise especially by the Marxist-socialist, communist or centralised economies of other countries led to their fall, poverty and economic retrogression.

Private sector involvement in rural telecommunication would involve already active and yet-to-emerge businesses such as small, medium and large-scale enterprises, agricultural workers, individuals, unions, community banks, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, women groups, firms and corporations. They stand all to mutually profit from the enterprise. In the delivery of universal access to rural telecommunications, every effort must be made therefore to involve and encourage the active participation of the private sector with available incentives. 'Red tapism' and unnecessary bureaucracy or delay may even ward off interest. The Nigerian

¹⁵ JP II *Centesimus Annos*, Rome 1997 n. 32

Communications Commission (NCC), which is the regulatory and licensing authority, should know already what and where this type of incentive lies.

Rural Development and Community Based Telecommunications

Rural development holds key to national development. In Africa, rural development is of the greatest importance since the rural population constitutes the productive hub of our economies. Also, the majority of our people still live in rural settings. Our foodstuff and livestock come from rural agrarian productivity to a large extent. Our grains, meats, vegetable, wood and craft also come from rural development. Rural development, therefore, must be pursued with vigour for it is only when production increases in quantity and in quality that hunger and misery disappear. Enough of lip service and more action are needed for rural dwellers.

The cost of transporting foodstuff from the rural productive areas to the urban settings and even beyond our shores is so high. Often, it is not the farmers and the local community but the traders and middlemen and the transporters who make the larger profit. All the cost is transferred again over to the poor who buy the end products in the cities. Studies show that it is only in Nigeria that the cost of a litter of fuel is cheaper than a small loaf of bread. How many Nigerians drive or own a car for which

fuel is used? Yet most Nigerians would generally eat bread if only they could afford it. This question addresses our sense of natural justice.

The Nigerian experiment with the Directorate for Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) was a good theory with corrupt and bad managers. It failed because contractors were given money by the federal officials to construct roads which the rural people and communities with 90% less money could have constructed and maintained better. Why should a contractor from Borno State who lives in Maiduguri be hired to deliver a rural road project in Bayelsa State or vice-versa? If there are local contractors who have a stake, why couldn't these be the immediate actors?

We may argue it anyhow, but the reality remains to prove that local contractors could not have been more efficient, accountable and controllable. As long as DFRRI applied this alienating method of rural development which proved counterproductive because its beautiful theories did not have grassroots effect except on the pages of government newspapers and media of course, most of its agenda remain cheap propaganda and incongruous dishonesty.

If the situation of rural communities were improved and competence allowed to the base, there would be a noticeable reduction in the rural to urban drift prevalent in our societies. Large-scale migrations are taking place in our time and some rural areas are losing their youth and the able-bodied people, thus creating empty villages which may

be labelled simply, “*Old People’s Homes*”. At the other end, the cities are swelling in number with Lagos, Kano, Onitsha, Aba, Ibadan, among others totalling over 35 million people. The issues arising therefrom are many - environment, health, housing, employment, crime, morality and a ‘*slum culture*’ which creates ‘*area boys*,’ *alimajiris*’ and ‘*agboros*’.

One strong key to rural development is access to information technology and rural telecommunications. This would dramatically change the face of the rural areas and lead to a transformation likeable to the ‘*industrial revolution*’ of the 19th Century in Europe. Everything must be done to give this initiative a chance but on the pre-condition of communally inspired and communally based infrastructure and ownership by the people themselves. It has happened elsewhere! It will create jobs and maximise time for a more productive economy where much time is wasted.

The general advantage of community based rural telecommunications, which is to ensure a globalisation in solidarity, a globalisation without marginalisation includes access to infrastructure, education, communication and improvement in the overall quality of life of the people, fostering unity and linkage among people, reduction in unnecessary transportation costs and distant, proximate travels, maximisation of risks often taken in avoidable travels, improvement of the general business climate and

opportunity for both creative and productive market economy.

The unquantifiable intangible benefits, and in fact the most important, are those that affect human development, enhancement of psychological and social factors, and the spread of knowledge, without which equal rights would only remain pep talk. It is imperative to end this section by citing Pope John Paul II in his '*Ecclesia in America*' where he restated the reality of world-wide globalisation, noting however that "*the globalised economy must be analysed in the light of the principles of social justice*". We might even underscore this point by linking rural telecommunications access to the demands of social justice.

The Role of the Church and Non-Government Organisations

Globalisation began with the Christian religion and has continued ever since. The history and role of the Church in pioneering integral development worldwide is already taken as an indisputable fact of history. The Churches have remained leaders, especially the Catholic Church in promoting the ideals of a civil society and in mass mobilisation and grassroots presence. These include notable services in social development, integral development programs, education, housing, health, agriculture, human rights, women promotion, enlightenment and the moderator- role in conflict resolution. People now know that the Catholic Church and indeed other religions have the ability for social

mobilisation, transformation and be the first port of call for community development.

The Church is acknowledged as the first leader in the promotion of a culture of life, of civilisation and of moral, social, religious and cultural leadership. As a moderator, the Church can and should continue to insist on good government, self-help initiatives and in our context, teach, “*you cannot pray on empty stomach*”. A life in dignity and prosperity is also an ‘*adumbration*’ a pre-shadow of the life hereafter.

Actually, the Catholic Institute for Development Justice and Peace (CIDJAP) in collaboration with the Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC), the NTCA and the coordinating role of the Growing Businesses Foundation (GBF) is participating in championing the agenda for rural telecom in Nigeria. After all, communication and information is a basic Christian right with a dimension to religion and the domain of the divine.

Call for Public-Private and Community Collaboration

The key word in this context is collaboration. It is a compromise between freedom and commitment and leads to a shared understanding of mutual goals. It is a call for interdependence, not dependency or even independence. There is an enhanced need for the public sector, the

private sector and communities to make a reasoned choice in the model of public-private community partnership for rural telecommunications businesses in Nigeria.

The experience of technologically knowledgeable people and institutional support of donor agencies is necessary and appreciated at the start-off stages for a guaranteed success of this enterprise under the circumstances prevalent in Nigeria. On a global perspective, we cannot escape the connectedness of the world, not least because the more we concentrate on what we are best at, the more we will need the expertise of others. To achieve this goal, the Nigerian stakeholders may take note of some national factors some of which are:

- The political agenda and context which dictates that rural telecommunications be truly national starting all over the national geographical zones at the same time. This would make it an open venture like the community banks, and even more successful.
- Allow any community that is ready and able to apply to receive a license and start when ready.
- Establish rules in collaboration and leadership of the Nigerian Communication Commission and the stakeholder's participation in a bottom-up methodology.
- Share the costs of technical assistance, capacity building and ongoing training.

CHAPTER 7

The Legacy of *Laborem Exercens*, the Meaning and Dimensions of Human Work in John Paul II Theology of Human Work: Challenges in Nigeria

The Holy Father, Pope John Paul II wrote in the document *Laborem Exercens*: “We are celebrating the ninetieth anniversary of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* on the eve of new developments in technological, economic and political conditions which according to many experts will influence the world of work and production no less than the industrial revolution of the last century. There are many factors of a general nature: the widespread introduction of automation into many spheres of production, the increase in energy costs and raw materials, the realisation that resources are limited, the problems of environmental pollution, and the emergence of peoples who, after centuries of subjection, are demanding their rightful places among the nations.”¹⁶

A summary of the legacy of *Laborem Exercens* and its impact on the world of work in Nigeria and Africa as a whole leads us in this paper to study the underlying tenets of this

¹⁶ *Laborem Exercens*, I, 3.

document and provide a summary of its guiding principles, which we consider a legacy for the people of Africa. Many initiatives on the continent have been guided by these principles and the Church hierarchy in the continent continues to seek for appropriate means to adapt these teachings to the apostolate in Africa, understood as 'integral evangelisation.'

- a. **It is man's duty to work.** It is by his work that he must procure his daily bread; by his work that he must contribute to the continuing development of the technical arts and sciences; by his work, that he must help to raise ever higher moral and cultural standards of the society in which he shares his life with the human family. In so far as we fail in realising this, we frustrate our lives and fail in what we owe to the common good, offending against the virtue of social justice, which bids us to do habitually, whatever is necessary for the common good. Since it is man's duty to work, Nigerians may need to change their attitude to work, which since the colonial experience has become exteriorised. Work should not simply mean 'meal ticket', but must be more for a country, with the potentialities to elevate Africa. Work must be understood as necessary, creative, corporate, painful and redemptive.

- b. **Man alone is adapted to work.** Indeed, work is one of the signs by which man is distinguished from other living creatures. Although active in sustaining themselves, animals cannot be said to work. Work is a

fundamental dimension of man's existence on earth, and through work fulfils his life on earth. Wherefore, work bears man's signature, the distinctive mark of his humanity and nature, the mark of a person who is created in God's image to act within a community of persons. If we do this we shall never neglect or deny the threefold external purpose of work namely: family, nation and mankind; nor shall we neglect the dignity of the working person and unique individual.

- c. **The encyclical *Laborem Exercens* extols the unique worth, value and dignity of man and asserts that economics must serve man, not otherwise.** Man's special relationship to God, his creator, and his endowment with reason, faith and an eternal soul make him superior over-work itself, the objects of work and the tools and equipment used as working materials. Such an attitude will help rescue Nigeria and entire Africa from the impending economic secularism or materialism facing modern nations.
- d. The conflict between labour and capital is superfluous. The undoubted source of the conflict lay in the fact that when the workers offered their labour for sale, they put their powers at the disposal of a class of entrepreneurs who tried strenuously to establish the lowest possible wage for the work done. Apart from this, man's work was abused in other ways for the sake

of profit, among the evils being the neglect of safety precautions and of provision for the health, living conditions of the workers and their fundamental human rights as well as their families. The Pope offers the basic thesis that there is a priority of labour over capital, and at the same time, there is no inherent opposition between both. While recommending the sharing of profit between capital and labour, the Pope warns that both capitalism and socialistic communism, that is, between economism and materialism have erred in setting mankind in an antinomy of ideologies to the left and right. Nigeria must reject all ideologies whether to the left or to the right. African policy-makers are thereby helped to strike a balance between rigid capitalism and extreme collectivism. We must maintain the primacy of man over things including ideologies.

- e. The 'personalist argument' is offered as a valid alternative to all forms of work, which deprive workers' participation in the means of production, or bureaucratise his personality. As the document points out, the man who works rightly expects something besides a fair wage for his labour. He wants also to have the process of production so arranged that he works, even on something which is owned in common, he can be aware that he is working 'on his own account.' This awareness is extinguished by excessive bureaucratic supervision which centralises everything and makes the worker feel that he is just a cog in a huge machine directed from above; may rather, that he is for more

reasons not just a mere instrument of production other than the true subject of work endowed with an initiative of his own. Failure in this respect inevitably does incalculable damage to the running of the economy, harm that is not confined to economic consequences but has for its first victim man himself.

- f. On the ownership of private property, *Laborem Exercens* maintains that this right is a natural one and is in order with the will of God. Ownership of property, whether individually owned or in the hands of the community as titleholder, must be strictly differentiated from rigid capitalism or extreme collectivism. Christian traditions have never held that the right to ownership is absolute and untouchable. Rather, the right has always been understood within the broader context of the right which is common to all men to use the goods of the whole creation. The right to private disposal is plainly subordinate to the right of common use of goods that are intended for all mankind. In the context of Nigeria, we are guided from the above assertions to learn that one man cannot live in super-abundance when the entire masses around him live in poverty and squalor. An adequate method of distribution of the goods of the nation must be undertaken to ensure that the majority of the citizens have their rightful share in the nation's resources.

- g. *Laborem Exercens* rightly points out to African leaders as well as workers and employers everywhere, that some of our problems in labour and productivity are controlled by factors beyond the workers and his direct employers. Such factors, which cause dependence in economic relations, may be social attitudes and institutions, domestic labour policies as well as international trade policies and relations, multinationals, and other economic determinants, which need adequate examination. Policymakers and economic experts are, thus, helped from the Pope's research to know where the problems lie and to take necessary steps to curb them for the good of the worker.
- h. **The rights of the worker are inalienable.** By guaranteeing him these rights, the charter of the United Nations, which calls for the respect of human dignity and guaranteeing of human rights, are recognised. In the words of the Pope: "*As the Magisterium of the Church has pointed out several times, especially since the publication of 'Pacem in Terris'*", respect for this great body of human rights constitutes the primary condition for peace in today's world, peace within states and social groups as well as between states.

The human rights that flow from work fall into the broad context of these principal rights of the person (LE, n.26). Among the many rights of the workers, which any serious nation must guide and guarantee are, the right of citizens to work; the right to just wages for

work done; the right to form trade unions for the defence of workers' rights from all sorts of exploitation; the right to strike when this becomes inevitable; the right to own property and to participate in the ownership of the means of production; the rights to various social benefits and insurance such as health, education, leisure and rest, pension and old age, protection against threats to personality and property; and rights to practice of religion, freedom of movement, speech, thought and existence.

Other rights include the protection of women from chauvinistic elements of exploitation; guaranteeing the rights of migrant workers, technical workers, the disabled and unemployed; and last but not least, protecting the dignity of agricultural work by granting farmers essential support, services, loans and encouragement. In a developing nation, such as Nigeria, official state policy must be aimed at achieving the full realisation of these rights for the common good of all its citizens.

- i. Finally, the spiritual orientation offered by *Laborem Exercens* confirms and elevates the traditional African conception of work, as a God-given vocation to help in creation. Work will, thus, be understood as a human obligation in the complex meaning of the word, for the Creator has commanded it and man cannot live and

grow in his humanity without it. Properly understood, work has before all else the property of bringing people together, uniting them in the oneness of God's supremacy. For through work, man cares for his family and those closest to him; he cares for the wide range of his human society, that is, the nation which is his mother, and the whole human family of which he is a member.

Challenges on the Church

- a. The Nigerian Church is challenged to defend human worth and dignity, to call for a just economic order and to insist that all persons have rights in the economic and political spheres. The Nigerian Church must insist that society has a moral obligation to take the necessary steps to ensure that no one among us is hungry, homeless, unemployed or otherwise denied what is necessary to live with adequate dignity. In a country with just about 10% rich and more than 60% poor, the Church cannot keep quiet. Today, in Nigeria, there is an unequal distribution of income, education, wealth, job opportunities and other economic goods as well as discrimination on the basis of religion, sex, tribe, and other arbitrary standards. In such a situation, the Nigerian Church must call and act for social justice and for distributive justice too. It is the duty of the Church to make it clear that the dignity of the human person is the criterion against which all aspects of economic life must be measured. This dignity can only be realised in relationship and solidarity with others.

- b. The Church must stress three spheres of economic values in Nigeria, namely;
- That the economy must enable people to find self-realisation; fulfill their material needs through adequate remuneration; and enhance unity within the family, the nation, and the world community.
 - That meeting human needs and increasing participation should be priority targets in the investments of wealth, talent and human energy. In other words, the fulfillment of the basic needs of the people is of the highest priority, namely, water, medicine, light, roads, food, schools, transport and jobs.
 - That management and workers should develop new forms of partnership and co-operation, such as co-operative ownership of the means of production, and worker participation in ownership and decision-making, thereby broadening the sharing of responsibility in economic society.

Of much importance is the political area. The Church in Nigeria must insist that government is not a reserved right of any group of people, because they have the power of the gun or the economic power alone, but that government is a right for every individual. Therefore, democracy, which allows participation for all citizens and checks dictatorship,

must be supported. Above all, the Churches in Nigeria must remind the government of its basic duties towards the citizens, its moral obligation and the reason for its continued existence, namely:

- That of protecting basic rights as guaranteed by the Constitution, the United Nations Charter on Human Rights and the Organization of African Unity Charter for Human Rights.
- Ensuring economic justice for all
- Enabling the citizens to strike a balance towards these ends by encouraging individual initiatives and social responsibility.

However, while the Christian social principles provide a positive affirmation of the role of government, it does not advocate a ‘*statistic*’ approach to political or economic activity. The principle of “*subsidiarity*” is the primary norm for determining the scope and limits of state and government action.

Finally, all the moral principles that govern the just operation of any socio-economic endeavour apply to the Church itself and its agencies and institutions. All Church institutions, both the hierarchy and individual Christian in Nigeria, as elsewhere, must realise that the Church as a community can make very important contributions to achieving greater economic justice. This can only be done if we have adequate knowledge of the Social Teaching of the

Church. In the words of Pope John XXIII, we conclude this presentation;

It is therefore our urgent desire that this doctrine be studied more and more. While we note with satisfaction that in many institutes it has been taught for some times and with outstanding success, we urge that such teaching be extended by regular, systematic courses in Catholic schools of every kind, especially in seminaries. It is to be inserted into the religious instruction programmes of parishes and of associations of the lay apostolate. It must be spread by every modern means at our disposal: daily newspaper, periodicals, popular and scientific publications, radio and television. The laity can do much to help this diffusion of Catholic Social Teaching by studying it themselves and putting it into practice, and by zealously striving to make others understand it. They should be convinced that the best way of demonstrating the truth and efficacy of this teaching is to show that it can provide the solution to present-day difficulties. They will thus make converts of those people who are opposed to it through ignorance. Who knows, but a ray of its light may one day enter their mind.¹⁷

¹⁷ John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, nn. 223 – 225

CHAPTER 8

Nigeria Child Spacing Program Helping Women Meet the Challenges of their Community Concerns

Introduction

It is important to note that all over the world, most people in need, whether resulting from natural or ecological disasters or by human wickedness occasioning political, social and religious tensions, have in one way or another found solace in the service of the Rotary International and the United Nations among other agencies of concern and care¹⁸.

We are called in this new millennium to become apostles of good news and of a better world order for all. It is, after all, possible. The potentials are there. The will, I am sure, is also there. So, what is left? Action! We shall not, of course, in this context close our eyes to several latent and obvious injustices prevalent in our modern social, economic and political order. They need to be challenged and changed for the better.

¹⁸ Presented at the Rotary and the UN

This is the reason for the existence of the United Nations and the Rotary International, which believe and work for sustaining hope. This is not to say that humanity has not seen many shady and ugly sides. But we cannot give up on our universal and common task to focus on the need to create a better, just, humane and loving world where nobody needs to die for lack of food. This, unfortunately, seems to be the situation in so many places.

The Reality on Ground

Recently, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) published its 1999 Human Development Index (HDI) report. The global report identifies dark spots indicating the following. Some one hundred countries, developing or in a state of economic and political transition, have experienced serious economic downturns, with some seventy to eighty having per capita incomes that are lower today than they were ten to thirty years ago. In developing countries, 1.3 billion people live below an income poverty line of four dollars a day. Life expectancy is declining in many countries, as the HIV/AIDS pandemic worsens.

Of an estimated 16,000 new worldwide infections every day, ninety percent are in developing countries. Armed conflicts are also undermining progress in many countries, where almost one hundred million people are caught up in a cycle of catastrophe and hunger and about fifty million people have been forced to flee their homes. In the past ten years, armed conflicts have killed two million children, orphaned one million others and disabled as many as five

million. Beyond the report, further facts emerge which show that:

More than one billion people live in absolute poverty and more than half of them go hungry daily. More than two million children die annually of easily preventable infectious diseases; 1.3million people, roughly a quarter of humanity, lack access to safe drinking water; over one hundred and twenty million people worldwide are officially unemployed; eighty million children do not even attend primary school.¹⁹

Meanwhile, global military spending, despite a decline since the end of the cold war, still equals the combined income of the poorest half of humanity. Against such a background, what else need we say? It is an unjust, unfair, inhumane and degrading situation which needs to be challenged and changed. Significantly, the global report noted that the poor pay dearly with their health and the destruction of their natural resource base. Women are found to suffer most through exposure to indoor household pollution and toxic chemicals from agriculture and industry.

The overwhelming majority of those who die each year from air and water pollution are poor people in developing countries, so are those most affected by desertification and

¹⁹ Earth Action Parliamentary Alert, February 1995; Social Summit Background Information

so will those worst affected by floods, storms and harvest failures caused by global warming. All over the world, poor people generally live nearest to dirty factories, busy roads and waste dumps. Smoke and fumes in poor households that burn traditional fuel cause about 2.1 million deaths related to air pollution. In what could trigger debates among environmentalists, the report observed that the burning of fossil fuels globally has almost quadrupled since 1950; the consumption of fresh water has almost quadrupled since 1960; the marine catch has increased fourfold; wood consumption, both for industry and for household fuel, is now forty percent higher than it was twenty years ago. Industrialised countries, due to high incomes and consumption levels, account for over half of the increase in resource use.

Regarding the human consequences of current consumption patterns, which the UNDP report describes as “*unacceptable*”, gross inequalities in consumption opportunities have excluded over one billion people who fail to meet even their basic consumption requirements; “*Among the 4.4 billion people who live in developing countries, almost three fifths live in communities without basic signification; almost one-third are without safe drinking water; one quarter lack adequate housing; one fifth live beyond reach of modern health services; one fifth of the children do not get as far as grade five in school and an equal percentage are undernourished*”. In our cities, countries and regions, the report is simply a near exact replicating of the current state of affairs in many people’s lives.

The Context of Nigeria

With all its resources in human, material, space and other potentials for wealth, Nigeria and many other African nations are agriculturally dependent yet agriculturally underproductive, and lack adequate modern agricultural technology and services. Basic needs are often not met and the various global pronouncements on freedom, civilisation and technology, remain ideals. Nigerian citizens are hungry and many of them die young. The cities are overcrowded with Lagos, Kano and Ibadan attempting to score population counts of about ten million people respectively. The morbid picture of Nigeria that stands as a paradigm of many societies is the lack of:

Basic education for the majority of people; basic health care, clean water and sanitation; basic children's immunisation; material care of women; adult literacy; proper nourishment; decent housing, jobs and free environment.

The ingredients for agricultural productivity are there, namely: land, labour and capital. Agriculture is said to be the mainstay of any nation. Yet, Nigeria's agricultural output is somewhere around 10%. Answers are always attempted but the results are not forthcoming. How can Nigeria feed 150 million mouths by the import of food and export of crude oil as was the case in the 1970's and 1980's? Against such a background, it is an unjust, unfair, inhumane and degrading situation which needs to be

challenged and changed. Young people are still abandoning the rural villages for the cities to do nothing, with crime increasing.

It is imperative that as responsible global citizens, we review critically, the present world system and structures and how they impact Africa. The main point is that global policies such as the International Monetary Fund's Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) must also be evaluated in terms of their impact on human lives. The following shortcomings are relevant vis-à-vis the African socio-economy. For example, in traditional African society, material wealth and the sharing of this wealth in the community does not define social status. Similarly, in rural Africa, labour is viewed as a communal good as is most evident in the agricultural practices of small-scale farmers across the continent. Land, on the other hand, was a treasured asset in African society and belonged to no one in particular, but to the entire community. Times may have changed much but it is still necessary to address these inherent values and retain what is possible.

This use of social goods such as access and respect for land, and eventual rituals associated with the land among other communal properties are issues that make Africa unique. Africans believe that individual rights are important, but not more than the interests of communities. There is emphasis to bear on the principles of solidarity and the common good so fundamental to African society and culture.

Or what else does one make of a system that itemises several categories of rights, duties and obligations toward the satisfaction of individual prerequisites but fails to place them within their communal and social context? This is an area that deserves further attention. This, in part, explains the love Africans have for life and for families and the feeling of protection that comes with large families.

A Fresh Look at Africa - Signs of Hope

Individual human beings living in a society are the basis of any meaningful development. Human resources, and not just capital, income, technology, or material resources, constitute the ultimate basis of the wealth of nations. Catholic Social Teaching identified this noble truth during the Vatican Council for the constitution *Gaudium et Spes* and explicitly states: “*Man is the author, the centre and the end of all social and economic life. Economic development must remain under man’s direction*”.²⁰

To put this in plain language, development is for man, not man for development. A country, which is unable to develop the skill and knowledge of its people and to utilise them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else. In this connection, therefore, we can mention that Africa’s search for progress certainly moves on, despite notable setbacks. There are many positive developments and we mention them briefly.

²⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, No. 63

There is a new wave of change and re-awakening blowing all over the continent of Africa. There are signs of cultural revival in many countries. Local music is on the increase. African dresses and attire are in vogue. The use of local languages, aesthetics, art, advertising and various forms of culture is noticeable everywhere. In the Christian Churches, there is a call to indigenisation and acculturation to elevate the African identity by means of local Church music rites.

Africa is a youthful continent and two-thirds of the population are below thirty years and are better educated than their elders, more urbanised and more knowledgeable about the international scene. The crisis of confidence and the broken psychology of the African after the colonial trauma seem to have disappeared gradually with the rebirth of self-confidence, new African art and a mass of literature. People now think of their continent as the prime mover rather than the object to its own development. Many people prefer to take an internalised critical view rather than copy other people, or always blame other people for their problems. Africans are waking up to the fact that Africa has to develop not just to survive with outside help.

The economic record is more varied than is often imagined and fortunately does not always reflect decline and drift. Except for war-ridden zones, improvement in living standards such as housing, feeding, education is taking place in some countries of Africa even if new problems in the same areas are coming due to inadequate policies, rising

populations and official mismanagement. Nonetheless, resources abound if only they could be well utilised.

Signs of economic recovery, using Western indices are there and many nations of Africa are resetting their priorities alongside economic reform. Enterprise is a popular tradition in Africa as is the market economy. Some more effort should be channeled to move from private survival to collective take-off. Africans have to wake up to the fact the self-development and self-reliance is the only guarantee for a long-term economic survival, rather than surviving solely on the charity of the outside world. The United Nations deputy Secretary-General and interim Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) told the eighteenth meeting of the Conference of the African Development and Economic Planning Ministers in Addis Ababa in April 1992, “that change necessitates challenge”.²¹

The world is changing and Africa particularly is changing with it. The most obvious signs of change at the moment are basically that many conflicts in and between states are being settled, notwithstanding the resurgence of others. Moves are being made towards democratic systems of governments. The big challenge for the rest of this decade is in encouraging economic and social change with both

²¹ Issa B.Y. Diallo, in *Courier, ACP EEC*, n.134, July/August 1992; Bruxelles, p.59

forward-looking and inward-looking analysis, promoting regional cooperation in political, economic and social climate which is constantly changing and is already having noticeable effects in the countries of Africa.

Africa is on the move despite centuries of oppression and aggression. Not all that has been labelled 'development' has been proven after some time to be development after all. After critical evaluations, we are today, able to see that technology and its progress may lead to a higher level of communication and production among men, including the mastering of environment. However, many human beings have become degraded, marginalised and reduced in worth, basic dignity and in their rights because of this negative form of technology.

Technology, yes, but not at the cost of man's dignity. It is not everything developed in America and called 'development' that must qualify in Africa as development. In other words, there is an added need in Africa, based on our values to set out new criteria for development within Africa. In an interdependent world, the social and economic reality needs a global perspective, which has become crucial to solving local problems.

Yet realistic assessment must recognise that African countries and their friends cannot and should not be expected to copy and transplant convictions, approaches, practices and institutions, which grew over many decades in some industrialised Western societies. Africans must agree

that the concepts of human rights are human dignity, individual and community rights. We live in a globally interdependent world, yet, there are cultural values that are particular, and sustain our own ambient that we could not lose them and retain our corporate identity.

They are to be found in the areas of individual and communal reasonability, and cosmo-vision. Our task is to intensify the education and conscientisation of the people on the matters that touch their own lives. The quest for democracy and respect for human rights require a new quality and re-orientation. We are much aware of the fact that human rights and social and economic development are inseparably linked. Democracy, development and the respect for human rights and basic freedoms are interrelated and reinforce one another. Each citizen has not only obligations vis à vis the state, but can also invoke a right to development.

Political reform is necessary for political and socio-economic progress. We are also aware that successes in some countries are accompanied by failures and are aborted or interrupted by democratisation processes in others. The right to development, making people its central focus, is a fundamental human right. It is the responsibility of states to observe them and ensure that these rights are observed. Today, in African nations, parts of Europe, Asia or the countries of America, emphasis needs to be given

towards establishing a framework which will ensure realisation of basic human rights and freedom for all peoples representing a common feature of all cultures without exception.

Responsible Parenthood as the Answer to Child Spacing and Family Planning

Population question in our time and place has been grossly misunderstood, politicised, misapplied and abused. As a man of the Church, I represent an institution, namely, the Catholic Church, which often has been misrepresented both on its agenda concerning the right of families to procreation, to sexuality, to women and to the moral relativism of the present.

In his message to Nafis Sadik of the UNPF, Pope John Paul II writes:

As I have already had occasion to say, married couples should decide to have children in accordance with reasonable plan, based on a generous but at the same time realistic assessment of their potentialities of the well-being of the future child and that of society itself, by the light of objective moral criteria (cf. Observatore Romano, 19 March 1994, 6.8).

The Catholic Church is aware of the problems posed to the entire survival of mankind by the world demographic pictures and does not underestimate its significance. Precisely because of these deeper studies, research has

been promoted and encouraged and statistical data obtained. These, of course, have ethical and pastoral implications that the Catholic Church has continued to explicate.

The Sacredness of Human Life

Pope John Paul II had occasion to discuss this topic several times.

In the miracle of the birth of human life, we are obliged to recognize something going far beyond a mere biological fact. In the procreation of human life, biology postulates its own transcendence. And that cannot but have implications on the ethical plane too: we cannot treat that which contains in the procreation of human life as though we were dealing with a mere biological event, susceptible of various kind of manipulation.²²

It is on this fundamental anthropological basis that the Church's teaching of responsible fatherhood and motherhood rests. In the words of Pope John Paul II;

Catholic thought is often misunderstood as though the Church supported an ideology of fecundity to the least by urging married couples to procreate without common sense or planning. But careful reading of the

²² John Paul II, *Agenda for a New Millennium*, pp. 107-108.

*pronouncements of the Magisterium is enough to show that this is not so.*²³

The Principles of Solidarity and Subsidiarity

One area where many societies today agree is on the two principles of solidarity and subsidiary.

Pope John Paul II in his encyclical letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* particularly underlined the importance of the principle of solidarity, identifying it as a human and Christian virtue. “*Each person as a member of society is indissolubly linked to the destiny of society itself and by dint of the Gospel, to the destiny of all men’s salvation*”. (Guidelines on Catholic Social Thought, p.40).

Such teachings apply to Africa now, in great need for a foundation of unity. “*The ethical demands of this principle require all men, groups and local communities, associations and organisations, nations and continents to participate in the management of all the activities of economic, political and cultural life while overcoming any purely individualistic conception*” (Cf. Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 30 - 32; John Paul II. Discourse Je Desire to the 68th Session of the International Labour Conference, United Nations, June 15, 1982 AAS74, 1982, p.992ff).

²³ Ibid.

On the other hand, a very important principle governing social life is subsidiarity, which is to be considered as the complement of solidarity.

The principle of subsidiarity maintains that;

The state or any other authority should not prevent or take over responsibility from a person, group, or community to carry out such activities and achieve expected results on their own level of competence (Pius XI, Quadragesimo Anno. May 15, 1931, ASS, 23, p.203).

The principle of subsidiarity protects the human person, local communities and intermediary bodies from the danger of losing their legitimate autonomy and competence. *“The Church fights for subsidiarity in so far as this principle by reason of man’s dignity, promotes respect for what is most human in the organization of social life and the safeguarding of the rights of people in relation between individual societies and universal society”*²⁴

²⁴ Guidelines, op.cit p.41; John XXIII Pacem in Terris, April 11, 1963, AAS, p.294

Child Spacing

According to Pope John Paul II,

Actually in the procreation of life, husband and wife realize one of the highest dimensions of their vocations: they are collaborating with God. Because this is so, they are bound to take an extremely responsible attitude. In making the decision to have or not to have a child, they must let themselves be inspired, not by selfishness or thoughtlessness, but by a prudent and informed generosity, which weighs up the possibilities and circumstances and above all, makes the well-being of the future child a central consideration. When therefore, there is good reason for not procreating, this choice is lawful and may even be a duty. But there is also a duty to do this by criteria and methods that respect the total truth of the conjugal encounter in its native and procreative dimensions, which is wisely regulated by nature itself in its biological rhythms (JPII p. no 8 - Agenda for the New Millennium.

Mothers Need Security

The role of the mothers must be socially re-assessed. The mother's tasks in the home demands great commitment, much time and much love. Children need looking after, they need love and affection. Care must be taken if the children are to become secure and responsible adults who are, morally, religiously and psychologically mature. If responsibility for the development of the family belongs to the mothers rather than to the fathers, even more depends

on the relationship between mothers and children. A society can indeed be proud of itself if it allows mothers to devote time to their children, and allows them to bring them up in accordance with their needs.

Women's freedom as mothers should be clearly protected so that they are free from all discriminations, especially in relation to women with no family obligations. Mothers must not be financially penalized by the very society that they so usefully and noble serve.²⁵

Through mothers, God entrusted human beings to women in an entirely special way. This is why the leading role in protecting life from the moment of its conception pertains to women. Who, more than mothers, can know the miracle of life unfolding in their wombs?

Rejection of Exploitation and Cultural Oppression

Women often encounter difficulties, making their maternal task more onerous for them, sometimes to the point of heroism. *"We must energetically repulse all the many forms of violence and exploitation, which, more or less overtly, capitalise on women and trample on their dignity. Not-seldom, these unbearable pressures derive from indifference and inadequate help. They are due to legal systems that are poorly attuned to the importance of the family. They are also caused by*

²⁵ Address of JP II at Wilson Training Centre Hobart, Tanzania, 27 Nov. 1986

widespread and distorted cultures, which unduly exempt men from family responsibilities and in some cases, encourage them to regard women as objects of pleasure or mere instruments of reproduction” (Pope John Paul II p.111- 112).

Conclusion and Practical Applications

The conclusion of this presentation are as follows:

1. Religious and Social Dimensions of Life are Linked

The ‘social’ human construction of the world is not ‘secular’ in the sense of being outside God’s plan, but is intimately involved with the dynamics of the ‘reign of God’. Therefore, faith and justice are closely interlinked (*Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, n.3).

2. Dignity of the Human Persons

Made in the image of God, women and men have pre-eminent places in the social order with inalienable political, social, legal and economic rights. The fundamental question to ask about social policies is; “How beneficial is it to people?” (*Populorum Progressio*, 1968, n.8 - 26).

3. Options for the Poor

A preferential love should be shown to the poor, whose needs and rights are given special attention before God. ‘Poor’ is understood to refer to socially and economically

disadvantaged people, who, due to their status, suffer oppression and powerlessness.²⁶

4. Love and Justice are Linked

Love of neighbour is an absolute demand for justice, because charity manifests itself in actions and structures, which respect human dignity, protect human rights and facilitate human development. “*To promote justice is to transform structures which block love*” (Bishop Synod, *Justice in the World, 1971, n.16, n.34*).

5. Promotion of the Common Good

The ‘Common Good’ is the sum total of all those conditions of social living - economic, social, political, and cultural -, which make it possible for women and men to readily and fully achieve the perfection of their humanity. Individual rights are always experienced within the context of promotion of the common good.²⁷

6. Political Participation

Democratic participation in decision-making is the best way to respect the dignity and liberty of people. The government is the instrument by which the people cooperate together in order to achieve the common good (Christmas Message, 1994)

²⁶ *Octogesima Adveniens, 1971, n.23*

²⁷ *Mater et Magistra, John XXIII, n.65*

7. Economic Justice

The economy is for the people and the resources of the earth are to be equitably shared by all. Human work is the key to contemporary social questions. Labour takes precedence over capital and technology in the production process. Just wages and the rights of workers to form trade unions are to be guaranteed. The questions we must constantly ask include; What is the impact of the budget on people's existence levels?

Does it promote human beings or simply maximise profit? Is man at the centre of the economy or at the periphery? Does the economy and its deterministic rigidity consider the place of women and the disabled people, migrants and the unemployed people who merit solidarity and therefore share fully in the profits of the production process? (John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*, 1981).

8. Stewardship and Creation Preservation

All property has a 'Social Mortgage'. The earth and its resources are to be respected. By the work and activity of human beings in continuing the development of our environment, we become co-creators and stewards of God's bountiful gifts of nature. Responsible management of resources and proper accountability become obligatory (*Laborem Exercens*, 1981).

9. Global Solidarity

We belong to one human family and as such have mutual obligations to promote the development for all peoples

across the world. Whether in Church, in State or in the family, the rich have particular responsibilities towards the poor and the structures of the international order must reflect justice and bilateral complementarities (Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 1968).

CHAPTER 9

Towards a Self-Sustaining and Self-Reliant Church

Theological Perspectives from the Social Teaching of the Church and Local Experiences in Development

I. Gratitude

I would like to express my profound gratitude to my mathematics teacher, choirmaster and mentor far back in 1969 and 1970 while I was a fresher and junior seminarian under All Hallows Seminary Onitsha (then on exile at Ukor) the Most Reverend Solomon Amatu, Bishop of Okigwe. I have known the bishop for over 40 years and admire his piety, wisdom and audacity in quiet and sincere service and transformation of Church and Society. Father Isidore has told me that the Bishop assented to my nomination as guest speaker and resource person at this auspicious occasion which is a gathering of the Church hierarchy, religious and faithful of the diocese.

Besides approving the event, I am told he desired to manage his programme to allow some personal presence, an act that speaks for itself. I pay tribute to all diocesans who are collaborators with the Bishop in the tremendous progress this diocese is making on the path of integral evangelisation and the practice of charity since his transfer

to serve the people of God in this ecclesiastical circumscription.

I recall the memory of the founding Bishop of this diocese, Most Rev. Anthony Ilonu (*Requiescat in pace*), who after the civil war of Biafra and Nigeria, worked as a teacher at the Bigard Memorial Seminary (my parents lived in Uwani, Enugu) whilst I was a junior seminarian. I served at his masses for children, celebrated every Sunday at 7am. His last visit to our parish at Sacred Heart Uwani Enugu a few years ago was like homecoming. His visit to pass the night with me at my residence in Enugu and our late-night discussions centred on his desire to complete a befitting project for his people and lead them to a self-reliant and self-sustaining indigenous African Church.

My gratitude goes to the competent diocesan officials and organisers, especially Father Isidore for taking the lead in inviting my presence and keeping the pace of the warmth and belief that we had something to share with the brothers and sisters of Okigwe diocese, coming from our own background of Enugu diocese which experiences is worth sharing. A people can by sheer solidarity, determination, will, vision, opportunity and challenge rise above their given situations and take their destiny into their own hands. Enugu diocese has done just that and I am glad to share our local experiences in humble acknowledgment that much is still ahead.

Let me confess that Father Isidore, with his persistent daring and constantly keeping in touch with several

telephone calls, emails and telematic correspondences, virtually monitoring my movements whether in Nigeria or abroad, made me cancel other scheduled engagements to share your warmth and participate at this event. Such daring and persistence by missionaries for their flock, parish, schools, health centres, projects vision and mission for the common good is exemplary and brings desired results in our times and clime. Thank you for the invitation. To my many friends, classmates, colleagues and acquaintances here present, I pay my respects and now invite you all to share with me some thoughts on the topic assigned.

2. Okigwe Diocese in Focus

The focus of this paper, dialogue and sharing is the Catholic Church and people of the territory of Okigwe diocese. Your gift is this land blessed by God with large numbers of priestly and religious vocations who are ready to bring the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth. Okigwe diocese within Nigeria ranks among the areas with the most dedicated, educated and missionary oriented dioceses. Claim it and enhance it for upon the heels of the bringers of the good news follow blessings for their peoples.

The Irish and Polish missionary experiences showcase how the role of the missionaries in championing the emergence of these nations into the international theatre, with John F

Kennedy emerging the President of the USA. Missionaries are ambassadors for their people. Added to the gift of these vocations to the religious and priestly life are the many other endowments of human and natural resources of your diocese, some of them still untapped.

Counting on the blessings, one is amazed at the numbers of the human capital, thinkers and scholars who are indigenes to this diocese whether Roman Catholic or not. Professor Adiele Afigbo of the University of Nigeria, now deceased, a renowned humanist and historiography teacher and such caliber of persons show the gift which is in your territory. The establishment of tertiary institutions, schools and enterprise centres speak volumes of the desire of the people to move from neglect, stunted cultural practices, religious syncretism and fetish, poverty and ignorance into a competitive world class territory with the many possibilities and apparent limitations.

To achieve greatness, however, unity is essential and this appears, in my humble estimation, as one of the critical challenges for a Church on Mission in Okigwe diocese to redeem its people. It seems appropriate to presume that one of the expectations of the audience is to share a reflection on how we can specifically offer a lasting solution to the legitimate quest for self-reliance of the local Church, moving away from the age-long dependence on external agencies and institutions to realise the vision and theology of the Second Vatican Council. This theology promoted the role of the particular Church and her competence in

human, natural and social resources with the focus on the theology of incarnation and enculturation, summarised in those beautiful words of St. John's Gospel: "*The Word took flesh and dwelt among us*" (John 1:14).

Our study follows the Synod of the Bishops on Africa at the Plenary Assembly (Africa Synod) in 1994 and the call of the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II in the Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa* No 104. The Pope challenges the Church in Africa to articulate her mandate in all dimensions, namely of proclamation, enculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, social communications all of which are possible through a dynamic and sustainable local personnel and to contribute these to the Universal Church. The Africa Synod locates the issues of self-reliance and sustainability as an agenda of the future of the local people and challenges all who have positions of responsibility to initiate credible methods and models of lifting the African Church and people from a '*begging and dependent Church to a self-reliant Church*'.

At a meeting in Kumasi, Ghana of the Bishops of West Africa, concern and focus was given to matters of sustainability and self-reliance, showing that the bishops are resolved to move from a receiving (begging) Church to become a self-sustaining and rather, giving Church. Pope Benedict XVI in the Second Synod of the Bishops on Africa in 2009 uses the biblical language "*Africa rise up and walk*" to

show the challenge of the cripple who seemed dependent but indeed had received the gift of healing.

The Apostolic Exhortation *'Africae Munus'* of 2011 is a veritable document which talks of Africa's commitment to Christ from apostolic times, which foundations are its assets in terms of becoming the region of the world Church with future, hope, family values and as the Pope says - "*the spiritual lung of the world Church*". This is apt because the respiratory organ, upon which breathing and thus all life depends upon is the lung.

The role of the Church founded on the Incarnate Word, who elevated humanity to redemption and salvation and recreated the challenge by the Creator to "*subdue and fill the earth*" (Genesis Chapter 1), is to lead by credible example and show that self-reliance and sustainability is not only possible and desirable, but corresponds to the teaching of the Fathers of the Church (St Augustine; St Thomas Aquinas; St. Peter Abelard; St. Anthony of the Desert; St. Clement of Alexandria etc}. These have adapted the Gospel to their teaching on the endowment of each person with gifts that call for responsibility and judicious use as each shall render accounts of stewardship for the gifts received.

One may, thus, apply this passage to Africa, the Church, to Nigeria and contextually to Okigwe diocese, our political elite, the educational or social and cultural organs and the captains of industry who are our economic drivers to "*rise up and walk*" and not continue to wallow in self-pity,

lethargy, apathy, unrealistic and unrealistic bogus claims, dishonesty, adulation and a perpetual dependency syndrome. This, in my humble estimation, remains part of the challenge facing the Igbo Church, nay in local context, the people of Okigwe diocese. Hope is the gift. Optimism founded on reality is the foundation for success.

Okigwe diocesans are brilliant with realistic ideas, planning and methodology skills which are foundations for the proper participation of all persons as productive ingredients in the attempts towards self-reliance. The contributions of the Laity in resource management needs to be constantly encouraged and not be neglected. The Laity have a wealth of resources, decision making systems and management competency skills that serve the need of the Church and their locality. Their participation is critical, and Laity remain the major untapped resource in our Churches.

3. Our Mandate

Look around you and you shall discover the manifest situation of many people in our land, frustrated, dejected, brutalised, abandoned, disillusioned and rendered poor in every sense of the word. They are hungry, exploited and naked, homeless and many of them die young. Statistics on the African continent state that 40,000 children die daily due to lack of the basic means of livelihood. The contextual statistics would be most challenging, thus, the phenomenon

of crime, 'bokoharamism' kidnapping and brigandage into negative actions which has become the bane of our society.

Our mandate has its roots in the Gospel of Jesus Christ to "Go into the whole World and proclaim the good news" (Matthew 28:19). "I came that they may have life in abundance" (John 10: 10). "The spirit of the Lord has been given to me for the Lord has sent me to Good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). The Lord Jesus Christ in his life challenged the people of Israel to self-help. A good example is the miracle at the Lake of Galilee with the multiplication of loaves. He made the disciples 'not to send the people away into the desert in search of food' but to give them food themselves by helping locate a young lad who had five loaves and two fishes. This symbol was enough for the Lord to perform the miracle of the multiplication and feeding of five thousand people, not counting the numbers of women and children.

It is our responsibility as Christian leaders of society to encourage the empowerment of people, which leads them into self-reliance and allows them to shape their destiny. Such strength helps people to understand the underlying causes of poverty and to organise themselves for purposeful activity. Positive empowerment is based on solidarity and mutual respect and strives for equality of relationship, which it may never fully achieve. This is the real challenge facing the world and the Church, for how can we see people die daily of hunger for food, unemployment, curable diseases, illiteracy and ignorance, ill-health, inadequate housing and horrendous poverty without

realising their God-given destinies and talents? The challenge and mandate in the language of Vatican II is to "*see the signs of the times and translate them in the light of the Gospel*" (GS I, 2).

Taking into consideration the fact that any discussion about self-reliance revolve around the proper use of power, which is the ability to achieve a purpose and bring about change, we do underscore our utter rejection of a system which creates and encourages poverty in order to practice charity. The New Testament repeatedly attests to the paradoxical inter-relationship of power and powerlessness. "*He has sent me to bring the Good News to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind to set the downtrodden free and to proclaim to all the Lord's year of favour*". (Luke 4: 18- 19).

The long tradition of Catholic Social Teaching has always advocated the empowerment of poor and marginalised people, a theology completely consistent with the Gospel by empowering the less privileged to become equal and responsible citizens. No genuine authority can be based upon the powerlessness of those who are subject to it. In fact, political and economic situations challenge poor people to effect changes in their own lives by engaging the oppressive structures and social situations that has kept them dependent. "*God helps those who help themselves*".

What we experience in the Arab world and in other places of tumult and uprising currently is the relocation of power to the people against years of oppression, injustice and tutelage. There comes a time when people can and must say “No!” to subjugation as an attempt to recreate their destinies wasted by an elite that denied them their rights and suppressed it. The exodus phenomenon is the historical presence and action of God alongside the marginalised, a paradigmatic approach which captures the present situation and mood of the Nigerian people.

In the words of a Vatican diplomat to the UN: *“if the process globalisation which is taking place in our world is to be truly human, it requires the construction of a truly global community where concern for all especially the weakest is uppermost”* (Cf. Archbishop Renato Martino, Vatican Diplomat and Nuncio, speech to the UN, 1977).

Church and Self-Reliance- Catholic Social Teaching En-Route

The universal quest by man created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1: 27) for a better world founded on the biblical injunction to *“subdue the earth and fill it”* (Gen 1: 28) living in full equality, dignity and integrity, prompted this reflection on the linkage of Church and self-reliance. Due to the lack of knowledge by people, including Christians of the profound teachings contained in the Social Teaching of the Church since Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical letter *‘Rerum Novarum’* on the conditions of the working classes and the call for their liberation, just treatment and

just wage, the magisterial office of the Church has continued to inundate the world and the Faithful with statements, guiding principles and teaching that guarantee a proper understanding of socio-economic and political-cultural realities.

These realities are founded on sound reason, common sense and the injunctions of faith. We, as African theologians, Christian Faithful and ministers of the Word, are also called to reflect on these teachings in the light of our own peculiar faith experiences and circumstances of life with the purpose of drawing from their insights, deepening them in our thoughts and further elaborating upon them with our background and context in view. This sharing today draws upon some of these age-old wisdom and guiding principles, thus, their presentation in a brief summary here. Pope John XXIII described the Church as "*Mater et Magistra*" (mother and teacher) in his Encyclical letter which bears this title, stating very strongly that this "*Catholic social Doctrine is an integral part of the Christian conception of life*" (MM 222). He suggests that these principles are of universal application, for they take human nature and the varying conditions in which man's life is lived into account.

The principles also take into account the principal characteristics of contemporary society, and are, thus, acceptable to all (Cf. MM no 220). Pope John XXIII,

therefore, recommends that there is urgency for the study of the Social Doctrine of the Church. "*Such teaching must be extended by regular, systematic courses in Catholic schools of every kind, especially in seminaries. It is to be inserted into the religious instruction of parishes and of association of the lay apostolate. It must be spread by every modern means at our disposal: daily newspapers, periodicals, popular and scientific publications, radio and television*" (MM 224). This call, which, since then has been interpreted to mean prophetic challenge in view of the events of human history since 50 years of its publication, faces us more in the particular churches of Africa and our developing nation.

With the document '*Populorum Progressio*' Pope Paul VI in 1968 gave the world a clear teaching on the link of development and progress, Church and self-reliance, culture and society. In fact, he called development the '*new name for peace*' and urged that every effort be made to bring humanity to the awareness and authenticity of their true self, identity, skills, ability and resources which, in essence, is authentic and sustainable development. True development is not infrastructural - it is the building of the human person and his integrity and personality according to the mind of God.

The linkage of Church and self-reliance is a theological concept, expressed since apostolic times and engraved even in the nature of the family and the system of economic enterprise, particularly agricultural production in antiquity before the emergence of industrial capitalism. In the word

of Pope John XXIII, "*it is not enough merely to formulate a social doctrine. It must be translated into reality. And this is particularly true of the Church's Social Doctrine, the light of which is truth, justice its objective and love its driving force*" (MM226).

Grieved at the wanton misery and suffering into which increasing majorities of our people are condemned to live especially their economic dependence, there is need for the leaders of the people to realise that "*failing to plan is planning to fail*". Therefore, in an effort to free ourselves from the present situation of dependency, we acknowledge the need to recognise our potentials and limitations in order to achieve the desired self-reliance. Over-ambition and undue expectations are part of the problems which make people "*build castles in the air*". Several resources have been wasted in unattainable projects. The Church is called to lead by modest example to sustain this drive and its ministers must commit themselves to carry out this mission in educational campaigns for justice and peace for all our people.

The quest for self-reliance is not an attempt at rebellion, or an exercise in isolation. Self-reliance also implies solidarity. The Church can attain self-reliance in those areas where she can do things for herself, seek reasonable assistance from external bodies on those things she cannot support herself and pursue the wisdom which states that

subsidiarity does not exclude solidarity in the search for the Common Good. Our belief is based on the fact that we have several values in our religious, theological, cultural and social ambient which teach us of the proper use and management of resources. These correspond to the wisdom of our ancestors who became rich by saving and harnessing the little they had. In our context and with the added advantage of knowledge and experiences of what works elsewhere, the management of local resources and the belief in our ability to sustain and survive assumes the dimensions of a Gospel initiative. It is imperative to accept this challenge and serve the people to redirect their values so that we learn to "*cut our coat according to our size and cloth*".

Given the socio-political conditions in our country today, the Church's growth and development of the faithful has been adversely affected without much-needed resources. The seminaries and religious houses still lack adequate accommodation. Many parishes, especially in the rural areas, do not have the access and adequate resources required for mission work. Infrastructure much needed for development are lacking as our road network, housing, energy and power supplies for industrial development is below average and constant outage of electricity a common occurrence. As a result, we still have to depend upon external assistance on a wide range of areas. We realise that funds emanating from external sources may have some 'strings' attached and may not continue for long, in fact, are rather diminishing. Donor agencies have developed a

gradual 'aid fatigue' and there is a direct call to recipients to be on their own. We urge ourselves and other non-governmental organizations including our local Church to prepare for this probable development.

As a credible step towards financial self-reliance, we join the recent calls by the local Church and our civil rulers and commit ourselves to encourage income-generating projects to enable people and institutions achieve their own development and the overall common good. This can be done through the establishment of microfinance banks that are properly functioning and are guided by discipline and corporate governance; agricultural projects; skills training and vocational centres for the youth and adult education with literacy programmes for those in need. Other useful projects are the creation of Small Projects Fund and credit revolving projects for communities and groups such as youth, women and men to promote their efforts on a revolving basis. Such projects build up group solidarity action and workers rights. From our experience in Enugu, we have observed that the provision of soft loans through our own Umuchinemere Pro-credit Microfinance bank (UPMFB) supports private initiative, social market and individual or group entrepreneurs and has helped us link and empower over 50,0000 people with loanable funds over a volume serviced by an asset base of near three billion naira. Umuchinemere bank is one of the largest and leading MFB's in Nigeria.

Here, I shall share with you some of the successful projects going on in the diocese of Enugu as a point of departure of what we all can do in our different localities. Some of these include CST (Catholic Social Teaching) programme; health and educational institutions; the establishment of a diocesan university, the GOU (Godfrey Okoye University) with faculties and the attendant advantages of a university; the VITFC; the Ofu Obi Africa Centre, the growing numbers of parishes, pastoral programmes and initiatives towards evangelisation; agricultural projects; rural development; education work at all levels; women and men programmes on the competence and levels of the Laity; income generating projects; linkage of Church and government; team work of the local personnel through trust and control mechanisms; social housing programmes; further studies and a new sense of mission under new evangelisation.

Resolutions

Aware of the enormous responsibilities facing humanity, the African continent, the Nigerian nation and Okigwe diocese at this time, I recommend that we resolve as follows:

I. To face up to the real problems and challenges of the local Church, working in unity, determination and focus and through the Holy Spirit to promote more conscientiously the mission of Jesus Christ which is summed up in the new evangelisation understood as: proclamation, dialogue,

enculturation, justice and peace and the challenges of the means of social communication (*Ecclesia in Africa*).

2. Reaffirm our desire to identify and harness the material, spiritual and human resources of our local Church for the attainment of a state of sustainable self-reliance.

3. Acknowledge the relevance of trained personnel in our work to sustain the training and empowerment of our personnel and calling for ongoing formation in skills and knowledge within the shores of the locality and abroad.

4. Promote the sustenance of the use and management of funds at our disposal as a vital issue in the attempts to attain self-reliance. It is, therefore, imperative to hold tenaciously the principle of proper accountability, honesty and transparency in the use of funds.

5. Promote the preferential option for the poor, which calls each individual to give a weighted concern to the needs of the poor, in all economic, political and social decisions; because it is the most impoverished people whose rights and dignity are most often violated. We affirm that we are on the side of the poor.

6. Challenge the rascality by which local, state, and federal officials of government have borrowed money to buy supplies, equipment or a house. They borrow money from private markets and international financial institutions. Individual loans are often repaid directly, but if a country

borrow money, the citizens are not necessarily notified or informed of the purpose of the loan or its terms and conditions. In fact, instances exist, where such loans have been used to enrich a small group of people and have been transferred to private bank accounts of government officials outside the country. We question the logic and the justice which demands repayment of debt taken thirty years ago, before many African children were born and paid to creditor nations to be enjoyed by their children who were not born when the loans were taken. Huge debt repayments places repayment before life, and total debt cancellation is a bold gesture of the Millennium Development Goals to usher in demand for ethical considerations that promote and enhances life for all.

7. In line with Catholic Social Teaching, to emphasise our belief in the sacredness of each individual and in the dignity of each person. We consider this position a criterion against which all economic, political and social systems are to be judged and all aspects of the debt situation must be measured. The erosion of common good, caused by the current debt situation demands active solutions from governments, institutions, and the Churches which assure human dignity and protect human rights.

8. To foster education growth at all levels and in all forms and dimensions, especially in the promotion of career and skills programmes, youth and women development and in the promotion of a theology of empowerment, which is truly Catholic and authentically African.

9. To challenge our people to register, vote and be voted for and develop a positive interest in politics for the general welfare, whilst supporting lay and active participation in politics. We are aware that only in the restructuring of the social order based on the principles of justice, truth and fairness can there emerge the new society of our dreams. This optimism has its source in the belief that a “common dream is the nearest reality” and affirm with the Bishops of Africa in the Synod our hope and belief in HIM through whom all things are possible (Luke 1:37).

10. To acknowledge the spiritual, social and human dimensions of the Nigerian context in which we act as agents of the Good News. There is a lot of potentiality in human, natural and material resources in our nation and dioceses. Almighty God has blessed us abundantly. The local Church to a large extent is already self-reliant in manpower and personnel. The Church leadership has vision and there is need for courage. While much has been achieved already with the support of the world, Church and people of goodwill, much is yet to be done.

Conclusion

I have enjoyed my sharing with you all, brothers and sisters. May we now recommend all these deliberations with intensive prayer and trust in him who makes all things possible (Luke 1:26) and call on all our people to work assiduously for the achievement of the goal of a self-reliant Church in our Diocese, which is mature enough to help

herself do what it can and even assist others. We agree that our success in attaining self-reliance will need discipline, truth, justice, hope, patience, love and perseverance. We, therefore, call on our heavenly Father in this Year of Faith for His abundant blessings.

CHAPTER 10

Interreligious Ethics in Higher Education – Challenges for a New Paradigm of Life and Society – The Globethics.net Program as Model

“I have long believed that when government, civil society and, particularly, Religious communities work towards a common goal, transformational change can take place. Faiths and religions are a central part of that equation. Indeed the world’s faith communities occupy a unique position in discussions on the fate of our planet and accelerating impacts of climate change. As a secular organization, the United Nations does not have any common language or common religion, but like all faiths we do work on behalf of the disadvantaged and the vulnerable people. We share the same ethical standards and belief in the inherent dignity of all individuals and all human beings”²⁸

Contemporary challenges to Life and Society

The principal questions of interreligious ethics circulate around the topic of “*why ethics matters*” and how faith

²⁸ Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General, Speech at the First Term Plan event at Windsor castle. UK, 2009 published in “Faith in the Future – The Faiths and the Sustainable Development Goals - The Bristol Commitments; (UNDP and ARC publication, 2015), 7.

groups, believers and leaders of various religious confessions can apply their sets of religious beliefs to the progress and practice of ethical principles. These principles bother on values and virtues, and the search for integrity is epitomised in the lives of the founders of various religions such as Buddha, Prophet Mohammed, Jesus Christ the son of God and the saints and prophets known to various religions and continents and the common good of all.

It further reflects on the *fundamental respect for life*, which often is the basic teaching of most religions. This involves the respect for human dignity, belief in the promotion of individual/communal responsibility and freedoms and the rights belonging to humans because they are made in the image of the divine. Interreligious ethics further address issues linked to the protection, promotion and advancement of life in society and the environment, the linkage of faith beliefs with action for justice, issues of war and peace and the place of ethics in business, finance, politics, education, family, community, technology and society. It also includes the challenge to pursue issues of inclusion for discriminated groups in dominant religious traditions with practices that affect victims – the poor, especially women, youth and marginalised groups. In essence, how can a living faith and religious belief systems integrate ethically acceptable actions that go beyond beliefs to inculcate rationally grounded basis of doing the ought, the right things, thus, bringing ethical dilemmas into the central concerns and challenges for faith groups, religious

leaders, believers and even for non-believers from ideals to reality?

And how can the goals of inclusion, fairness and equality be integrated into global concerns of religious groups to effect that – nature, flora, fauna and humans – and indeed entire creation are nurtured, the planet – “*our common home*”²⁹ and the environment protected so that a peaceful ecology for all is achieved? These are issues addressed in interreligious ethics in higher education.

The Global Context

There is no shortage of pronouncements that a world for everybody, often considered by many as “ideal” and “illusory” and therefore “unrealistic” remains the greatest challenge for humanity in the 21st century. The issues confronting nations and peoples globally indicate an unfinished business of building solidarity amongst members of the human family and establishing their bonding and ultimate meaning. It is no wonder that poverty in the midst of plenty and the task of eradicating extreme poverty, disease and hunger remains a challenge.

Today, humanity is ashamed of its inability to respect and defend human life, protect the environment, promote human dignity and guarantee the welfare of all. The lack of

²⁹ Pope Francis, “*Encyclical Letter Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home*”

responsibility and values-driven leadership in local, national and international contexts bear the clear evidence of failure. It is a failure to guarantee values cherished universally by all, including freedom, participatory democracy, justice, respect and equality, tolerance, peace and socio-economic welfare. It is not, however, the systems that failed first. What failed first is the lack of ethical principles in human agents and the lack of integration of character formation in the youth, thus the need for filling this gap.

It is no exaggeration to say that contemporary life and society often lack shared values across sectors and cultures, and, as a consequence suffer from a growing gap of any meaning in life and the absence of peace based on justice. Other challenges and existing threats come from a divided world - from environmental degradation, including of our climate to extreme weather events, which endanger lives, livelihoods and whole nations³⁰.

The scandal of current patterns of consumption generating levels of pollution, which our planet cannot cope with at a time when many die of hunger and homelessness, is simply mind-boggling. Economic growth compatible with our planetary limits and decent employments, which put people before profit remains elusive. With all the many positive achievements of humanity during our time in the areas of

³⁰ Pope Francis. *Encyclical Letter Laudato Si, On Care for Our Common Home*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2015

advanced scientific developments and technology, space travel, the arts, financial transactions, swift communications, medicine and civilisation, conflicts and insecurity continue to prevent progress for the majority who live in unfreedom and without basic rights in the 21st century. In some cases, religious and ethnic motives are instrumentalised to settle political differences. The nature of conflict has also changed considerably as armed conflicts are far more likely to occur within states than between them, and to involve disparate non-state actors.³¹

Taken together, we see institutional weakness in government, economy and traditional and religious institutions, including the academia, showing a growing lack of trust or respect by citizens for established authority and institutions around the globe. And perhaps more worrisome is a growing absence of faith in the human values that guide people, values founded on sound moral and natural reasoning, using freedom to make choices and decision that affect the common good.

The agenda of achieving levels of inclusive and sustainable development for societies “*that no one be left behind*” stands behind the efforts made with the Sustainable Development

³¹ Alliance of Religions and Conservation and Conservation and UNDP. *Faith in the Future – The Faiths and the Sustainable Development Goals – The Bristol Commitments* (Bath, Ranchor Prime, 2015), 14.

Goals of the United Nations (SDG 2015). These efforts are supported by continued action at regional, international, national and non-governmental levels. The further support from civil society, businesses, individuals, religious and faith-based organizations, who raise voices and engender positive action to serve and saves lives gives credence to the need for interreligious ethics as a priority area for reflection.

Scope and Aim of Interreligious Ethics

Religions have a clear role and a calling beyond their unique salvific faith mission, to promote ethics, values and the practice of virtue and to do this beyond their various religious faith groups or traditions. This function which corresponds to the heritage of many religions as the repository of humanity's history and values, traditions and ethical principles is invaluable and a great cultural asset and historical resource.

The scope of interreligious ethics is therefore essentially but not limited to the promotion of co-existence amongst peoples, since the Divine, to whom all religions adhere to, is creator, centre and sustainer of all that is.

Religious dialogue has relevance when it moves beyond the past to the sharing of values in current plural socio-religious contexts with the aim of promoting an atmosphere for mutual respect, learning from each other, and carrying out joint activities which serve human life, support vulnerable groups and engage the environment by advancing virtue and values described as ethical practices. The second

ecumenical council convoked and held at the Vatican from 1962 to 1965 encouraged closer and stronger bonds between various religions and amongst peoples, highlighting better relation of Christians to non-Christian religions towards fostering unity and love grounded in the common bond of the human community in its origins and its ultimate meaning.³²

According to the council, *“All people of whatever race, condition and age, by virtue of their dignity as people, have an inalienable right to an education that responds to their own vocation and is in line with their temperament, their specific gender, culture and the traditions of their own country, and at the same time, is open to a fraternal coexistence with other peoples, in order to ensure true unity and true peace on earth”*³³. This call is both an opportunity and a challenge. In higher education, capacity is built of the agents of human civilisations - teachers, students and professionals - in centres of formation with content and curriculum to assist societal transformation.

³² Pope Paul VI. *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions). Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965.

³³ Pope Paul VI. *Gravissimum Educationis* (The Declaration on Christian Education). Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965.

Interreligious Ethics Makes Education Transformational

It is important to link education to character formation by building upon virtues and values-driven educational models and systems beyond just knowledge transmission. When students, at the end of a course, obtain their certificates, they are certified by their institutions as professionals in a specific discipline or study. But this is not enough for society and its need for values-driven leaders. What certification does a student get for character and good conduct, which is both a qualitative and a valuable service to the larger society?

Let's take an example from the area of business and the economy, which affects teachers of business and students. There is a challenge to conduct business with "good conscience" and finding solutions that combine sustainability and risk factors to protect the environment. Such studies maintain that investing in good conscience, which implies bringing into perspective the environmental, social and governance concerns that feed into the product design is an asset, and not a loss. Advocates of sustainable investing argue that stronger scores in areas such as corporate governance can improve a company's performance. Religious investors are in the forefront, championing responsible investments that reduce exposure to contentious stocks, such as weapons manufacturers,

tobacco companies or fossil fuels, and all this is good ethical practice applied to business.³⁴

Interreligious Ethics Includes Activities which Bother on Democracy and Education

Societies globally are opening up to novelties through improved information, sharing and participation. This includes styles of governance where democratic norms and procedures are common. There is need, therefore, for religious institutions to rethink democracy in the light of the various faith traditions in a multicultural world and advance ways and means of improving participation, giving voice, especially to women and youth, sharing governance ideas and introducing pedagogical tools for teachers and training programs.

These efforts give democracy at this hour of its crisis some orientation at a global level. Since many faith traditions are theocratic in structure, a certain form of a decentralised management of affairs would give credence to the models of managing modern society which democracy projects.

Interreligious Ethics and New Educational Models

In view of the realisation that education is indeed integral and includes skills acquisition and basic/advanced tertiary

³⁴ Thompson, J. Financial Times. "Investing in Good Conscience Wins More Interest", <https://www.ft.com/content/b0b99c92-c246-11e8-84cd-9e601db069b8> (accessed 18 November, 2018)

education with professional skills, interreligious ethics could help governments and communities improve on such educational models which empower the learner in theoretical and practical skills.

Fighting Hunger and Malnutrition

Interreligious Ethics in Higher Education offer possibilities in the search for solutions for a new paradigm of life and society. By their nature and structure, they have potentials to generate and contribute to research, training and teaching based on a broad range of resources that come from the speculative sciences of philosophy, theology and socio-religious studies, and the wisdom of generations and traditions.

At a time when humanity is challenged by hunger and disease, faith-based organisations, with their history of religion and social change, can translate such a knowledge base into enhancing the use of scientific methods and new technologies in their institutions of higher learning. Intercontinental networks of universities, exchange programs, mentorships and research collaborations belong to the field and capability of these traditions.

The aim is to translate these various religious beliefs and faith teachings into practices that are values-driven, producing responsible leadership and ethically binding rational conduct for the common good of all and the wellbeing of the entire creation. It is indeed a bold attempt to promote the relationship between religious beliefs and

ethical conduct and compare these teachings with their faith practices in a systematic and scientific manner, establishing their links, mutualities, commonalities and differences, including contradictions.³⁵

Religions Play a Critical Role in the Integration of Ethics in Society

Martin Palmer, Secretary General of the Alliance for Religions and Conservation has stated that “*religions hold a key – an important key – to the task that humanity has been given*” in achieving the sustainable development goals.³⁶ This explains why the efforts made to focus on the role of religion and religious groups especially in the fields of education, remain clearly important.

The commitment of the Sustainable Development Goals for more models of sustainable development needs a cross-sectorial approach and new major global initiatives for interreligious ethics, as the ethical and spiritual foundations for an alternative concept are not yet fully there. In many developing countries, religious and faith groups offer, through their structures, a leadership role in being the

³⁵ Ike, O. A world for Everybody – Communicating Faith in the Diversity of Cultures – Interreligious Dialogue and Co-Existence, Enugu: BEW IT Limited, 2016.

³⁶ Alliance of Religions and Conservation and Conservation and UNDP “Long Term Plans and Commitments: In Faith in the Future,” 21.

largest providers of educational institutions (65 percent of schools and hospitals and social services in several nations are offered by religious institutions and non-state actors)³⁷.

It is a known fact that the oldest social service providers known to humankind are religious institutions. In most cultures of the world, religious leaders are trusted often more than those in government or the NGO world, and they are listened to and followed in ways that almost no other sector of society can hope for. They range from small communities at the heart of each and every social group, to religious leaders of communities (of different sizes, locations and faith traditions) to CEO's and staff of major faith inspired NGO's working on all aspects of human existence and experience. Their contributions, therefore, are equally diverse and significant. These religious and faith groups are local, national and international in their understanding and reach. Through their teachings and practices they manifest the core beliefs and with them, the core values of their traditions, using accessible language and values such as compassion, love and trust. This unparalleled outreach speaks to norms, behaviour, attitudes and social and political trends and cannot be underestimated.³⁸

³⁷ Alliance of Religions and Conservation and Conservation and UNDP. *The Zug Guidelines for Faith Consistent Investing*, 2016.

³⁸ Faith in the Future – The Faiths and the Sustainable Development Goals - The Bristol Commitments; UNDP and ARC publication, 2015. 19.

Globethics.net Providing the Framework for Interreligious Ethics

At Globethics.net³⁹, the need for a strategic network of significant pilot models of how interreligious ethical formation and common research can be done to include institutions, programs and individuals was already conceived and is currently being carried out. The vision at Globethics.net is clear and bold, namely: *to integrate Ethics in Higher Education*. At the level of Higher Education institutions, we encounter the youth – future leaders of communities, families, institutions, businesses and nations. Upon them, their knowledge and integrity rest the future of societies. They need to be empowered by their institutions, learning environments and teachers whom we engage with tools and resources.

Promoting ethics as policy in higher education is the highest priority and agenda at Globethics.net. It implies policy focus and engagement with regulators and decision makers, but also with key providers of educational products, which in many cases involve religious and faith-based groups.

The consortium on ethics in higher education provides such a platform, with several universities from all the continents involved. These members belong to all the major faith groups - Hindus, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Traditional Religions and secular state and private actors in

³⁹ Globethics.net Foundation website: <http://www.globethics.net>.

higher education. There is extensive work currently undertaken and the impact is enormous.⁴⁰

The founder's spirit behind Globethics.net was motivated by a deep emotional commitment and sense of responsibility to work for global leadership founded on ethical pedestals. The overriding conviction then, as it is still now, was on the need for a united global effort to promote values-driven leadership through ethics, so that we can meaningfully control the forces of science and technology and govern the peaceful evolution of human society.

The UN ECOSOC Council (United Nations Economic and Social Council) needs as equivalent, official and highly visible UN Council for Cultural, Ethical and Spiritual Transformation with leading representatives of all major traditions and interreligious think-tanks which can stimulate attempts to establish the “cultural dimension of the Great Transformation” which is now globally recognised but not yet institutionally implemented in the UN system in terms of a greater visibility, participation and impact of religious organizations and ethical think-tanks. How can we synchronise governance with inevitable digitalisation of politics? How can we enable decision-making mechanisms at the global level? These questions need to be answered.

⁴⁰ Globethics.net, *Globethics.net Annual Report 2017*. Geneva: Globethics.net, 2018, 12.

One may observe generally that the significance of higher education in the area of development co-operation is underestimated. Yet, forming the elites for future global networks of new responsibilities for sustainability and capacity building as change agents for the eco-social transformation which we need to undergo globally demands for a much more visible and determined support and collaboration, also between development agencies and higher education institutions. Where will the future elite otherwise be trained and where will new ethical and morally informed majorities come from?

Activities promoting interreligious ethics are carried out through the Globethics.net program anchored on four products and four resources. They are support to institutions, empowerment of teachers, capacity for students and provision for professionals.

Support to institutions: These efforts involve introducing ethical behaviour in higher education institutions and support the integration of relevant and contextual standards and structures. The objectives include assistance that encourage ethical behavior, through developing standards and structures, building capacity, ensuring that ethics directorates are established in higher education institutions, training the trainers, offering tailored solutions and resources, involving experts on ethics to support the

institutions and enhancing credible benchmarks and institutional assessments.

Empowerment of teachers: This is achieved in higher education through teacher training, research, course development and collaborative projects. The objective is to encourage ethical behavior amongst supervisors, facilitators, training professionals and persons involved as teachers in teaching and research by providing trainings, course content; resources and tools for teaching on applied ethics.

Capacity for students: With target groups such as undergraduate/post-graduate candidates and doctoral/research fellows, effort is made to encourage students to behave ethically through learning and researching, showing them best practices of individuals, companies and organisations that have become successful by following ethical standards and principles and offering new perspectives on intercultural exchange and dialogue for peace and sustainable development.

Provision for professions: The target groups are professional associations and their members, such as research institutes on ethics and providers of public utilities including government ministries. The objective is to provide educational and training material on applied ethics adapted to professions across sectors to grow a deeper understanding of ethics in their context. Trainees obtain knowledge and practice of ethical thinking and lifestyles that

support their work and enhance sustainability concerns in professional sectors.

Practical Suggestions

It is suggested to develop clear ethical guidelines on accountable and responsible religious leadership and management for religious communities so that churches and other religious communities can be shining examples of trustworthy religious leaders instead of examples of scandals and distortions in terms of ethical and anti-corruption standards.

We ask that higher education actors make policies that empower people and develops talents; that these policies translate higher education to achieve transformative roles by placing the common good before self-interest; that higher education takes a holistic approach through understanding of in-depth correlations; that higher education serves integrity which makes values-based decisions and behaviours; and finally that higher education promotes competence of the educated by focusing on innovative and collective proficiency that serves sustainability. This means to essentially stand up for our one world.

The work of ACT Alliance and its member organisations in the area of interreligious peace ethics, interreligious ethics of sustainability and ethics of entrepreneurship as the

dividing lines between religion and business often are blurred and very problematic features also occur in all types of religious communities, where religion is used simply to more profit-oriented business.

Also suggested is that every development organisation create visible staff and clear guidelines on interreligious collaboration in development.

Conclusion

The challenge for all religions at this stage of human history is to collaborate on levels of joint actions that impact positively for the common good of all. Religions have this potential. That we must once again reaffirm the cultural and spiritual values that irresistibly draw humanity into the future through ethical practices that considers the “ought” and “the right” and also do so because it is the right thing to do, this time, not just because of laws or morality or sanctions but as a way of life. This compels us to rediscover the underlying power behind all the sciences of literature, history, philosophy and the other humanities to restore wholeness to our highly fragmented view of the world by reuniting the objective and subjective dimensions of social reality.

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CHAPTER 11

“Economy and Mission” as Solidarity and Stewardship in Financial Management – An African Point of View

I. Why This Topic?

Management of the resources of congregations and their assets are not normally the first things religious think of in the context of their piety, mission and the practice of their spiritual lives as religious brothers and sisters⁴¹. So why focus on “Economy and Mission”? The question can be put in another manner: How are you managing the responsibilities entrusted to you as a religious at every level of responsibility? And since some of these assets are material, a clear answer necessarily links the topic of Economy and Mission. In view of the global climate and current socio-political and economic challenges, there is a worldwide concern about the care for our resources and the environment. People are thinking of the future in ways that was some years earlier presumed as certain. Religious life is moving from the global North to the global South after several years of dominance and presence of the centres of religion and political dominance in these centres.

⁴¹ Reflections for the SEDOS SEMINAR, NEMI, ROME, 2nd to 5th May 2017

Just like a well that watered other countries and farms in the past, it is clear that the North must let go so that the younger mission countries find their own sources, resources, and personnel to thrive and grow new fruits. It is a difficult task to let go, and therefore, several discussions are happening about the future and the responsibility all of us have for this future. Pope Francis has called all to become Good Stewards. The simplest way to formulate this question is to ask the following to the brothers and sisters: “How do you start your day? Do you have any plans? Or do you just wake up in the morning and watch the day pass by, waiting for things to happen? And the Religious are specially invited to raise awareness about the importance of good stewardship, become better stewards in areas of competence and serve Christ better.

Let it be said – we live in a reality that is often far removed from our ideal. Worldwide, cases of corruption abound. Poverty increases alongside wealth and many die young. There is constant news of abuse of resources and its depletion, of lack of transparency and the growth of nepotism, mediocrity, unethical dealings, or just of indifference to the world around us. What is our role in all of this? How do we bring this reality closer in view of rising depletion of resource, climatic changes, disasters such as floods and acid rains, global warming and lack of access to required knowledge and adequate funds to make things better? How do we build bridges across cultures, religions and sectors to ensure stewardship as a Gospel value? And the bottom line is this: building a bridge from the reality to

the ideal requires a plan. And SEDOS is invited to contribute to this plan.

Permit me to begin this reflection with a statement made by the Blessed Michael Eneja, Bishop of Enugu 1978 -1996 who addressed religious and priests in Nigeria with these words: *“We as individuals and groups need to be efficient in financial management. Our system must be clear, orderly and transparent. Our reports must be punctual and regular. One must not be satisfied that one is honest to oneself. This is no longer enough. One must also prove that one is honest before others and the Law. It is not just the casual statement “it is between God and me”. In these days, it is the question of “between others, the Law and me”. Church stewardship on financial management is a dimension of Integral Development. It is the relevance of the link between body, mind and soul and a call to faithful followership.*

The Vatican’s Guidelines for **MANAGEMENT OF ECCLESIAL GOODS OF INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE** given by Pope Francis delivers the key to the discussions around the topic of Economy and Mission. This was already a topic of much relevance as congregations discuss the very important implication of the Guideline. Thus, we read of the Brothers of Mercy for example: *“When we discuss finances, we talk about our lifestyle and the way of living together and therefore, in particular about*

the credibility of our religious life. And at the same time we reflect upon the way in which we establish our mission ... the importance of our vocation to be close to the poor.” (Brother Lawrence Obiko, Superior General of the Brothers CMM, at the International Meeting Accountable Brothers – Good Stewardship in Brothers CMM, October 9th to 21, 2016; ISSN, 1877-6256, p.4).

The following reflections on the subject of Solidarity and Stewardship in the financial management of the Resources put into our care come from an African cultural point of view.

2. Stewardship is Responsibility

The goods of this world have been given to humankind for use and responsible stewardship/management. This mandate to stewardship is grounded in sound reason and common sense and is justified in all cultures, traditions and religions. For Christians, this mandate is at the origin of creation in the Book of Genesis Chapter I: “*subdue the earth and fill the earth*”.

True stewardship, therefore, involves and revolves around the following themes with implications for:

- Preservation of the TRUST delegated to humankind;
- The guarantee of JUSTICE in the distribution of goods;
- The promotion of the common good and;
- Search for the restoration of HUMAN DIGNITY;
- The practice of the principles of subsidiarity, solidarity and accountable lifestyles.

The good Shepherd has taught us: not only in this life, but even in the next shall each person be held accountable for deeds, misdeeds and omissions (Matthew chapter 25). And this portion shows that the accountability shall be based on Truth, Justice and Charity.

3. Poverty is not God Determined – It is a Man-Made Problem

Nature has blessed creation with abundance. Scientists, philosophers, economists and simple people know this. There are plenty of resources, natural, human, spiritual, technical and mental to take care of all. But there is, unfortunately, the equivalent amount of greed, wickedness, sin and powerful agents who do not wish for a world for everybody. Therefore, we need a new partnership in development co-operation where a coalition is built around those who believe that poverty is not God determined. We are challenged to take a stand on the side of the ongoing struggle for the eradication of the structures of disease, hunger and ignorance. These calls for acceptance of principles of Solidarity with those in need; promotion of the thinking around subsidiarity which is self-help; responsible management of available resources to avoid waste and recycle them; rejection of lifestyles that are superfluous and mundane to our vocation and identity.

4. Project Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluating is the Science of Development and Stewardship

Failing to plan is planning to fail. This is an old adage and is useful for each planning group of person. The Lord teaches us in the Gospel of Luke 14. 28 -33 to plan and budget properly. The adage is, “look before you leap”. Planning is an intellectual process. It is the conscious determination of courses of action, and the basing of decisions on purpose, facts, actual situations and considered estimates. Planning could be ad-hoc, short term, medium term, or even long term, depending on the project and problem in view. The advantages of planning are many, including offsetting uncertainty, minimising costs or wastes, facilitating control and keeping objectives in view. Good planning under normal circumstances leads to successful results.

5. Greater Coordination and Collaboration as Communication Skills

Coordination calls for mutual and proper assessment of targets and goals aligned to expected results. The leaders ensure communication and knowledge of skills, respect, trust, understanding and teamwork among the stakeholders of a project. Faithful to our mandate to witness to Jesus Christ in our lives and in His Church, the responsibility of coordination of various projects and persons responsible for execution appears as the mandate to stewardship and preservation of the goods given to our care. Coordination can be internal or external but always implies that the right people be appointed for the right jobs. We call it “putting

square pegs in square holes”. It implies an ability to maintain a strong communication link among the activities in a particular project in order to get the desired goals and objectives achieved according to plan. Therefore, the regular training of the agents and sharing of experiences of projects is critical for success.

6. SEDOS in Development Co-operation – Lessons for the Global North and South

In a growing global environment with migration, influences and interconnectedness on economic, cultural, social, political, technological and market/religious levels, human thinking and development models are changing and rapidly too. Therefore, the current era for Economy and Mission within SEDOS and the Church communities worldwide are affected and challenged with new approaches. Whereas populations and youthful religious vocations move to the global South, aging populations and wealth stay in the global North, calling for all round paradigm shifts. In a paper I delivered in 1997 at Enugu for Justice and Peace co-coordinators of the Catholic Church of Nigeria and co-organised with Misereor on the topic: “Development strategies and Financial Management of Projects”, CIDJAP publications, 1997, pp 15 to 20, co-edited with Willy Kawohl and Emmanuel Ome, I made the following points which bear repetition here:

- **Development must take place in the global North and the global South simultaneously and on a reciprocal basis. This is based on the Social teaching of the Church which states that Development is integral and is needed by all. “The Goods of this world belong to all”** (Ref to Gaudium et Spes; John XXIII, Mater et Magistra; John Paul II Laborem Exercens; Paul VI, Populorum Progressio; Pope Francis, Spes Salvi). This means that development can no longer be understood as something that is almost exclusively necessary for the so-called “developing countries”. Co-operative development work has to be re-defined as applicable both to the North and the South with simultaneous inter-dependent challenges.
- **Co-operative development work in its entirety requires new forms of communication and analyses in which vision, openness and willingness to learn have a place and values as measured solely by the global North do not dominate.** Since development is a complex process, large power plays and cultural influences - social, emotional and symbolic - impact it. To be comprehensive, an intensification of the communication between partners in the North and the South is important. Existing power differences must be made visible, transparent and become a subject of discussion.

- **Co-operative development work has to be more engaged in a just distribution. The imbalance of the distribution of the goods of the universe with statistics that show clear disparity is the bane for Economy and Mission. Whereas some have little or nothing, others have more than they need and even waste it.** The worldwide prevalence of the market economy system also integrates the so-called developing countries into the world market. It is a task for Church leaders to counteract the continuing concentration of economic power in the North. The mutual aims must remain the limitations of unchecked market forces, the redistribution of power and wealth at all levels and the strengthening of local and regional structures.
- **The competence to take decisions has to lie with mixed bodies, with equal representation of the North and South including gender balance and aspects.** This makes for proper democratic functioning of these organs to realise the common criteria and guarantee the measures for implementation.
- **Co-operative development work must occur simultaneously in the North and the South and makes sense when viewed from reciprocity. It needs to really spring from a double approach.** The analyses of the problems, the discovery of

potentials and the definition of the goals in a particular area must take place simultaneously. This has implication for parallel measures to realise the defined collective aims. The process is both/and, not simply either/or.

- **Co-operative development work is not only the business of aid/development agencies. Churches, trade unions, missionary organisations and governments are all part of development in its broadest forms.** The aim of this broad-based co-operation is an improved coherence in the relationship between the global North and the rest of the global South.
- **The interdependence of the problems of the North and the South demand specific strategies for their resolution.** Changes can be realised by targeted measures that have a positive effect on global problems affecting all. Examples include justice questions such as access to trade and markets, preventing capital flight from poor countries to the global banks in the north, reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and balancing the overuse of the planet's resources through greening of the environment of the south.
- **The problems of the North and the South are interlinked. Some of the problems currently existing in the global South have their origins in**

the structures and rules prevalent in the global North. These include environmental issues, health problems, cultural alienation and migration. Many of the goals for development work in the North have relevance also for the South, such as strengthening of democratic structures, environmentally supportive food production, dealing with terrorism, etc.

- **Interference in a foreign territory is only justifiable on the basis of reciprocity.** It has become clear that the dominance of the global North over the South is due to economic and military supremacy. Therefore, co-operative development work and missionary co-operation must be decolonised.
- **Making contact is a concrete way of gaining new experiences.** The simultaneous realisation of these activities makes possible a broader exchange of networks between organisations, missionary groups, and apostolates in the North and in the South, within a global framework.

CHAPTER 12

Globethics.net Voice to a Long Walk to Ethics Education – The Imperative of Values-Based Formation for Future Leaders – African and Global Perspectives for Action

Globethics.net Mission: We apply Ethics in Higher Education through⁴²:

- **Empowerment** - Developing talents and behaviours
- **Transformation** - Placing common good before self-interest
- **Holistic approach** - Understanding of in-depth correlations
- **Integrity** - Making values-based decisions and behaviours
- **Competence** - Focusing on innovative and collective proficiency
- **Sustainability** - Standing up for one world

⁴² Obiora Ike; paper presented at the International Association for Education in Ethics (IAEE) Conference in Stellenbosch, South Africa held from 3rd - 5th October, 2018

An African Story – Big Problems Have Small Beginnings

Permit me to share a wise tale known and told in many African traditions, which recently featured in The New York Times. The title of the story is 'Find My Stolen Turkey'. 'Many years ago, a Bedouin chief discovered one day that his favourite turkey had been stolen. He called his sons together and told them: "Boys, we are in great danger now. My turkey has been stolen - find my turkey." His boys just laughed and said, "Father, what do you need that turkey for?" And they ignored him.

'A few weeks later the Bedouin chief's camel was stolen. His sons went to him and said: "Father, our camel has been stolen. What should we do?" And the chief answered: "Find me my turkey". 'A few weeks later the chief's horse was stolen, and again his sons asked what they should do. "Find my turkey" the chief said. 'Finally, a few weeks later his daughter was abducted, at which point he gathered his sons and told them: "It's all because of the turkey! When they saw that they could take my turkey, we lost everything."

This story bears repetition in this context because it clearly demonstrates the current situation humankind faces everywhere. We wonder about how we arrived at the present global crisis in terms of the various horrendous gaps which harm people in public and private conduct. Experts say that the quality of global democracy is in rapid decline, that fraud and economic related crimes grow unabated and that the rise in abuse of humans by fellow

humans despite all the laws, conventions, treaties and constitutions continue in this time and age.

Find My Stolen Turkey is a wise invitation to start early in our ethics teaching and practice. It starts from the family, community, school, and religious places, all the way to higher education, governance, technology and businesses. This is why the focus of IAEE, Globethics.net and other institutions globally on ethics in higher education needs the support of policymakers, administrators, teachers, businesses, students and all stakeholders in higher education.

Ethics in Education Key for Sustainable Development

It is indeed an honour and a great responsibility to assist and guide young people, students and researchers, as educators. The challenge however for those who teach is to undergo a radical rethink about what and how we teach young people to enable them to emerge as thought leaders and responsible citizens of the world, equipped with skills and knowledge to protect the environment, advance cultures, progress history and preserve the human ecology — body, mind and soul. Such knowledge contains the ingredients of ethics, which is the discipline, process and action of thinking the right thing, of doing the right thing and of living justly.

The Ethical Rationale is Life

Is the knowledge base of what we learn for life have relevance in actions? Here lies a great potential for positive and sustainable change for humanity in the 21st century, confronted by challenges that come from social, environmental, technological, economic, cultural and political upheavals globally.

Gaps in Ethics Education

Part of the many problems that institutions of higher education face in ethics education, particularly in developing countries, is not a lack of awareness of the need for ethics, but rather the lack of adequate and required resources, skills and content towards integrating the discipline of ethics in management and in the classroom. In today's world, more and more attention is given to the critical role of higher education institutions in fostering students to not only be well educated but also to be values-driven, as citizens and as leaders. As such, academic institutions are challenged to ensure that they abide by the highest ethical standards and that they build an ethos on their campus, among teachers, students and administrators, which inspires trust, credibility and hard work. This future starts with a sound interdisciplinary education.

Primary Concern of Society Must Essentially Reflect in What and How We Teach Young People

The bearers of the future of human civilisation are the youth! At a time in which we find ourselves in the midst of a complexity of issues, rather than offer narrow responses, what is called for requires interdisciplinary approaches.

The Role of Universities

Higher education institutions must move from being ivory towers of the past to become authentic spaces of balance, inclusivity and access. Higher education institutions are bearers and catalysts for integral development and social mobility, which provide opportunities for the many, regardless of gender or social standing, to address the complex issues of society with broad values founded on **ETHICS** – here an acronym for: **Empowerment, Transformation, Holistic, Integrity, Competence** and **Sustainability**.

No Sustainable Development without Ethics

The future of humanity rests on some critical key points, one of which is that there can be no sustainable development universally if there are no ethical values integrated across sectors and built within the education industry at all levels. If Facebook were a country, it would be the largest in the world with its 3 billion users from all corners of the globe and generations beyond culture, religion and ideology. What policies, skills and resources

are available not only for knowledge acquisition, but also for creating the environment for the development and application of basic ethical values and principles practically in the training of the youth, towards overall transformation?

Can any sustainable development and progress be assumed for humanity, if it is devoid of education? And coming to reason on this, surely an education that has strong content in values and ethics produces leaders that are values-driven?

The Shame of Humanity in Ethical Gaps

Today, humanity is ashamed of its inability to respect and defend human life, protect human dignity and promote the welfare of all. The lack of responsibility and values-driven leadership in local, national and international contexts bear clear evidence of failure. We are all aware of the growing turmoil various people and nations face in the 21st century and are shocked that what we thought we had achieved in previous centuries. Ideals of freedom, democracy, justice, equality, tolerance, peace and economic welfare for all are gradually eroding in these times to our dismay.

The First Failure is not System but Character

It is not, however, the systems that failed first. What failed first were character and ethical principles in human agents. Managing and teaching ethics at all levels assumes, therefore, the dimensions of the search for the turkey that first got lost. 'Find My Stolen Turkey' is a metaphor for our

common challenge and opportunity. It is the search for ethics that is sustainable and serves humanity from me to we.

The Role of Teachers is to Transmit not Just Knowledge but the Truth of Life

Teachers need to teach the young that there is truth and ethically accepted codes of conduct, and not just subjective opinion. For when truth and ethical conduct are denied, what do we make of the human reason that has the ability to think and process the notion that one 'ought' to do something - knowing the right thing and doing it? We owe the youth the truth about life and the experiences of virtue as a basis for a world founded on peace and mutual coexistence. The implied thesis is correct, namely that ethics is critical for our world and provides the answers to many of our problems.

The Globethics.net Vision

Our vision at Globethics.net is clear and bold, namely: to integrate ethics in higher education. At the level of higher education institutions, we encounter the youth future leaders of communities, families, institutions, businesses and nations. Upon these and their knowledge and integrity rest the future of societies. They need to be empowered by their institutions, learning environments and teachers whom we engage with tools and resources. With these, they can integrate the ethical ingredient into disciplines

they teach and their students receive ethics lived through example and the knowledge and practical constructs. It is possible.

The founder's spirit behind Globethics.net was motivated by a deep emotional commitment and sense of responsibility to work for global leadership founded on ethical pedestals for the betterment of all. The overriding conviction then, as it is still now, was on the need for a united global effort to promote values-driven leadership through ethics, so that we can meaningfully control the forces of science and technology and govern the peaceful evolution of human society.

Why the Vision?

The world is in need of guiding ideas, a vision, to more effectively direct our intellectual, moral and scientific capabilities for world peace, global security, human dignity and social justice. Our world needs ethics, more ethics and much more ethics. Only in ethics, with ethics and through ethical standards can we evoke evolutionary ideas that spur our collective progress without the wake of destructive violence that threatens to undermine the huge but fragile political, social, financial and ecological infrastructures on which we depend and strive to build a better world.

This conference is held at a background of scholars and practitioners exploring these symptoms, their underlying causes and the outdated theoretical concepts that unpin

the present global dilemma with a hope to give solutions through education at all levels.

Transformation as the Aim of the Vision

The recent edition of CADMUS Journal, Volume 3, Issue 4 of May 2018 mentions, and some of you are already aware, that *“the world has entered the new Axial Age. Numerous transformations are taking place in the models of social, economic, and political activity, in projections of power and authority. The political landscape and its relevant “content structures” (democracy and liberalism, right and left, globalisation and nationalism etc.) are acquiring new systemic qualities. If we want to avoid fighting with the ghosts of the past, it is necessary not only to take into account these transformations but examine them from within. Who can manage the complexity of the “plurilateral” world we are stepping into? What kind of political architecture will be needed to support the nascent multi- or rather “pluripolarity”?*

Modern Times Suffer from Integrity Deficiency

As the referred to CADMUS journal mentions, some of the current challenges to include: *“Bitcoin, blockchain, fake news, populism, the polarization of societies, growing poverty and disparity between those who have and those who do not have, the world financial crisis, the revival of Cold War tensions, renewed proliferation of nuclear weapons, artificial intelligence, the fourth Industrial Revolution, neoliberalism, the retreat from democracy, rising intercultural tensions and fundamentalism*

which have all something in common". And, as we know, some of this crisis suffers from integrity deficiency.

The Common Good is foundation

Taken together, we see institutional weakness in government, economy, and traditional/religious institutions and academia, showing a growing lack of trust or respect by citizens for established authority and institutions around the globe. And perhaps more worrisome is a growing absence of faith in the human values that guide people - values founded on sound moral and natural reasoning, using freedom to make choices and decisions that affect the common good.

Values and Virtues Set the Agenda for Human Action

Some of these values are embedded in what we consider excellence, integrity and justice, life, respect and sharing, inclusion and responsibility, competence and accountability and many others, all of which serve sustainability. Unfortunately, a noticeable tendency is for some people to remain, as the Acton Institute mentions in its latest editorial, *"vulnerable to the seductions by the new gods of autonomy without community, freedom without responsibility, rights without duties, pleasure for pleasure's sake, entertainment devoid of work, allegiance to a diversity that questions identity built on lifestyles that reject ethical conduct that are values-driven"*. It cannot continue like this and the youth whose future stands ahead are the most vulnerable.

Applied Ethics Integration - Key to Interdisciplinary Studies

There are of course inhibiting conditions to translate these powerful motives into action, but they still retain their original power for realisation. It reinforces the need for reinvention and integration of Economics as Ethics and other social sciences, moves to establish the place of ethics in the rapid development of the institutions of global governance and reaffirmation of the cultural and spiritual values that irresistibly draw humanity into the future. It also compels us to rediscover the power of values behind and behind literature, history, philosophy and the other humanities to restore wholeness to our highly fragmented view of the world by reuniting the objective and subjective dimensions of social reality.

The Mission

The mission is: “Promoting Ethics as Policy in Higher Education”. Until recently, history had recorded the acts of creative individual thinkers and dynamic leaders who altered the path of human progress and left a lasting mark on society. This is what policy focus in the context of education suggests and we hope for this. It corresponds to the new and revised Mission of Globethics.net - a strong reason for this conference.

Making Policies that Develop Young Talents and Empower People

We ask that higher education actors make policies that empower people and develop talents; that these policies translate higher education to achieve transformative roles by placing the common good before self-interest; that higher education takes a holistic approach through understanding of in-depth correlations; that higher education serves integrity which makes values-based decisions and behaviours; and finally that higher education promotes competence of the educated by focusing on innovative and collective proficiency that serves sustainability. This means to essentially stand up for our one world.

“UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

International organizations of the UN system and NGOs such as Globethics.net, the Club of Rome, the Red Cross, and the Association of Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, to mention but a few others, stand out because they explore the major concerns of humanity and are inspired by high values, committed to the achievement of practical, but far-reaching goals. At Globethics.net, we are desirous to see how we can make ethics a key driver of the UN 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

No Single Institution Can Do It Alone – We Need Collaborations

Today circumstances are more conducive for collaboration, even though we face a myriad of challenges. But the

international environment is more developed. No single organisation can, by itself, harness the motive force needed to change the world. However, a group of like-minded organisations, a consortium of actors in Ethics in Higher education founded with such powerful intentions, can become a magnet and focal point to project creative ideas that possess the inherent dynamism for self-fulfilment.

These reflect the stress and uncertainty generated by rapid globalisation, technological innovation and social evolution, which the learned Pope Benedict XVI mentions in his Encyclical “*Caritas in Veritate*”. Here, the modern dilemma is the fact that the speed of technology is faster, beyond and sometimes above the human person who has created it, yet the ethical capacities of human beings who have made these products moves slower even as the pace of technology grows faster”. It is a dilemma between Ethics and technology and how to responsibly manage freedom to serve both technology and humanity. This is the challenge for bioethics – to save, protect and serve life.

The Practice of Ethics is Action

The taste of the pudding, they say, is in the eating. How do we translate and make ethics practically present and relevant in the classroom and lives of students, teachers and professionals who emerge from higher education institutions? We are compelled by the practice of ethics in the market place- with the right products and the adequate

prize, promoted by the right people and the correct brand of promotional material to impact the change we want for society. It is as simple as this but the fact is that the journey has just started – with you.

Capacity Building is the Way to Go

We encourage capacity building at the level of institutions and by encouraging critical thinking and ethical behaviours among teachers and students. The training concepts are based on four programmes and four resources that constitute the Globethics.net Cycle of ethics in education, all of which are in a pack for you to take home, read and engage. The resources include the Digital Library, Publishing House, Academy and Network, all customised to local contexts and needs.

Is Ethics Realisable?

The most troublesome concepts are the ones we take for granted. This is not because they are familiar but because they are embedded in our way of thinking. They roll off our tongues without our even attempting to think what they really mean. We take them axiomatically as established truths. One of these concepts is the idea that ethics is not practicable or its integration not practicable.

Cultural and Spiritual Values Inspire Ethics for Life

That we must once again reaffirm the cultural and spiritual values that irresistibly draw humanity into the future through ethical practices that consider the “ought” and do the right because it is right to do so. It compels us to

rediscover the underlying power behind all sciences - of literature, history, philosophy and the other humanities to restore wholeness to our highly fragmented view of the world by reuniting the objective and subjective dimensions of social reality.

Daily News Exposes Unethical Practices

And indeed, when you read a newspaper today, you get the impression that the growing cases of corruption, sexual harassment, plagiarism, abuse of power, faulty research assumptions and methodologies, payment for marks by students, lack for zeal for hard work and nationalist challenges confronting the globalist model have moved to the centre of political discourse. Indeed it has, but that part is the the bad news. There is also good news.

The Good News in the New Axial Age is – “Collaboration”

The world has entered the new Axial Age. Numerous transformations are taking place in the models of social, economic and political activity, and in projections of power and authority. The political landscape and its relevant “content structures” (democracy and liberalism, right and left, globalisation and nationalism, etc.) are acquiring new systemic qualities. If we want to avoid fighting with the ghosts of the past, it is necessary not only to take into account these transformations but also to examine them from within. Artificial intelligence has joined the club. To

see the complexity of things and to understand the transformation of the world in transit, we need to get rid of myopic and linear interpretations of seemingly familiar but morphing notions like “globalism and nationalism”. Who can manage the complexity of the “plurilateral” world we are stepping into? What kind of political architecture will be needed to support the nascent “multi” or rather “pluripolarity”?

The Key Challenge is to be Part of the Equation

How can we synchronise governance with inevitable digitalisation of politics? How can we enable decision-making mechanisms at the global level? These questions need to be answered. Nobody will miss the train to “a bright tomorrow”. Historical time flows for everyone - you cannot hide “behind the wall” to avoid it. No actor of a historical process can bury his head in the sand of the comfortable present, indulging in “counter-clockwise revolt”. The future will come for everyone, but not everyone will hold an equal place in it.

The African Story is Indigenous Wisdom for International Discourse

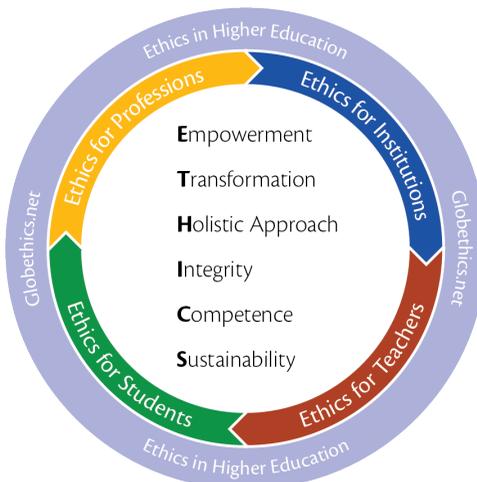
‘Find My Stolen Turkey’ is an invitation to turn the tide of unethical practices spreading like a cancer in virtually all countries, systems and cultures. When we allow the first and smaller vices to proceed, the larger ones follow. And sometimes, it might be too late to stop it all.

What We Do

- We support institutions in their efforts to introduce ethical behaviour in higher education institutions and support the integration of relevant and contextual standards and structures.
- We empower teachers in higher education through teacher training, research, course development and collaborative projects.
- We encourage students to behave ethically, showing them best practices of individuals, companies and organisations that have become successful by following ethical standards and principles.
- We provide professions with educational materials adapted to their profession to develop a deeper understanding of ethics in their context (for them to use to practice ethics).

Why?

To help build **strong institutions, responsible leaders and citizens**



This is why we are taking a multi-level and innovative approach with our efforts in integrating ethics in higher education. All actors must be involved in order to achieve change. Our main aim is to integrate ethics in higher education, which we do through offering institutions, teachers, students and professionals in this field various services, products and resources.

Ethics in Institutions (EI) promotes ethical behaviour in higher education institutions and supports the development and integration of relevant global and contextualised standards and structures. It provides expertise, tools and resources to strengthen and embed ethical values and practice within institutions.

Ethics for Teachers (ET) is designed to encourage ethical behaviour in teaching and research, and to provide training, course content resources and tools for the teaching of applied ethics.

The personal commitment of teachers and staff at all levels, from assistants, lecturers, assistant professors, leadership and administration of the university, are key to integrating ethics standards and teaching content effectively in their institutions.

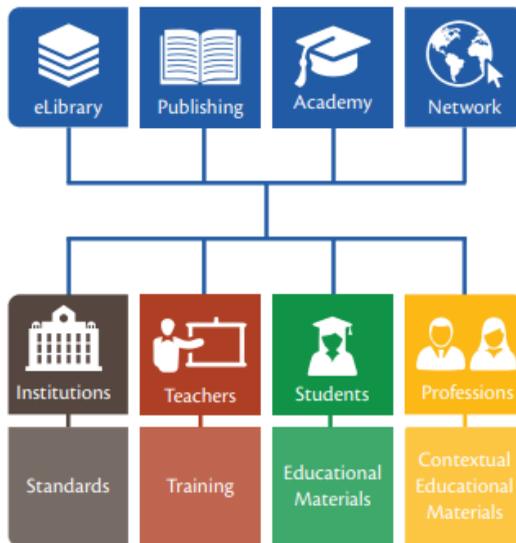
Ethics for Students (ES) encourages ethical behaviour by showing students the best practices of individuals, companies and organisations that have become successful by following ethical principles. It offers a new perspective

on intercultural exchange and dialogue for peace and sustainable development. Ethics for Students is not only about teaching knowledge of values, but changing attitudes and behaviours by developing their talents, character education, dealing with ethical dilemmas, mentoring and putting into practice institutional standards, norms, procedures, awards and sanctions.

Ethics in Professions (EP) provides professionals with educational and training material on applied ethics, adapted to their profession with a focus on practical ethical dilemmas that they may come across and how to manage them.

How?

Four Programmes – Supported by Four Resources



Our different resources are the key elements of our strategy, and through implementing them in various ways, and targeted at different audiences, we fill in our strategy.

Our open-access online **library**, for instance, holds over 7.3 million articles on applied ethics.

Through our **publishing house**, we promote ethical reflection, provide a platform for researchers and empower authors from the global South through fair publishing.

The Globethics.net **Academy** delivers online and in-house training by international, highly qualified trainers, where HE leadership, teachers and students are made aware of the ethical dimensions of their daily practices.

Our efforts are also focused on providing higher education institutes **networking** and knowledge-sharing opportunities through the Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education.

With Four Programmes



Ethics for Institutions

Objectives:

- Encourage ethical behaviour
- Develop standards and structures
- Build capacity

Target groups:

- Higher Educational Institutions

Our **HOLISTIC & INTEGRITY APPROACH** covers many aspects such as:

- ✓ Ethics Directorate in Higher Education Institutions
- ✓ Baseline Ethics Survey
- ✓ Train-the-trainers
- ✓ Tailored solutions and resources
- ✓ Experts in Ethics to support the institution
- ✓ Institutional Assessments

Ethics for Teachers

Objectives:

- Encourage ethical behaviour in teaching and research
- Provide training, course content, resources and tools for teaching applied ethics
- Target groups
- Teachers, supervisors, training professionals

Our **COMPETENCE-DRIVEN** programmes include:

- ✓ Teacher training with academic partners: examples of Kenya, Nigeria.
- ✓ Short training course (seminar/workshops) with highly qualified international teachers and trainers
- ✓ Access to Globethics.net Academy e-learning platform

Ethics for Students

Objectives:

- Encourage and embed ethical behaviour in students through learning and researching
- Offer a new perspective on intercultural exchange and dialogue for peace and sustainable development target groups:
 - Undergraduate, postgraduates
 - Researchers and doctoral candidates

Our online EMPOWERMENT programmes include:

- ✓ 13 online modules on Ethics in Higher Education leading to a CAS certificate.
- ✓ Option (as of 2019): short modules with ECTS (earned credits) for diploma degrees of selected academic partners with the Consortium

Ethics for Professions

Objectives:

- Provide educational and training material on applied ethics adapted to professions across sectors and target groups
- Working Professionals
- Professionals associations and members
- Research institutes on ethics, governance and sustainability

Our TRANSFORMATION & SUSTAINABILITY

programmes include:

- ✓ Online webinars with free access to Globethics.net e-learning resources on applied ethics across sectors
- ✓ Possibility to joint postgraduate diploma programmes in applied ethics with our partner universities
- ✓ Access to our Certified Ethics Professional (CEP) programme and access join Globethics.net Consortium Pool of Experts

Supported by Four Resources



Digital Library - Providing Knowledge

Globethics.net Library of + 7 million documents

- Free of charge
- Open access
- Multilingual
- Full-text articles, books, reference works, theses, etc.
- Special collections, including case studies, institutional and thematic collections

Publishing - Exploring and Sharing

Globethics.net Publications of + 140 publications

- Applied ethics, theology and philosophy
- Multilingual
- Digital copies: free of charge
- Print-on-demand

Academy - Exchanging and Learning

Globethics.net Academy

- New e-learning platform
- Blended learning:
 - Train-the-Trainers
 - Global Ecumenical Theological Institution (in collaboration with WCC)
- Online open learning:
 - Responsible Leadership Course
 - Ethics, Sustainability and Environment lecture series (in collaboration with CITVN)

Concretely, we are now planning several Training-of-Trainers sessions in the global south and are further building up our Globethics.net online learning Platform.

We aim to provide equitable high-quality tertiary learning opportunities to learners from every part of the world. We currently are undertaking several steps towards this goal.

Further development of the Globethics.net online Academy
The offering of accreditation of our courses according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), with the help and support of NARIC.

Network - Encouraging Dialogue



Globethics.net Network Participants from all over the world

- Informed on what is happening on ethics around the world:
 - news, jobs, call for papers, events, etc.
- Self-reflection and discussion about ethics:
 - blogs, forums, editorials and workgroups

Besides a board of foundation with vision and engaged staff in our head office in Geneva, Globethics.net's biggest strength consists of **human resources**. Our network is full of people that want to make a change in education. This includes institutions (agreements with 250 organizations, partnerships with many more), individuals (175,000 registered users) and national contacts. But the two best examples of the way we implement change, are our two main networks: The Globethics Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education and the Regional Programmes.

Ethics around the World



- 10 Globethics.net Regional Programmes
- + 30 Globethics.net National Contacts

Strengthening our Regional Impact

Globethics.net has regional programmes and offices on all continents. This enables us to further enrich worldwide outreach and to create a balance between global and contextual ethics. With the objective to create a multiplier-effect and disseminate our products and services, supporting our regional programmes is essential.

Working together

Globethics.net Partnerships

200 + partners

- Academic
- Support
- Network
- Scientific

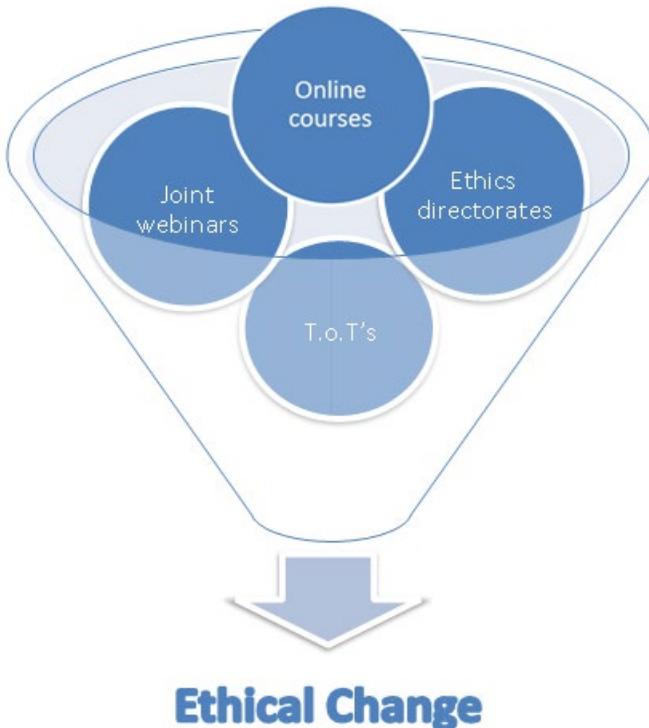
Except for the many partnerships with other NGO's, international organisations and the private sector, our main focus is to create strong and ethical institutions. This means that most of our efforts in terms of partnerships are directed towards academic institutions through the consortium on Ethics in Higher Education.

The Consortium initiative is a call for joint action by higher education institutions that seek to address together the ethical needs and challenges of their sector. Since the launch of this initiative in 2017, the consortium on Ethics in Higher Education consists of ten engaged institutions that

have the power to strengthen themselves and others and 50+ individual members that support ethical governance and leadership in higher education.

In order to change societies, a bottom-up approach is needed where higher education institutes are the key drivers for ethical change in the leaders they will deliver to the world. As the number of consortium members increases, more institutions are dedicated to this transformation.

Growing our Impact: The Consortium on Ethics in Higher Education



- Bottom-up approach
- Institutional change and individual change
- Learning from each other
- Multi-leveled methodology

By promoting an ethical culture, by building capacity for stronger ethical governance, leadership and teaching within the institutions themselves, we aim to create a network where HE Institutes learn from each other.

A few numbers

- 195,000+ Participants
- 9,000 Organisations in our database
- 200+ Partners
- 1000+ Teachers trained in the last year
- 97% believe that ethical standard would improve the competitiveness institutions
- 81% could apply ethics in their field of work

CHAPTER 13

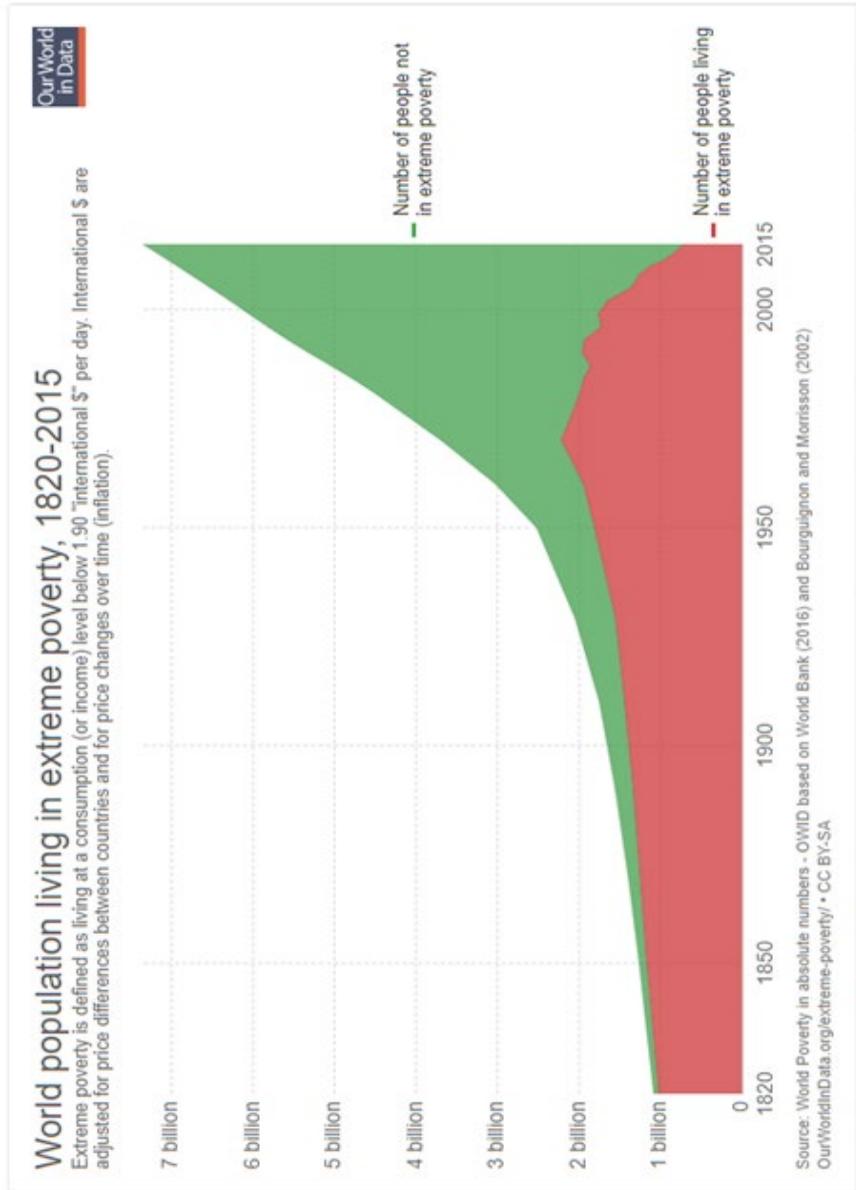
Standing Up to the Ethical Challenges of Finance, Technology and Governance to Enhance Africa's Development Potentials in the 21st Century

Global and Local Challenges

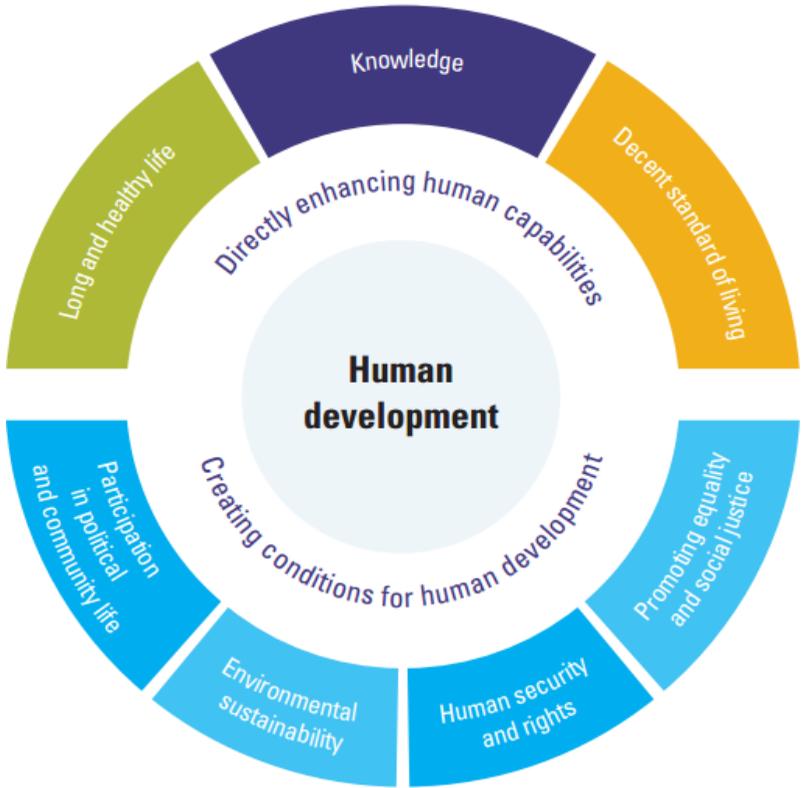
- A time of great challenges with unprecedented political, environmental, social and economic instability worldwide
- A real concern for better governance & a call for more ethics & sustainability
- Global loss of trust in political and business leaders
- Technology and innovation is penetrating all sectors
- New forms of job & business model e.g. social entrepreneur, coworking, etc.
- Youth & employees are looking for purposes at work & better jobs opportunities
- Poverty reduction & wealth creation remains weak
- Demand to rethink new forms of development model & policy⁴³

⁴³ Obiora Ike; paper delivered in the Vatican, Rome on 30th October, 2018 on the occasion of the Nigerian Embassy to the Holy See Public Debate on Africa's Future and Challenges

World Level of Poverty

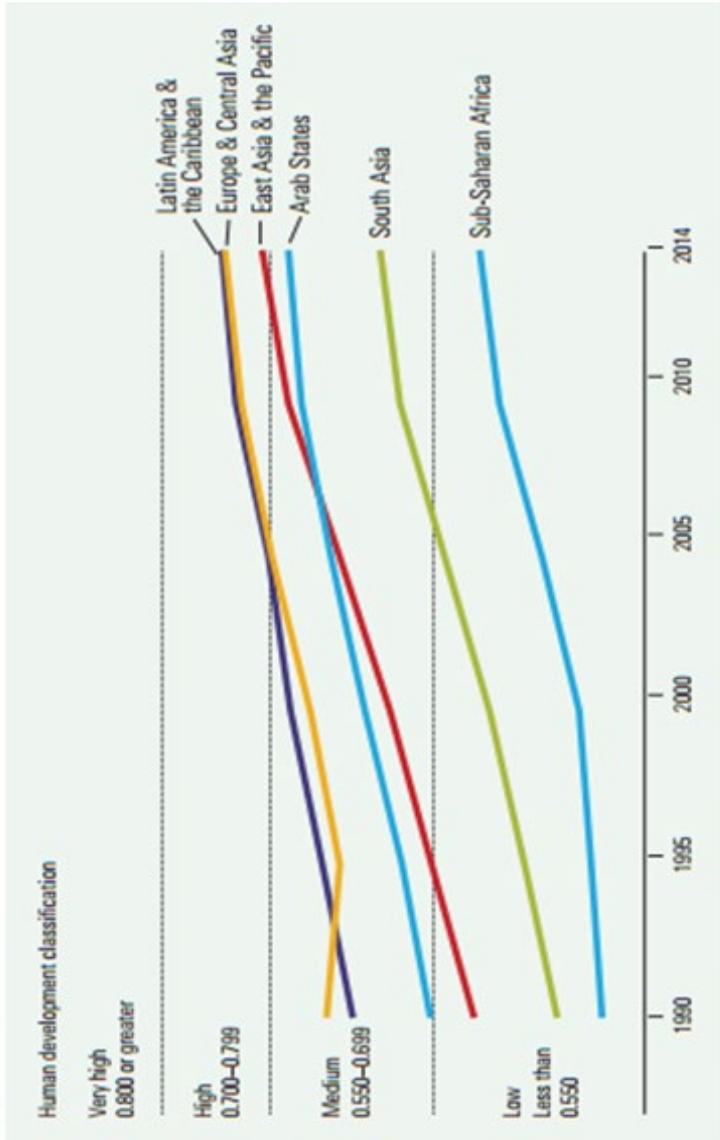


Dimensions of Human Development (HD)



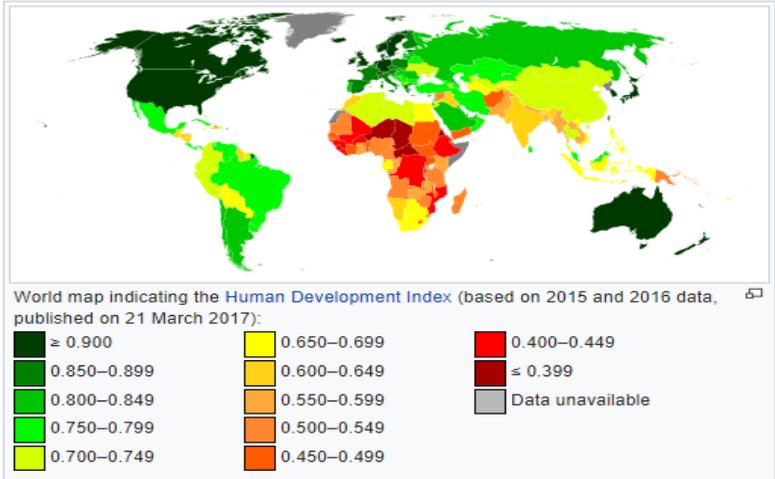
Africa holds the Lowest Human Development Index in 2015

Progress on the Human Development Index since 1990 has been fairly steady over time and across all developing regions



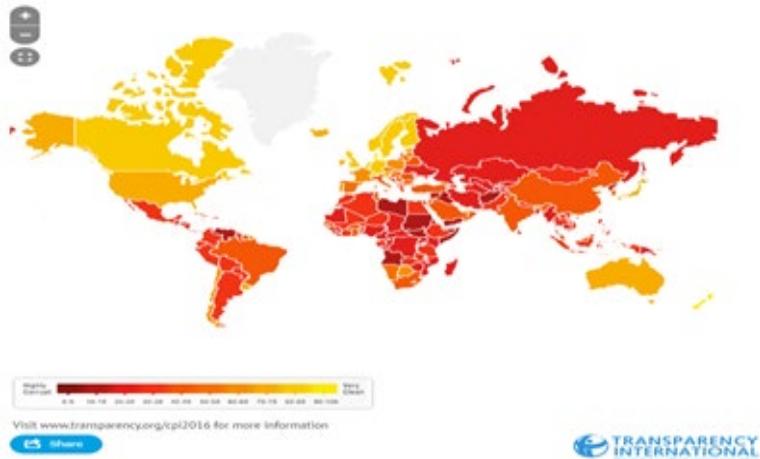
Source: Human Development Report Office calculations.

Nigeria holds the position of 152 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index



Corruption Perception Index 2017

Nigeria is ranked 148 out of 180 countries



Nigeria's Poverty Rate

The Nigeria Poverty statistics goes as follows:

- Lagos State - 8.5 percent; Osun State - 10.9 percent; Anambra State - 11.2 percent; Ekiti State - 12.9 percent; Edo State - 19.2 percent; Imo State - 19.8 percent; Abia State - 21.0 percent; Rivers State - 21.1 percent;
- FCT (Abuja) - 23.5 percent; Kwara State - 23.7 percent; Akwa ibom State - 23.8 percent; Delta State - 25.1 percent; Ogun State - 26.1 percent; Kogi State - 26.4 percent; Ondo State - 27.9 percent; Enugu State - 28.8 percent; Bayelsa State - 29.0 percent; Oyo State - 29.4 percent; Cross River State - 33.1 percent; Plateau State - 51.6 percent;
- Nasarawa State - 52.4 percent; Ebonyi State - 56.0 percent; Kaduna State - 56.5 percent; Adamawa State - 59.0 percent; Benue State - 59.2 percent; Niger State - 61.2 percent; Borno State - 70.1 percent; Kano State - 76.4 percent; Gombe State - 76.9 percent;
- Taraba State - 77.7 percent; Katsina State - 82.2 percent; Sokoto State - 85.3 percent; Kebbi State - 86.0 percent; Bauchi State - 86.6 percent; Jigawa State - 88.4 percent; Yobe State - 90.2 percent; Zamfara State - 91.9 percent.

Source: <https://naijaquest.com/nigeria-povertystatistics/>

Some Facts and Figures for Nigeria

- Life expectancy at birth = 53.1 years

Number of years a newborn infant could expect to live if prevailing patterns of age-specific mortality rates at the time of birth stay the same throughout the infant's life.

- Expected years of schooling = 10.0 years

Number of years a newborn infant could expect to live if prevailing patterns of age-specific mortality rates at the time of birth stay the same throughout the infant's life.

- Gross National Income (GNI) per capita = \$5,443 purchasing power parity (PPP)

Aggregate income of an economy generated by its production and its ownership of factors of production, less the incomes paid for the use of factors of production owned by the rest of the world, converted to international dollars using PPP rates, divided by midyear population.

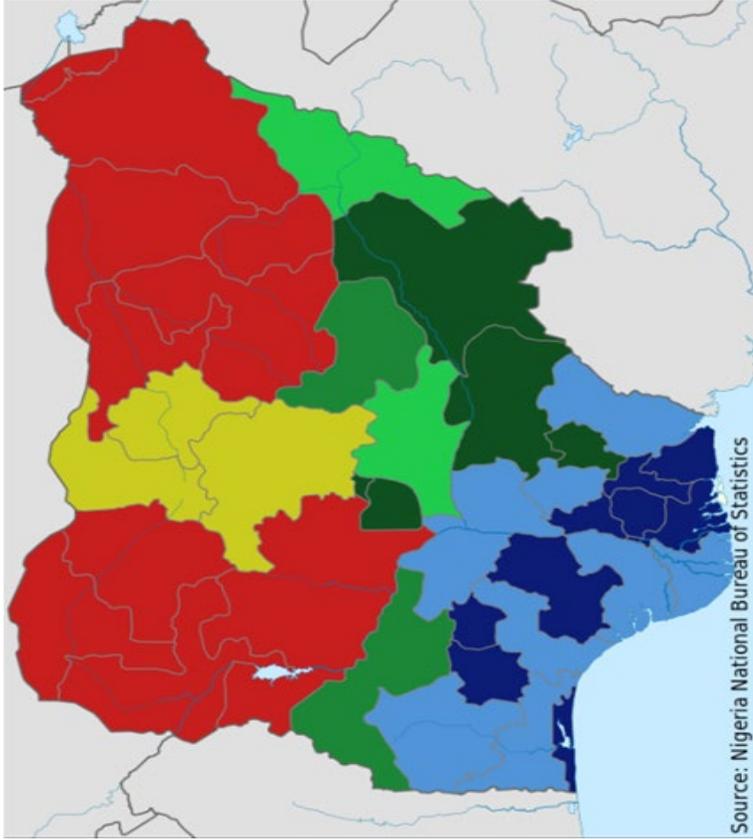
- Employment to population ratio (% ages 15 and older) = 53.1

Percentage of the population ages 15 years and older that is employed.

- Homicide rate per 100,000 people = 10.1

Number of unlawful deaths purposefully inflicted on a person by another person, expressed per 100,000 people.

Female Literacy Rate in Nigeria by state in 2013



Source: Wikipedia

Rethinking the future of Africa at Global Level



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

Africa and Europe – A new partnership for development, peace and a better future

Cornerstones of a Marshall Plan with Africa



bmz.de

A Global Agenda - Sustainable Development Goals 2030



Education 2030



Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action

for the implementation of
Sustainable Development Goal 4

**Ensure inclusive and equitable
quality education and promote lifelong
learning opportunities for all**

The Sustainable Development Goal 4 targets:

🎓 *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.* 🗣️



4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes



4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education



4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university



4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship



4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development



4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all



4.b By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries



4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

The Role of Universities in Developing Countries

University education is more than the next level in the learning process - it is a critical component of human development worldwide. It provides not only the high-level skills necessary for every labour market but also the training essential for teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants, engineers, humanists, entrepreneurs, scientists, social scientists, and a myriad of other personnel. It is these trained individuals who develop the capacity and analytical skills that drive local economies, support civil society, teach

children, lead effective governments, and make important decisions, which affect entire societies.

Source: www.educationalpathwaysinternational.org

However...

There is No Sustainable Development without Ethics

The future of humanity rests on some critical key points, one of which is that there can be no sustainable development universally if there are no ethical values integrated across sectors and built within the education, political, cultural, financial and technological industries at all levels.

Can any sustainable development and progress be assumed for humanity if it is devoid of education, and come to reason on this, surely an education that has strong content in values and ethics that produce leaders that are values-driven?

The Common Good is the Foundation

- Taken together, we see institutional weakness in finance, technology, government and religion, showing a growing lack of trust or respect by citizens for established authority and institutions around the globe.
- And perhaps more worrisome is a growing absence of faith in the human values that guide people; values founded on sound moral and natural reasoning, using

freedom to make choices and decision that affect the common good.

Values and Virtues Set the Agenda for Human Action

- Some of these values are embedded in what we consider excellence, integrity and justice, life, respect and sharing, inclusion and responsibility, competence and accountability, and many others, all of which serve sustainability.
- Unfortunately, a noticeable tendency is for some people to remain, as the Acton Institute mentions in its latest editorial, *“vulnerable to the seductions by the new gods of autonomy without community, freedom without responsibility, rights without duties, pleasure for pleasure’s sake, entertainment devoid of work, allegiance to a diversity that questions identity built on lifestyles that reject ethical conduct that are values-driven”*.
- It cannot continue like this and the youth whose future stands ahead are the most vulnerable.

The Ethical Challenge to Leadership and Governance

- How can we synchronise governance with inevitable digitalisation of politics?
- How can we enable decision-making mechanisms at the global level?

- These questions need to be answered. Nobody will miss the train to “a bright tomorrow”. Historically, time flows for everyone and one cannot hide “behind the wall” to avoid it.
- No actor of a historical process can bury his head in the sand of the comfortable present, indulging in “counterclockwise revolt”.
- The future will come for everyone, but not everyone will hold an equal place in it.

In Summary, we must:

- Understand the ethical challenges of facing Finance, Technology and Governance today.
- Accept these challenges across all areas.
- Collaborate to innovate on sustainable solutions.

Globethics.net is an ethics network of teachers and institutions based in Geneva, with an international Board of Foundation and with ECOSOC status with the United Nations. Our vision is to embed ethics in higher education. We strive for a world in which people, and especially leaders, are educated in informed by and act according to ethical values and thus contribute to building sustainable, just and peaceful societies.

The founding conviction of Globethics.net is that having equal access to knowledge resources in the field of applied ethics enables individuals and institutions from developing and transition economies to become more visible and audible in the global discourse.

In order to ensure access to knowledge resources in applied ethics, Globethics.net has developed four resources:



Globethics.net Library

The leading global digital library on ethics with over 8 million documents and specially curated content



Globethics.net Publications

A publishing house open to all the authors interested in applied ethics and with over 190 publications in 15 series



Globethics.net Academy

Online and offline courses and training for all on ethics both as a subject and within specific sectors



Globethics.net Network

A global network of experts and institutions including a Pool of experts and a Consortium

Globethics.net provides an electronic platform for dialogue, reflection and action. Its central instrument is the website:

www.globethics.net ■

Globethics.net Publications

The list below is only a selection of our publications. To view the full collection, please visit our website.

All volumes can be downloaded for free in PDF form from the Globethics.net library and at www.globethics.net/publications. Bulk print copies can be ordered from publications@globethics.net at special rates from the Global South.

The Editor of the different Series of Globethics.net Publications Prof. Dr. Obiora Ike, Executive Director of Globethics.net in Geneva and Professor of Ethics at the Godfrey Okoye University Enugu/Nigeria.

Contact for manuscripts and suggestions: publications@globethics.net

Global Series

Christoph Stückelberger / Jesse N.K. Mugambi (eds.), *Responsible Leadership. Global and Contextual Perspectives*, 2007, 376pp. ISBN: 978-2-8254-1516-0

Heidi Hadsell / Christoph Stückelberger (eds.), *Overcoming Fundamentalism. Ethical Responses from Five Continents*, 2009, 212pp.
ISBN: 978-2-940428-00-7

Christoph Stückelberger / Reinhold Bernhardt (eds.): *Calvin Global. How Faith Influences Societies*, 2009, 258pp. ISBN: 978-2-940428-05-2.

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ISBN: 978-2-940428-25-0.

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ISBN: 978-2-940428-41-0

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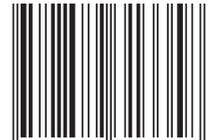
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