

## Understanding Volunteerism and Its Implications for National Development: A Perspective from Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

*The United Nations (UN) Universal declaration on Volunteerism Programme known as “Export or Overseas Volunteering Programme” which was purposely established to contribute to global peace and development is yet to have its impact in some states of Africa. Since the Beijing Conference of 2015 which established the programme, Nigeria, for example, has yet to develop its policy programmes to completely inculcate volunteerism as a part of its domestic programme for nation-building and sustainable development. It is for this reason that this study affirms that the Nigerian Central government is oblivious of its responsibilities to its citizens, when it sits back to allow corporate organisations and private individuals to engage, on its behalf, on social responsibilities to promote national development. The study, thus, traced the underutilisation of volunteerism in the country to corruption, lack of policy prioritisation, and other sundry factors. The study adopted historical design which is qualitative and explorative in nature. In other words, the study derived data through extant literature in the study area. Functionalism and Integration theories are adopted as its theoretical components to establish a link between the variables in the study. The study found that the concept of volunteerism has not been harnessed. The study recommends among others the urgent need for the government to efficiently utilise volunteering service in Nigeria to foster national development and encourage private individuals, corporate and non-governmental organisations to be involved in the development of the state.*

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**Keywords:** Nigeria, Government, Volunteerism, Development, National Development, Corporate Organisations, Individuals.

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### **1.1 Introduction**

The noble idea to render or offer any form of assistance when necessary by an individual or group of individuals; social and corporate organisations; religious groups and professional bodies, etc, either to private individuals, communities, organisations, schools or institutions, and nation-states, is not a recent phenomenon in our contemporary lives. This much recognised phenomenon of *volunteer service*, either to an individual or group of individuals, nation-states, institutions and comity of nations, is generally accepted by national governments as means by which governments’ policies, and efforts to sustain national peace, security and development could be complemented. In most developed and developing nations, volunteer service or volunteerism is targeted at offering of opportunities to young people, professional and experts

to render voluntary services to the nation. There is no doubt that offering young people opportunity to develop relevant skills and increase their understanding of the need of devoting time to the development of their local communities as well as the nation at large through special services has been beneficial to youth involved in particular and the nation in general (Kuma & Clark, 2016: 7).

But in the Nigerian context volunteers do not expect pecuniary rewards. Majority of individual volunteers are highly unexplored. The National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Volunteers in the National Graduate Volunteering Programme (NGVP), National Volunteers in the International Citizen Service Programme (ICS), Skilled and Professional Volunteers Programme, among others models in the history of the country were found to be underutilised. Rather than engaging themselves in promoting efficient community based voluntary services, and in the fight against poverty and inequality, the government officials channel volunteer's programmes toward selfish gains. In real sense, national voluntary Service is understood to contribute to internal development rather than for selfish gains as in the case of Nigeria.

Uzoagu (2019:31) argued that volunteerism in its natural form is the manpower needed to fight socio-economic uneasiness in the form of economic depression presently bedevilling Nigeria's economic growth or development. Also, to a large extent, volunteerism contributes to individual's development, social cohesion, and as well serve as a veritable tool in addressing social needs. Its capability to offer skills, energy, expertise and knowledge, all of which have the potentials to assist the government in delivering better public programmes and policy objectives cannot be neglected.

Leigh et al. (2011) cited in Caprara et al. (2012: 3) while expressing the benefits of volunteerism re-echo UN State of the World Volunteering Report of 2011 standpoint towards volunteerism which argued that:

The contribution of volunteerism to development is immeasurable in the context of sustainable livelihoods and is value-based while expressing the wellbeing of a people. Contrary to common perceptions, the poor income nations are likely to volunteer much more than the rich income nations of the world. In doing so, they are likely to realise their assets which include knowledge, skills and social networks for their benefits, and that of their families and communities alike....Moreover, volunteering is likely to reduce social exclusion that is often the result of poverty, marginalisation and other forms of inequality....There is therefore mountain of evidence that volunteer engagement promotes the civic values and social cohesion which mitigates violent conflict at all levels and also foster reconciliation in post-conflict situations.

In similar manner, Caprara et al. (2012:3), expressed the positions of the South Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Development that was held in Johannesburg in October 2011; and the July 2012 Africa Conference on Volunteer Action for Peace and Development in conjunction with Kenya's Ministry of East African Community; the United Nations (UN); and other partners in Nairobi respectively to re-emphasised the fact that volunteerism if properly utilised is beneficial to a nation-state, as was evident after the Arab Spring in which youth in the region volunteer their services in order to foster greater regional cohesion and development. The impact of voluntary service to a nation is also relevant to conflict resolution and reconciliation as was evident in the post Arab Spring development stride. This is what it means to embrace volunteerism in its entirety; unfortunately, it has not been giving much priority it requires in Nigeria.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem:**

Putting into cognisance the large size and huge population of Nigeria state, volunteerism would have been a favourable tool needed to support government policy and programmes for human capital and socio-economic development. However, corruption, seat tight syndrome, lack of policy prioritisation, etc., that characterised the country's socio-political environment have bedevilled efficient utilisation of volunteerism in the country. However, rendering of voluntary services in the form of education; technical skill acquisition and training programmes; health and social welfare services; law enforcement and military services; as well as corporate and organisational services, all of which are known in our domestic linguistic environment as "*call-to-service*" to national development agenda have not been given much attention or recognition as a reliable strategy for national development by the government in recent times. As a consequence, the youths, private individuals and corporate bodies have lackadaisical attitudes towards national issues that would have promoted social and economic wellbeing of the populace and national development. Also as a problem, is distrust or lack of confidence in government voluntary service programmes often bedevilled by selfish interest rather than its core objectives.

Undeniably, the success of the political, social and economic development of any nation-state, particularly those of the Third World, including Nigeria depend completely on the collective responsibility and commitment of young adults, private individuals, corporate organisations and government agencies. Now that the Nigeria state is experiencing economic depression, high rate of youth unemployment, and now that the entire world is experiencing *Covid-19 pandemic* also refers to as *Corona-virus pandemic*, what the country requires is collective responsibility of all its agencies, private individuals, non-governmental organisations and multinational corporations to fight these challenges. Unfortunately, insincerity of programmes' objectives and corruption at the highest order have be-clouded our senses, thus, hindering the individual, government and corporate organisational partnership for effective voluntary services delivery to the country.

In real sense, if the much needed manpower for voluntary services including the youth, stakeholders, and corporate bodies are mobilised, integrated and made to function efficiently through government policy framework, there would have been much needed cooperation in the country in regards to nation building. In addition, if the government has sufficiently exploited the opportunities at its disposal, i.e. the huge human and natural resources, and embraced the interests that have been shown by private individuals, corporate bodies, foreign governments and agencies in the form of financial, technical, and medical aids to the country there would have been the much needed cohesion between the government and these volunteering bodies to foster national development. This study therefore is posed to examine the reasons why volunteerism is underutilised in Nigeria; and the need for the government to embrace volunteering service and its benefits to national development while eliminating all offensive vices that are likely to impede volunteerism in the country.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine volunteerism and its implication for Nigeria's national development. While the specific objectives are to;

- (i) Examine the extent to which volunteerism is underutilise for Nigeria's national development,
- (ii) Examine the benefits of efficient utilisation of voluntarism in the country's national development, and
- (iii) Suggest useful solutions to the challenges facing efficient utilisation of volunteering services in the country.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

The following questions are raised to give direction to this study:

- (i) To what extent has volunteerism underutilised for deployment of Nigeria's national development?
- (ii) What are the benefits of efficient utilisation or deployment of volunteerism to the country's national development?
- (iii) What are the best solutions to the challenges facing the utilisation of volunteerism for national development?

#### 1.5 Method of the Study

This study adopted historical design which is qualitative and explorative in nature to examine volunteerism and its implications for Nigeria's national development. This means that the data used in the study were derived from secondary source via textbooks, journal publications, government official documents, newspapers, magazines and internet materials.

#### 1.6 Theoretical Framework:

In order to establish the relationship between volunteerism and development, as well as to substantiate its implication or benefits to Nigeria' national development, the study adopted *Structural Functionalism or Functionalist theory and Integration theory* both of which are closely related and pursue a common purpose in international relation studies. Ultimately, structural functionalism or functionalist theory is credited to the following scholars; Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parson and Robert Merton. The theory like the systems theory, sees the society as a complex whole whose components work together to promote stability or the development of the society as a whole. These Structural functionalists argued that the society as a whole is a system of interconnected parts that work together in order to promote harmony and efficiency as well as to maintain a state of balance and social equilibrium for the whole. Its major focus, thus, is the interconnectedness of the society and how each components or parts of the whole influences or is influenced by other components or parts (Mooney, Knox & Schacht, 2007:1).

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) in attempt to substantiate the need for a society to function as a whole compared the society to human body. He argued that the society works, or functions in the same way all parts of the human body works in harmony with each other. However, we must ensure that all parts of the body works together to maintain harmony between them. In the same manner, we must ensure that one or a section of the whole do not fail to perform their respective responsibilities or duties because if they do fail, the entire system is likely to function abnormally. This is what happens to a state or country where there is absence of national integration or cohesion. If the government or leaders of the state fail to perform their duties or responsibilities to the state and the citizens, there is the likelihood of the system collapsing. Efficient state structure and integration of all its sectors are therefore needed to sustain harmony and sustainable development (Moffitt, 2003). This implies that every nation-state requires political, cultural, economic and social cohesion to develop. Volunteering service thus, is a required criterion for national development in our contemporary society.

Rosamond (2000) opines that the main focus of the structural functionalist theorists is common interests and needs shared by states and non-state actors rather than the self-interests of nation states often triggered by the notion of their sovereign rights. When the common interests of states and non-state actors are integrated in some special circumstances there is the likelihood of sustainable peace and harmony in the global system, likewise when all the common interests and stakeholders in a nation-state are integrated into its programmes, there is also the likelihood that national development can be achieved. In a related manner, Mitrany (1976) sees

functionalism as that which encourages international and domestic integration or collective governance and material interdependence between the states of the global system on the one hand; and between a national government and its component parts including non-state actors on the other hand.

The question now is what would happen to a state if the social institutions are short down as a result of its inability to integrate volunteerism into its system? This can possibly endanger the entire system leading to the risk of disharmony, disintegration and anarchy in the system; hence the need to foster national development through volunteering services to complement government's policy objectives and programmes for national development. This is what structural functionalists and integration theorists' suggested. However, *integration theory* which is sometime used synonymously with structural functionalism, and sometimes as an independent theory is also a veritable framework to explain the need for integrating all state apparatus in order to achieve national cohesion and harmony. It simply emphasises the merger of several states into a single state or organization. A state cannot on its own acquire all it desire, hence it depend on another or others to acquire what it doesn't have or could not achieve all alone.

Galting (1968) defined integration as a "process in which two or more actors form a new actor". Integration theory therefore is a process in which two or more institutions or states merge to form a new one. It is also a process of "turning previously separate units, component or entities into a coherent system" (Deutsch, 1978). Judging from these definitions, it is glaring that integration theory emphasizes the merger of either the institutions of the state (a rudiment of federalism), or the acceptance of other state actors and non-state actors to form a whole or unit where cooperation among them, or the bases from which national development can be achieved. Involving all segments of the society including the youth, corporate bodies and all sectors of national government have the potential to assist the government in delivering better public policies and programmes. This is actually what an efficient volunteering service entails

## **2.1 Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1.1 Volunteerism:**

Literature on volunteerism has shown several ways through which volunteer service has complemented states' capability for sustainable development. The significance of volunteer services has, thus, contributed to the divergent definitions of the concept. Several scholars, institutions, organisations and national governments have offered all embracing definitions of the concept. According to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Volunteering for 2030 Agenda (2018), it is a powerful means through which people are engaged to work for the collective agenda targeted towards sustainable development, as well as environmentally sustainable peaceful world, free of or a reduced poverty, hunger and inequality rates, and a situation where no one is left behind. In a similar manner United Nations Volunteers (UNV) Programme (2018), sees it as a programme that involves provision of medical care, taking climate action, providing technical assistance, and monitoring of post-disaster reconstruction. For Uzoagu (2019), volunteerism is the act of donating time, energy, knowledge, skills, etc. for the benefit of other people in the community as a social responsibility rather than for any financial benefit or remuneration. Lough (2015) sees volunteerism as a powerful means through which people are engaged in tackling development challenges in order to transform the pace and nature of national and international development. Lough argued that the benefits of volunteerism are so numerous and cannot be estimated. Its benefits range, from improving the society at large and to the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among the citizens and the government. In an elaborate manner, Okolo (2000) defines volunteerism as an "act of kindness in which so much time is devoted to helping and



fulfilling a particular need of social or religious groups such as a charity organisation, community or a church”. He also sees it as a “selfless act performed not necessarily for a volunteering group but for the benefit of the entire community. He, thus, sees volunteers as group of individuals who share their time, talents, skills, experience and resources towards community development, based on personal conviction.

Oluseyi (2006) sees it as the “willingness of an individual or group of individuals to work on behalf of others either as medical personnel, guides assistants, teachers, missionaries and other professional fields without pecuniary interest or any other tangible gain”. On a general perspective, volunteerism is the practice that involves the individual, group of individuals, institutions of government and nongovernmental organisation rendering voluntary services through the deployment of professional skills for the benefit of other people and the society at large. In a social or an employment related context, it concerns itself with the provision of special services to the public for the benefit of all. In some cases volunteering service does not necessarily require financial benefits or rewards of any form but targeted towards individual or national developments.

According to the UNV (2013), people all over the world engage in volunteerism for a variety of reasons that include: poverty elimination, provision of basic health and education, tackling of environmental issues, reducing of the risks of disasters, combating of social exclusion, and violent conflict. It is imperative to note that much as volunteering service in often cases, a voluntary exercise and not necessarily requiring financial benefits, certain factors motivates those involved in it, such as: justice, equity, equality and freedom as expressed in the UN Charter. In essence, a national government that supports and encourages different forms of volunteering service is likely to have a state that promotes the well-being of its citizens. Invariably, this is what is expected from the Nigerian government.

### **2.1.2 National Development(ND):**

The term national development is a broad, comprehensive and complex concept. This complexity is because it includes not just all aspects of development of a nation, namely political, social and economic developments but other forms of development that are dynamic and revolutionary in a society. In other words, development is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. According to the UN Decade report, “national development is growth plus change in turn is social, cultural as well as economic and qualitative as well as quantitative”. It is also a change in growth and development including social, cultural and economic change. It is the ability of a state to improve the social welfare of the citizens on the one hand, and the expansion and growth of the masses by the government in defined territory on the other hand. The central issues in the definitions above, which are *socio-economic cum political development*, means that “ND” seeks to ameliorate poverty, improves the national cum per-capita incomes, and develops the quality of education in the state by doubling the standard (UNO, 1971).

In 1971, the UNO now UN gave the factors that characterise national development to include: equal living standard for all, equal share of all in profit, equal distribution of income and capital, expansion of facilities in the education and the health sectors; and shelter and social welfare, etc. In addition, a well structured national development plan brings a lot of revolutionary or radical approach to development in the agricultural, transportation, communication, education and health sectors.

Gboyega (2003) cited in Lawal and Oluwatoyin (2011:238), captured the term development in particular as; “an idea that embodies all necessary attempt by the government of a state to improve the living conditions of all her citizens and in all ramifications”. This therefore implies massive or total improvement in material well being of all citizens, not the most powerful, influential or rich alone but to all citizens irrespective of status in the society, and in a

sustainable ways such that today's consumption does not imperil the future. By implication, national development demands that poverty and inequality of access to the good things of life be removed or drastically reduced. In other words, it seeks to improve on personal and physical security, as well as livelihoods and expansion of life opportunities (Lawal & Oluwatoyin, 2011). National development can also be described as comprehensive programmes that must embrace all facet of development index including socio-economic, political, and cultural cum religious advantages in the state or country.

### **3.1. Empirical Review**

#### **3.1.1 Discussion of Volunteerism in Nigeria:**

The essence of the empirical discussion on volunteerism and the categorisation in this study is to clearly outline the benefits of volunteerism and the need for its optimal utilisation, as well as finding solutions to its challenges in Nigeria. As noted by Calvin Holbrook, the benefits of volunteerism to development of the individuals and communities in need cannot be underestimated. Its significance is not for national development alone but for those involved in it or the doers. Giving ones time and energy to a cause without financial reward sounds unrealistic or seems to be an impossible task. But considering its vast benefits to the individual volunteers, organisations and community receiving the services, it's worth encouraging in a developing economy like Nigeria (Holbrook, 2019).

Citing the Greek ancient philosopher, Aristotle, Holbrook states that;

The essence of life generally is to serve and do good to others who are in need of the service. Volunteerism in its entirety is important as it offers essential services to people in need and to the wider society (Holbrook, 2019).

Some scholars have argued that helping people or a nation-state through personal or group volunteering service help to create self satisfaction and accomplishment. The more people, corporate bodies, organisations and state actors commit themselves to rendering voluntary services to humanity or the nation-state, the more they benefit from the services also. Supporting physical infrastructures such as building of roads, water, health centres, or sponsoring educational programmes, sports and culture; and other forms of development initiatives such as technical skills, etc., are not the responsibilities of the state alone but the individual and non state actors inclusive on volunteering basis. Through volunteering service initiated by private individuals, corporate bodies, governmental and nongovernment organisations, volunteering services could be achieved in any society. In recent time, a lot of nation-states find it necessary for volunteers, either as private individuals, corporate bodies (companies) or organisations (NGOs), foreign governments or allies, and significant others, to help them to do their work or carry out their responsibilities to the citizens effectively. Some states like Nigeria have not been able utilised volunteerism to compliments its developmental efforts.

#### **(a) Individual Volunteers in Nigeria over the Years:**

As noted earlier in this discourse, rendering of services in the form of volunteerism to the most vulnerable individuals or states is not for state actors alone but also for non-state actors alike. Human Rights watch, HRW (2020) reporting its assessment on the response to Covid-19 or Corona virus pandemic in Nigeria noted that the government of Nigeria in conjunction with some private individuals or philanthropists or businessmen in the country have contributed in no small measures through cash donations or provision of sundry items such as houses, hospital equipments, facemask, sanitizers, among others in order to curb the spread of the pandemic in the country.

Some has also privately power jingles or rolled out public health sensitisation campaigns to educate or inform people of the need to protect themselves through the practice of social distancing and maintenance of personal hygiene including regular hand washing. Humanitarian workers in internally displaced persons' camps (IDPs) in the Boko Haram prone area of North Eastern Nigeria have also to a large extent contributed individually and collectively to ensure limited or no spread of the virus to the camps where most IDPs including children are already suffering from acute diarrhea, respiratory infections, and skin infections linked to poor hygiene in the camp.

On 27 March 2020, Aisha Salaudeen of CNN Satellite network while assessing Nigeria's preparedness to curb the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic noted that the government through its agency, Nigeria Center for Disease Control (NCDC) collaboration with banks and wealthy individuals to battle the threat to human existence in the country emanating from the speedy spread of corona virus. She however stated that some wealthy members of the private sector including Femi Otedola, Ahdulsamad and Aliko Dandote contributed 1billion Naira (about \$2.7 million) each to support the government in Nigeria. According to Abdur (2020), on March 30, 2020 a billionaire businessman and owner of Globacom, Nigeria's second-largest telecommunication company, Mike Adenuga, donated 1.5billion naira to be shared between the federal government and Lagos State government. On March 27, the federal government of Nigeria announced the donations of medical supplies from Chinese businessman and the CEO of Ali Baba; Jack Ma to the country. On March 25, former Nigeria Vice President, Atiku Abubakar donated 50million naira (\$135,000) towards the country's corona virus relief fund (Abdur, 2020).

According to Olarewaju (2020), the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in her bid to contribute her quota to containment of corona virus in the country announced a credit relief of 136.6million US Dollars to businesses affected by the corona virus pandemic. The Governor of CBN, Godwin Emefiele said households, small and medium-sized enterprises, airline service providers, hotels, and health care merchants are potential beneficiaries of the proposed grant.

**(a) Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs) :**

Some NGOs with the support of national governments and multilateral or intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) such as the UN, WHO, etc., have also responded to assisting the government of the federal republic of Nigeria to contain the spread of corona virus pandemic in several ways. Like other infectious diseases that have occurred in human contemporary history such as HIV/AIDS, influenza, Cholera, Ebola, SARS, Lassa fever, etc., the latest in the series of infectious diseases, Covid-19 has been attracting concerns from scientists and drug developers with the aim of supporting the national government and IGOs since its spreads in Nigeria. Over the years, the UNV programmes in Africa, including Nigeria has been engaging people in tackling development challenges. The organisation has also contributed to peace and development by advocating for the recognition of volunteers, as well as in mobilising increasing numbers of volunteers, working with other partners to integrate volunteerism into development programmes in African continent, including Nigeria. Unfortunately, as we speak, Nigerian government is yet to fully embrace volunteerism into its domestic policy programmes.



In her efforts to integrate and transform lives of rural dwellers, especially young women and youths, the Vision of Women Environmental Programme, WEP, a volunteer and mentorship organisation, in her strategic plan (2018 – 2028) targeted towards *a world where the lives of women and youth around the globe are positively transformed* has been involved in the transformation of women and youth in Nigeria through a well design programme. The organisation which was founded by Dr. Priscilla Achakpa, no doubt, has positively impacted on the lives of these categories of people by equipping them with relevant information and skills. Most remarkable was the efforts of the organisation to expose them to the realities of life and the realisation of their potentials. With the organisation's broad objectives which include: equipping volunteers with community development skills, provide guidance to volunteers on designing and implementing community development projects, assist volunteers to build a career in the development sector, and provide a platform for volunteers to create the impact they desire in communities, she has impacted greatly on human capital development in the country (WEP, 2019).

Notably also is the contributions of Nigerian Red Cross Society (NRCS) established through an Act of Parliament in 1960, CAP 324. Section 5(1) specifically states that the society shall be recognised by the government of the Federation as a Voluntary Aid Society. Since its establishment, the society has in no small measure contributed in the area of humanitarian interventions particularly in times of emergencies with efficient responses across the federation, particularly in the time of natural disasters like flooding that occasionally occurs in the country by providing victims with relieve materials such as establishment of IDP camps in conjunction with government and health care services. This organisation has in several occasions carried out its mandate in the Northeast Nigeria, a terrorist prone region and safe haven for Boko Haram and ISWA Islamic terrorist organisations. It has also contributed or rather still contributing to eliminate the scourge of corona virus pandemic in the country (Nigerian Red Cross, 2020).

On a general note, and in recent times, the Society was fully involved in rendering voluntary service during the period of flooding in some parts of the country; farmers and herders' clashes in the country by assisting affected persons; sensitisation on Lassa fever, polio, corona virus eradications, etc., across the federation. On Thursday 6 February 2020 the Society specifically released a statement in support of her efforts in the prevention, control and containment of Lassa Fever and Corona Virus in collaboration with relevant government ministries, departments and agencies of government, and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Committee of the Red Cross, UN Agencies and the private sectors (Nigerian Red Cross, 2020).

**(b) Corporate Bodies:**

Like the private individuals, corporate bodies or establishment on volunteering missions to prevent the spread of corona virus donated huge amounts of money to the government. The United Bank for Africa (UBA) in March 2020 through her Chairman, Mr. Tony Elumelu donated the sum of 5billion Naira (about \$13 million) to the federal government to provide beds for isolation centres, intensive care unit facilities and direct access to medical advice to up to 450,000 people on daily basis (Aisha, 2020). It was reported that Nigeria's Access Bank Plc teamed up with Aliko Dangote to provide treatment and isolation centres across Africa, including Nigeria. Atlas Mara, backed

Union Bank in partnership with 54gene, a US based genetic research company with \$500.00 funding facility to fund covid-19 testing capacity in Nigeria to at 1,000 daily. Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) announced a donation of \$30 million from the oil industry to support the fight against the spread of the virus (Onu, 2020).

On 2 December 2018 traditional rulers and leaders of the host community in Ibeju-Lekki Free Trade Zone area of Lagos State including Idasho, Ilekuru, Okeyanta, Magbo-Segun, Okeesegun, Itoke, Idotun, Alasia, Okunraiye and Lekki town commended Dangote Oil Refinery Company (DORC) for partnering with the State government and the communities as part of its corporate social responsibility in the development of the areas. While speaking on behalf of Imobido community, Chief Jegede Lateef commended Dangote Group not only for establishing the refinery and petrochemical plants in the area, but for also constructing development projects in the area despite the fact that the company is yet to commence operation. Also, the head of Tiye community, Chief Adewale Salami commended the company for the various developmental projects, completed and ongoing, in their communities which he said in no small measure will contribute to human capital development.

The Group Executive Director of the company, Devakumar Edwin responding to the appreciation messages from the host communities added that the company will continue to partner with the government and the host communities to support educational programmes, development of small and medium enterprises, improved infrastructure and creating awareness on proper hygiene and sanitation in the environment (Dangote Group, 2019). This is what it means to be involved in volunteering services by private individuals or corporate bodies to a society or in a country. Unfortunately, such volunteering services are limited in Nigeria because of the government misplacement of priorities while formulating its policy programmes.

Ibrahim of the Cable News and View unlimited in 2015 commending the Dangote Cement Company for what he regarded as a major boost to its corporate social responsibility to the host communities of Ibese, Yewa and Ewekoro in Ogun state listed the company's achievements in the following social sectors; water, education, electricity, road and information technology (IT). He stated that apart from the company's efforts to develop its host communities, it prioritised human capital development by awarding scholarships to indigenes of host communities in any higher institution and secondary schools. Mansur Ahmed, the executive director, stakeholder management and corporate communication, complemented this by highlighting some of the projects to include: three domestic boreholes for Elere, Babalawo and Kajola communities; ten domestic borehole for Afami, Ajibawo, Aga-Akinronbi, Aga-Owoyele, Ijako-Orile, Wasimi-Imasayi and Balogun; four industrial boreholes for Ibese respectively; and construction of ten classrooms for Ibese and another five for Balogun communities. The company was also commended for its several other similar projects including internal road network along Wasimi-Imasayi, and the drain project at Olu of Ilaro/paramount ruler's road, and scholarship programmes in 2013 (Ibrahim, 2015).

**(c) Foreign Donors and Partners:**

On 27 March 2020 the CEO of Ali Baba, Jack Ma, a Chinese businessman donated medical items to the federal government of Nigeria in support of the fight against the spread and treatment of corona virus pandemic (Abdur, 2020). In the wake of the

shocking kidnapping and Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria, Georgetown University through the leadership of the Institute for Women, Peace and Security (IWPS) convened a meeting in Washington, D.C in August 2014 with representatives of a large numbers of the multinational corporations operating in Nigeria to champion the need for safe schools and to encourage collaboration and collective actions against these vices through volunteering services. In September same year, the Institute hosted a symposium to advance the need for the girl child education in Nigeria and beyond. This, no doubt encouraged collaboration between the government and corporate bodies initiate eliminate low school enrolments of girl child in northern part of the country. In spite the setback experienced in the region because of the invasions and subsequent abductions by Boko Haram of Chibok girls, the business community in Nigeria, including a number of global multinational corporations were still committed to improving the health, education, and access to business training for girls and women through commercial and philanthropic activities. This is what it takes to efficiently carryout volunteering service to indigent communities through collaboration with the government of the state.

**Table 1: Volunteering Services by Domestic Organisations (Corporate & Private Individuals) in Nigeria**

S/N	NGO	PROJECT TYPE	PROJECT LOCATION	YEAR OF PROJECT KICK-OFF	ACTIVITY/ STATUS
1.	Dangote Group (Dangote Cement Company, Ogun State)	Community Services including: education, electrification, Information technology, road & water.	Host Communities including Ibese, Yewa and Ewekoro, Elere, Afami etc.	2015 – 2019	Implementation
2.	Dangote Group (Dangote Oil Refinery Company, Lagos State)	Community Services including education, small and medium enterprises, awareness on hygiene and sanitation in the environment)	Host Communities of Ibeju-Lekki Free Trade Zone including Idasho, Okeyanta, Magbo-Segun, Idotun etc.	2018	Implementation
3.	United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA Group)	Covid-19 financial donation to Isolation centres including beds, intensive care facilities, and medical awareness on daily basis.	Nigeria's Presidential Action Against Covid-19	2020	Implementation
4.	Access Bank Plc & Aliko Dangote	Building/donation of Isolation centres across Africa and treatment of Covid-19 patients	Africa including Nigeria	2020	Implementation
5.	Atlas Mara backed Union Bank in partnership with 54gene (A US-based genetic research company)	A \$500 testing facility for Covid-19	Nigeria	2020	Implementation
6.	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)	Covid-19 financial donation of \$30 million	Nigeria's Presidential Action Against Covid-19	2020	Implementation

**Source:** Ibrahim (2015); Nigeria Red Cross (2020) & Onu (2020)

**Table 2: Volunteering Services by Foreign Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations in Nigeria**

S/N	NGO	PROJECT TYPE	PROJECT LOCATION	YEAR OF PROJECT KICK-OFF	ACTIVITY/ STATUS
1.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	UK Action Against Corruption Programme (UKACT)	Nigeria	2009	Implementation
2.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Working to Improve Nutrition in Northern Nigeria	Kebbi, Katsina, Jigawa, Zamfara & Yobe States	2011	Implementation/sensitisation campaign
3.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Women for Health (W4H) Programme	Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Zamfara, Yobe & Borno States	2012	Implementation/sensitisation campaign
4.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Child Development Grant (CDG) Programme	Jigawa & Zamfara States	2012	Implementation/sensitisation campaign
5.	UK Development Finance Institution (CDC Group)	Indorama Eleme Fertilizer & Chemicals Limited (Fertilizer production)	Rivers State	2013	Implementation
6.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Rural and Agricultural Markets Development Programme for Northern Nigeria (PrOpCom Maikarfi)	Northern Nigeria	2013	Implementation
7.	UK Department for International	Sanitation, Hygiene & Water in Nigeria,	Six Nigerian Northern States	2013	Implementation/sensitisation campaign



	Development (DFID)	Phase 2 (SHAWN)			
8.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Deepening Democracy in Nigeria 2 (DDIN2)	Nigeria	2014	Implementation/sensitisation campaign
9.	UK Department for International Development (DFID)	Increasing Economic Opportunities for Marginalised Youth in Northern Nigeria	Marginalised groups in Northern Nigeria	2014	Implementation
10.	USAID: (USAID in Partnership with UNICEF & Bauchi State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB))	Students Learning Under Lockdown Through E-Learning Collaboration	Bauchi State	2020	Implementation
11.	USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development)	USAID Trains War Widows in Northeast Nigeria to Produce Protective Facemasks Against the Spread of COVID-19	Nigeria's conflict affected Northeast	2020	Implementation
12.	MOFA-JAPAN (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in Nigeria)	Strengthening the Capacity of Network of Cvid-19 Laboratories of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control	Lagos, Oyo, Enugu, Edo, Kwara States & FCT	2020	Implementation

**Source:** Development Tracker (2020); Embassy of Japan in Nigeria (2020) & USAID (2020)

Suffice therefore to state that the plethora of instances provided above, though very limited examples in the Nigerian context considering numerous occasions and instances in which private individuals, organisations and agencies, local or foreign, have been involved in volunteering services to the country, this is what it means for the government to embrace volunteerism and encourage private individuals, corporate and non-governmental organisations in assisting the government in its development agenda. Unfortunately, the Nigerian government despite all its resources and influence in the comity of nations has not satisfactorily, *in the eyes of the local and international observers* explore and exploit the opportunities offered by volunteerism to human capital development and to a large extent, nation-building and national development.

#### **4.1 Summary and Conclusion**

From the discussions presented above, it is absolutely clear that the benefits of embracing volunteerism in any society cannot be underestimated. There is also no doubt that efficient utilisation of the opportunities volunteerism offers to nation-states, especially developing nation-states like Nigeria that is bedevilled by high rate of unemployment and youth restiveness could help to a reasonable extent eradicate anti-social vices among the youth. In essence, since volunteerism offers skills, expertise and knowledge, all of which have the potentials to assist any government that embraces it in delivering of better public programmes and policies, it shouldn't be underestimated.

From the foregoing, there is also no doubt that it could possibly contribute to the fight against other key national issues such as youth restiveness, agitations and unnecessary protests from the larger population if fully utilised since those volatilities often associated with the youth and the less privileged members of the larger society could be prevented through involvements in volunteering services. There is the saying that *idle mind is a devil workshop*, hence the need for the government to fully embrace or utilise volunteerism. With the huge natural and human resources that abound in Nigeria, it could be anticipated that if volunteerism sector is fully mobilised by the government to train youths to acquire skills through efficient and expertise skill acquisition and educational programme, and in conjunction with volunteering agencies or interested private sectors, corporate bodies, nongovernmental organisations, etc., it is likely to produce the needed manpower to have stable society free from anti-vices and sundry problems that occasionally bedevil the nation.

Most importantly, volunteerism if fully utilised by the government could also help to fight social and economic uneasiness that occasionally bedevil the nation. Now that the global system, including Nigeria is experiencing economic depression occasioned by the fall in crude oil price at the international market and now complicated by the global spread of covid-19 or corona virus pandemic, volunteering service is a possible or key phenomenon to complement national governments efforts since the governments alone cannot possibly handle these national and global issues. Hence, there is the need for collective responsibility of all including national governments, private sectors, civil society groups, foreign national partners or allies, IGOs, and NGOs to collaborate in the fight against these global evils also complicated by the wide spread domestic and transnational terrorism. This is absolutely what it takes to embrace or utilise volunteerism in Nigeria in particular.

#### **5.1 Recommendations:**

Now that Nigeria is experiencing dwindling revenue and experiencing economic recession occasioned by the global oil crisis on the one hand, and on the other hand the unfortunate tide of insurgency occasioned by the activities of Boko Haram Islamic terrorist organisation, Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), and other forms of criminal activities such as banditry,

attacks from Fulani herdsmen in the Middle belt, South West, South East and South-South regions, the government should recognise the critical roles that stakeholders, including foreign partners or allies and nongovernmental organisations, corporate bodies, civil society organisations, and private individual or sectors could render.

There is no doubt that proper coordination and integration of its partners in its developmental agenda would contribute to the actualisation of the nation's sustainable development goal. Moreover, the central government should provide levelling grounds for all to strive through workable policy framework. The government should also embark or count on patriotism and goodwill of the citizenry and kind support from the fraternity of ally or partner nations, corporate bodies, civil society and private individuals' volunteer service. Corruption and other anti-social behaviour among the government hierarchy are also identified as problems in the country, thus, must be eradicated through transparency in policy formulation and implementation, and deterrent by prosecuting corrupt officials of the government agencies. Exposing corrupt individuals including those occupying government offices could be an effective instrument through efficient public complaint agencies or volunteering groups that should be encouraged or contracted by the government of the federation.

Notable among our recommendation is that the government should engage the youth in volunteering service programmes because they are likely to bring a different or enthusiasm to volunteerism and national development programmes. Young people, indisputably, are much more curious, zealous and submissive in whatever endeavours they find themselves in. In a nut shell, if the government offers them the opportunity to contribute their quota to Nigerian national development agenda, they are likely to perform optimally better than is expected, especially when they have proper mentorship, encouragement, and when expose to reliable commendations or incentives or wages if necessary. They are likely to volunteer to work and encourage the government in return if offers favourable and conducive atmosphere to contribute their quota to the country's national development goals. We therefore recommend that the government at all levels should expose the youth to a broad range of skills acquisition programmes, especially with regards to technical training programmes offered by volunteering agencies or private sectors in conjunction with government agencies.

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