



Veterinary Profession: Potential Tool for the Realization of Nigerian Vision 20-20-20

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SUMMARY

As several countries make effort towards meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa including Nigeria are evolving policies and programme to address issues of sustainable development. The adoption of the framework of the MDGs, and its continents instrument: New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has provided a platform for the articulation in Nigeria of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), which laid emphasis on reforming government and institutions, growing the private sector, implementing a social character and value re-orientation. It has wealth creation, poverty reduction and employment generation as cardinal areas of emphasis. However, the seven point agenda of the previous administration of Alhaji Umar Yaradua, who declared her intention to pursue the vision of placing Nigeria among the 20 largest economies in the world by 2020 and the current leadership of President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan is committed to the attainment of this vision through its transformation agenda. This comprehensive frame-work focuses on sustainable growth in the real sector of the economy, which seeks to facilitate improvement in physical infrastructure, power and energy, transportation, agriculture, capital development, education, health, security, rule of law, combating corruption and tackling the Niger Delta problems. Therefore, it is imperative that

veterinarians who are very important professionals are properly positioned and adequately prepared to live up to high expectations in the area of food security, control of livestock diseases, integrated disease surveillance and response. This paper seeks to highlight the role of veterinary profession in the attainment of MDGs, as well as challenges and prospective ways through which veterinarians could contribute to the achievement of Nigeria vision 2020.

KEY WORDS: Nigerian, Veterinarians, Millennium Development Goals, Empowerment, Food security.

OVERVIEW OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2000, eight time bound development goals, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), were set at the UN millennium summit. One hundred and eighty nine (189), member states of the United Nations, including Nigeria, pledged to make commitment to address problems relating to poverty, education, gender equality, health, the environment and global partnership for development by the year 2015 (NPC, 2007b). To track the eight MDGs, the UN set 22 targets and 48 indicators towards the implementation and accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals. The 22 targets and 48 indicators are associated with the logistics

of combating the problem to be solved and the results expected to be achieved under the MDGs goals which include the following:

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality

Goal 5: Improve maternal health

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Goal 8: Development global partnership for development

The MDG goals are expected to be achieved by the year 2015 through the effort of nations, states, and local government of nations, spearheading aggressively and pursuing advocacy campaign of the MDGs (Alawiye, 2007; Ejiofor, 2009) while harnessing the potential the role of veterinarians in the actualization of MDGs and Vision 20-20-20.

Veterinary profession in Nigeria

The earliest reference to the veterinary profession in Nigeria was in 1904 by the Royal Army Veterinary Corps to Nigeria, with the establishment of the veterinary department in 1914, two veterinary officers; G.E. Owen and F.R Brandt being recruited. In 1954 Dr. Bukar Shuiab graduated from the University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom. In June 1967, the first veterinarian graduate, Dr. Basil Ikede who was jointly trained by the two veterinary faculties in the University of Ibadan and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria was wholly trained in Nigeria (Anon, 1985). The Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA) is the professional association of veterinarians in Nigeria which became active in 1966/67, although

it probably had a precursor in the Nigerian Veterinary Association (NVA) referred to by Mr. Henderson in 1945 (Anon, 1985). The Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN) which is the statutory body responsible for regulating the veterinary profession came into existence by virtue of ordinance No 30 of 1952 as amended by Federal Legal Notice (FLN) No. 131 of 1954, FLN No. 37 of 1958 and veterinary surgeons Decree No 37 of 1969 (Anon, 2004). Its functions are related in the main to the general duty of:

(a) Determining what standard of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to be registered as veterinary surgeons in Nigeria, and reviewing these standards from time to time as circumstances may permit.

(b) Establishment, maintenance and publication of a register of persons registered as veterinary surgeons in Nigeria.

It can thus be stated that the following bodies and individuals are responsible for the enhancement of professionalism of veterinary practice in Nigeria.

(a) The Veterinary Council of Nigeria (VCN)

(b) The Faculties (Colleges) of Veterinary Medicine in Nigeria

(c) The Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA)

(d) The individual veterinarian either as

(i) Policy makers in government

(ii) Government Veterinary

Practitioner

(iii) Private veterinary

practitioners (Babalobi, 2008)

Current status of the veterinary profession

There are more than five thousand eight hundred (5800) registered veterinary surgeons in Nigeria (Anon, 2007). The Veterinarians are distributed in the government (public) sector in the

academic (Universities and other higher institution) and in private sector (Veterinary practice, private firms, pharmaceutical companies, feed industry etc). As of 1985, over 90 percent of registered veterinarians were in the public sector (Anon, 1985), but over the last two decades, greater proportions of registered veterinarians were employed in the private sector comprising approximately 2,850 veterinarians. As the veterinary profession in Nigeria becomes increasingly privatized (Babalobi, 2005), there is the need to reposition and exploit the profession to meet the challenges of the globalized world and devise a very veritable instrument in achieving the policy thrust of the Federal government vision 2020.

Veterinarians and the MDGs:

Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

The role of veterinarians in food security is very strategic through the prevention, control and treatment of animals' diseases, which enhances the boost in production of livestock resources (WHO, 2005). In addition, private veterinarians have created several thousand jobs and also boosted incomes of micro entrepreneurs as well as reducing human diseases, poverty and hunger on the livelihood of the people (FAO, 2006). Livestock keeping is an important coping strategy in most households, to step up food and protein source and or to meet family emergencies which are now widely recognized as a route out of poverty (WHO, 2005). The emerging veterinary research into modern techniques such as artificial insemination has also helped to increase boost in livestock production yield in milk, meat and egg production thus facilitating the attainment MDG goal 1

Goal 2: Achieve Universal Education (UPE)

Education is an important tool for total emancipation of individuals from poverty (WHO, 2005). Veterinarians are also endowed with the knowledge of rural sociology which deals with social relations that exist within their immediate environment. Hence, veterinarians act as advocate and brokers of quality education for all school age children. This can be exemplified by the achievements of Nomadic education programme for Fulani Herdsmen in Nigeria (Ejiofor, 2009). Major factors such as poor health conditions in children and insufficient available funds were identified to be militating against the child enrollment and performance in education. Studies have however; shown that sales of livestock and livestock products has tremendously augmented school fees and its associated expenditures. Therefore, healthy livestock will better support education (WHO, 2005).

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women

In most of the developing world, small stock such as sheep, goats, chickens and guinea pigs are usually owned and managed by women. Numerous studies have shown that keeping these animals provides women with an independent source of income over which they have control and which they can use to channel resources directly to their children or reinvest in their money-making activities (WHO, 2005). Involvement of veterinarians in the mobilization and sensitization for women veterinary education opportunities, as well as conducting aggressive advocacy campaigns to enlighten people on gender issues and the need to engage more women in the livestock sub-sector of the economy as means to enhance national development cannot be over emphasized (Ejiofor and Jegede, 2009).

Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

Children are particularly prone to childhood killer and or nutritional related diseases, cystic echinococcosis and rabies accounting for about 55, 000 childhood deaths occurring annually (WHO, 2005). Veterinarians by virtue of their training and research activities are well grounded in knowledge of nutrition while providing technical advice to individuals, institutions and organization combating childhood killer and or nutritional related diseases. Thus, improving livestock health helps provide extra income for family subsistence as it helps maintain child health and reduce mortality while enabling them to diversify their income and spread risk (Ejiofor, 2010).

Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health

Maternal health care can be described as all the supportive care given to women before, during and after child delivery (Commonwealth secretariat, 2007). Therefore, veterinarians could also provide information and advice on basic functions of nutrients for women during and after pregnancy at various family and community levels (Ejiofor, 2010), as well as organizing enlightenment talks/ tips to women in collaboration with faith based organizations.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases

Veterinarians could work to expand public knowledge and understanding, not only by increasing awareness and prevention, but also help to lift the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS. To fight the scourge of malaria, veterinarians can help identify target breeding sites of mosquitoes and the control of zoonotic and water borne diseases in humans. Controlling these diseases, which imposes significant burden on poor communities of pastoralists, smallholder crop/livestock farmers and

landless urban and peri-urban Livestock keepers, is an important component of meeting this goal (FAO, 2006).

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability

Extinction of several endangered species of animals for 'Bush meat' in West Africa, especially, Nigeria is of serious public health concern (Kohli, 1984; Babalobi, 2008). Veterinarians have been involved in raising awareness on activities that threaten global environment such as destruction of the ecosystem and wild life (WHO, 2005). Veterinarian owned Animal right nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Agricultural AID Foundation(AAF) and Animal Welfare Initiative (AWI), has also done a lot to sensitize the Nigerian public in this regard (Ejiofor, 2010). Other activities that facilitate environmental damage include unsanitary free-ranging of livestock which promote the spread of various zoonotic viral, bacterial and parasitic diseases which also affect the wildlife such diseases include Rabies (threatening the survival of Africa's wild dogs and Ethiopian wolves), Bovine Tuberculosis, Anthrax (affecting species such as the Cape buffalo and also causing sporadic epidemics in wild herbivores respectively). Wildlife also transmits diseases to domestic animals, humans and in contact livestock (WHO, 2005). Controlling these diseases in their domestic reservoir can help protect the planet's wild species. Thus, measures to promote and support good animal husbandry will contribute to meeting this goal. Though medical and veterinary profession has different roles, both share many challenges in disease control. The outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), SARS, H5N1, Swine flu and many so called neglected zoonoses like rabies, brucellosis, tuberculosis and anthrax underscore the need for inter-

professional integrated collaboration. One concept which though not totally new but gaining greater relevance of late is the “One World, One Health, One Medicine” which encourages collaborative efforts of multidiscipline working in concert locally, nationally and globally to achieve optimal health of the people, animals and the environment (Cook et. al., 2005). The usefulness of this concept is clearly shown by its acceptance and endorsement given to it by major professional medical association such as American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), American Medical Association (AMA), American Society of Microbiology, Centre for Disease Control (CDC), and World Association of Laboratory Diagnosticians. No matter how effective a surveillance and response system is, the increasing prevalence of drivers creates a situation where zoonotic disease pathogens will continue to emerge in human populations and this it will be impossible to prevent all disease outbreaks and zoonotic disease from occurring. However, a global zoonotic disease surveillance system provides great benefits by conveying critical data for inform evidence-based responses, therefore minimizing the opportunity for zoonotic disease emergence, transmission, and spread in both human and animal populations (Lombin, 2010).

Goal 8: Develop global partnership for development

The need to develop a global partnership amongst veterinarians, institutions, organizations and countries cannot be overemphasized. These relationships have enhanced capacity, technical expertise, programme exchange, institutional development and networking potentials. Veterinary institutions in Nigeria have benefited technical support from several development partners like, USDA, EU, IAEA, FAO, WHO and OIE. There are also

collaborations and networks between research laboratories within and outside the country as well as disease control support provided by Alliance for Green Revolution and FAO. The most recent of such assistance is the control of HPAI in Nigeria (Olabode, 2009). Enhanced disease surveillance in animals as part of one medicine-one world approach would lead to quicker and more coordinated response by both veterinary and public health authorities. This will greatly minimize the impact of zoonotic disease outbreaks, using the outcomes of early warning surveillance and intervention strategies. Hence, the current trend in the concept of “One Medicine, One Health, One World” is a welcome idea and Nigeria alongside other countries in the region have keyed into it. The recent training of veterinarians, medical doctors and laboratory technologist as Field epidemiologist together which is a collaboration of the Federal Ministries of Health and Agriculture with technical support by the US Center for Disease control and Prevention (CDC), will strengthen their capacity to response to public health emergencies such as outbreaks, epidemics, natural disasters, emerging and re-emerging diseases (Lombin, 2010).

Overview of Nigeria Vision 20:2020

The NV 20:2020 economic transformation blueprint is a long term plan for stimulating Nigeria's economic growth and launching the country onto a path of sustained and rapid socio-economic development (CGD, 2008). The blueprint articulates Nigeria's economic growth and development strategies for the eleven-year period between 2009 and 2020, and will be implemented using a series of medium term national development plans (NPC, 2009).

NV20:2020 is a rallying call for all

Nigerians, regardless of ethnicity, economic status, or religion to unite and stand behind a common cause of placing the country firmly on a path of sustainable growth, and taking it to its rightful place in the community of nations (CBN, 2008b). The blueprint has therefore been designed to reflect accurately the collective interests of the people of Nigeria, using a bottom-up approach that is anchored on deep understanding of the aspirations of all Nigerian citizens, and knowledge of the future needs of the country (CBN, 2008a). The vision is underpinned by the need to effectively and efficiently mobilize the nation's resources to serve and improve the lives of its citizens, and to respond appropriately to the growing challenges of an increasingly smaller, mutually dependent, and interconnected world (CBN, 2007). NV20:2020 encapsulates the key principles and thrusts of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the Seven Point Agenda of the current democratic administration situating both within a single, long term strategic planning perspective (Anon, 2008). The development of the NV20:2020 blueprint commenced with the approval of the Framework for NV20:2020 at the apex of which was the National Council on NV20:2020 (NCV20:2020), by the Federal Executive Council. The NCV20:2020 was given the mandate to spearhead the development and implementation of the NV20:2020 Economic Transformation Plan in collaboration with the National Planning Commission (CBN, 2008a).

The visioning process involved active participation and input from a broad spectrum of Nigerians. Experts from various ministries, agencies, state and local governments, representatives from the private sector, as well as development consultants and non-governmental

organizations all participated in developing the blueprint. The effort was coordinated by the National Planning Commission, working with Messrs Accenture, a global management consulting firm (CBN, 2008b).

The visioning process commenced with the development of comprehensive strategic plans for each sector of the economy at the conclusion of detailed diagnostic assessments and visioning sessions. The country was analyzed across 29 thematic areas for this purpose and the effort was delivered through 29 National Technical Working Groups (NTWGs), comprising leading experts on each thematic area. Each of the NTWGs submitted strategic plans that included sector specific visions, policy targets, objectives and priorities for their respective thematic areas and formulated strategies, initiatives and implementation plans. The rigorous strategy development effort undertaken by the NTWGs was also replicated in each State of the federation and each Ministry, Department and Agency (MDA) at the federal level, by Stakeholder Development Committees (SDCs) set up for this purpose. The development of strategic plans at the State and MDA levels which involved the facilitation of several interactive SDC workshops across the six geopolitical zones of the country was designed with a view to generate sufficient public dialogue and input into the process. The work of the NTWGs and SDCs was also complemented by twelve (12) Special Interest Groups (SIGs) to ensure that all relevant perspectives and stakeholders were included in the visioning process. The SIGs were made up of the Legislature, Judiciary, Media, Women, Youths, Traditional Rulers, Religious Groups, Security, Nigerians in Diaspora, Persons with Disability (PWD), Labour and the Civil Service. Responses from a call for

memoranda from the general public were also relevant as input into the process (CBN, 2008a).

To develop the final blueprint, two working groups were constituted. The first working group was mandated to develop a consistent macroeconomic framework to underpin the vision, and the second, the Central Working Group, to develop the first draft of the blueprint, using all the inputs received in the course of the visioning process. The Central Working Group developed the first draft of the NV20:2020 Economic Transformation Plan across the three broad themes defined as the central thrusts for the Vision (NPC, 2009).

The NV20:2020 Economic Transformation plan was developed for and by the Nigerian people. It realizes the role Nigerian citizens' play in achieving the targets set forth by NV20:2020, and rightly places our citizens and their welfare at the forefront of the agenda. The Vision prioritizes and offers strategies to drive the full realization of Nigeria's potential and her emergence as one of the leading global economies in the world within the next decade.

Vision 20:2020 is an articulation of the long-term intent to launch Nigeria onto a path of sustained social and economic progress and accelerate the emergence of a truly prosperous and united Nigeria. Recognizing the enormous human and natural endowments of the nation, the blueprint is an expression of Nigeria's intent to improve the living standards of her citizens and place the country among the Top 20 economies in the world with a minimum GDP of \$900 billion and a per capita income of no less than \$4000 per annum. Nigeria's targets for 2020 are based on a dynamic comparative analysis of the country's potential growth rate and economic structure vis-à-vis those of other

Top 40 economies in the world. This implies that the Nigerian economy must grow at an average of 13.8 per cent during the time horizon, driven by the agricultural and industrial sectors over the medium term while a transition to service-based economy is envisaged by 2018 (CBN, 2008b).

Fundamental to the Vision are two broad objectives – optimizing human and natural resources to achieve rapid economic growth, and translating that growth into equitable social development for all citizens. These aspirations are defined across four dimensions (CBN, 2007):

? **Social Dimension:** A peaceful, equitable, harmonious and just society where every citizen has a strong sense of national identity and citizens are supported by an educational and healthcare system that caters for all, and sustains a life expectancy of not less than 70 years

? **Economic Dimension:** A globally competitive economy that is resilient and diversified with a globally competitive manufacturing sector that is tightly integrated and contributes no less than 25% to Gross Domestic Product

? **Institutional Dimension:** A stable and functional democracy where the rights of the citizens to determine their leaders are guaranteed and adequate infrastructure exists to support a market-friendly and globally competitive business environment

? **Environmental Dimension:** A level of environmental consciousness that enables and supports sustainable management of the nation's God-given natural endowments to ensure their preservation for the benefit of present and future generations (CBN, 2008a).

Vision 20-20-20 and transformation of the Nigerian economy

The economic transformation strategy for

Nigeria is anchored upon three overarching thrusts (NPC, 2009):

1. Creating the platform for success by urgently and immediately addressing the most debilitating constraints to Nigeria's growth and competitiveness;
2. Forging ahead with diligence and focus in developing the fabric of the envisioned economy by:
 - a. *Aggressively pursuing a structural transformation from a mono-product economy to a diversified, industrialized economy;*
 - b. *Investing to transform the Nigerian people into catalysts for growth and national renewal, and a lasting source of comparative advantage; and*
 - c. *Investing to create an environment that enables the co-existence of growth and development on an enduring*
3. Developing and deepening the capability of government to consistently translate national strategic intent into action and results by instituting evidence-based decision making in Nigeria's public policy space.

The concept for Vision 2020

A vision is a clear mental picture of the future which must represent a significant improvement of the current state (Vision20-2020., 2008). However, it must be supported by a clear and realistic working document which requires consistent and substantial effort for its achievement vision statement

“By 2020 Nigeria will be one of the 20 largest economies in the world able to consolidate its leadership role in Africa and establish itself as a significant player in the global and political arena”.

To attain this overreaching goal of reaching the top 20 economies by year 2020, Nigeria will need to enhance her economic development performance in the following area:

Polity, macro-economy, infrastructure,

education, health, manufacturing, agriculture (Anon, 2008) However, achieving the vision require critical success factors such as leadership commitment, shared ownership, integrated strategy, effective strategic plan and framework, inclusive development and resources.

Apart from the resources that will be required to implement the plans and programmes for achieving the vision, it is also necessary to ensure that the human, financial and institutional resources required in developing the vision document is adequately mobilized. These would include a multidisciplinary team of resource persons, especially veterinarians with necessary competencies to guide, drive and coordinate the process.

Agriculture in the Vision 2020

Agriculture has been identified as a major driver of growth of the Nigerian economy and must play a crucial role in achieving vision 2020 in Nigeria. According to the vision, agricultural sector shall be technologically driven so as to be profitable, sustainable and meet the socio-economic aspirations of Nigerians. Target set for this sector is to achieve 3-fold increase domestic agricultural productivity by 2015 and 6-fold increase by 2020 which will be achieved through the promotion of great use of highly productive and disease resistant crop, livestock, poultry and fish strains, breeds and species. Nigerian agriculture will be professionalized through education promotion and professional training incentives to encourage young people to embrace agricultural production, processing, extension services and marketing. The goal is to bear a shift from dependence on rain feed crop production through to significant utilization of irrigation. This sector is also expected to achieve a high degree of public private

partnership thrust in agricultural research and development by 2020 (Ejiofor, 2010).

Agriculture in the Major Economic Policy the 7 – Point Agenda

The current agricultural and rural development policies and strategies are being pursued within the framework of 7-point agenda and the success and lesson of National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), which was Nigeria's poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) launched in June, 2004 (NPC, 2004). In March 2007 a second phase of NEEDS, NEEDS II was launched. The agenda, which was adopted by government in May 2007, states the broad policy priorities for implementing economic reforms and development programmes in Nigeria (NPC, 2007a). It describes the key policy imperatives, direction principles and instrument in promoting sustainable economic growth for the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 and Vision 2020 (NPC, 2007b). The main agricultural goal enunciated under the agenda is diversified economy, security, employment generation, economic linkages, and export and poverty reduction (Anon, 2008). It acknowledges that low productivity, low quality of private sector investment, lack of domestic and international competitiveness, weak domestic policies and institutions, inadequate funding and lack of organized land tilting and tenure are the major challenges of agricultural development in Nigeria. The key agricultural elements of the agenda strategy are land reform, commercial agriculture, irrigation development, institutional support and market stabilization. Under the commercial agriculture programme, arable land will be developed in the state for use by well-trained and motivated commercial farmers who will cultivate carefully selected ecologically suitable,

commercial market – responsive crops. It will involve the federal, state and local government, each playing complementary and reinforcing roles. The policy offshoot of the 7-point agenda is the National Food Security programme (CAADP, 2009).

The National Food Security Programme (NFSP)

Within the framework of the 7-point Agenda, the National Food Security programme document's was published in August, 2008 (CAADP, 2009). According to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Water Resources, its objectives are to:

Ensure sustainable access, availability and affordability of quality food to all Nigerians and for Nigeria to become a significant net provider of food to the global community
Provide an enabling environment for private sector involvement.

Encouraging large scale commercial farming with strategic linkages to small holder farmers.

Significantly reducing post harvest losses through adequate storage, processing and appropriate market outlets.

Thus, the policy thrust of NFSP is based on import substitution, substantial food security, promotion of modern agricultural practices, natural resources conservation and commodity focus.

VETERINARIANS AND VISION 2020 OPPORTUNITIES

* Veterinarians are expected to be involved in the policy issues and make realistic and sustainable decision and inputs, based on expert knowledge. They must ensure that the profession is not disadvantaged in the implementation of the government policy like the vision 2020. It was unfortunate that the VCN was not included as major stakeholder in the implementation

of NEPAD-NIGERIA in October, 2009. This is not good for the profession. They need to be more proactive!

- * Veterinarians are to monitor development in meeting the demands of increasing population, initiating greater efficiency in livestock production, carryout research to find out lasting solution to eradicating some of the deadly animal diseases PPR, CBPP, TB, HPAI, FMD etc (Albert, 2008).
- * Veterinarians must not only be provided modern facilities commensurable with advanced economy, but must also be availed the opportunity for career development, training and retraining to keep them current with veterinary developments in advanced societies.
- * Veterinarians must be involved in the prompt reporting, diagnosis, monitoring, surveillance, prevention and response to epizootics, especially trans-boundary and emerging diseases (CDC/WHO/AFRO, 2001).

C H A L L E N G E S F A C I N G V E T E R I N A R I A N S I N N I G E R I A

The Veterinary profession is able to provide an extra-ordinary link between animal production, arable agriculture and human medicine (Hobert *et al.*, 2003) through their role in achieving the country's food security and public health. However, veterinarians are also faced with some challenge limiting their effort towards achieving the Vision 2020. These limitations include:

- * Inadequate finance to carry out research on zoonotic and other livestock diseases due to inadequate diagnostic equipments in the nine existing veterinary

faculties/colleges (Albert, 2008).

- * Veterinarians who are stakeholders in socio-economic development have been systemically sidelined from policy initiation, formulation and implementation particularly as it relates to food security and livestock production.
- * Remuneration of veterinary doctors in the Nigerian civil service and private sector is amongst the lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- * Veterinary representation at national, state and local government levels has been drastically reduced that, their input on issues relating to sustainable development are very limited or almost non-existence. In addition to these, infrastructures, ambulatory vehicles, logistics, laboratories, clinics for effective animal health delivery have deteriorated across the country.
- * Nigeria import several tones of livestock product annually to meet the protein needs of its citizenry despite the excellent environment for animal husbandry that lie fallow (Nnenna, 2004). This is as a result of weak policy enforcement. The situation is not healthy for the economy which could provide decent jobs, income for people and even foreign exchange earnings.

P R O S P E C T S O F T H E V E T E R I N A R I A N I N V I S I O N 2 0 - 2 0 - 2 0

The prospects of the veterinarians in the vision 20-2020 are as earlier presented by Ejiofor, (2010) as stated below:

- * Need for an all inclusive sound governance, economic growth and enhanced productive capacity will bring about positive attitudinal change and increase the man power

- of veterinarians in the country.
- * An urgent need for reform to re-align veterinary service delivery, so that veterinarians can fully spearhead the dissemination of basic, appropriate production and health techniques in the livestock industry.
 - * The review of the Board of NAFDAC to include various stakeholders in the livestock sub-sector including the creation of directorate of Veterinary medicine is a step in the right direction.
 - * The Bill for an Act to establish Universities Veterinary Teaching Hospital, 2010 sponsored by Hon (Barr.) Gbenga Peter Makanjola is a very wonderful development for the profession through employment generation for veterinarians.
 - * Encouragement of the private sector to invest in delivery of veterinary services.
 - * Assurance of an enabling investment environment through provision of adequate infrastructure
 - * Improvement of the scope of research and development in the livestock sub-sector as well as value re-orientation towards this sub-sector.
 - * Aggressive wooing of foreign and domestic investors into the livestock sub-sector.
 - * Mobilization and setting up special presidential committee on livestock production to boost animal agriculture.
- The curriculum would shift emphasis from spoon-feeding of information to analysis and problem solving. For veterinarians to achieve Vision 2020 there would be need to have well-rounded professional education that is grounded in real-life examples of

veterinary work across a range of disciplines.

CONCLUSION

The need for a holistic transformation of the Nigerian state has assumed an urgent and critical dimension in the course of the last two decades. Notable is the increasing relevance of Nigeria as a leading emerging market albeit with under-utilized potential. With the return to democratic rule in 1999, and the gradual re-building of civil institutions with a vibrant market economy, the feasibility of Nigeria assuming a key position as a global economic power and a catalytic hub for development in Africa has become more profound. Using an all-inclusive consultative process involving over 1,000 of the nation's leading professionals and thinkers, Vision 20:2020 is an authentic blueprint by the Nigerian people to set for themselves a stretch target to transform the lives of the average Nigerian, and by implication the Nigerian economy. Therefore, it is time for veterinarians to realize that they have a great task ahead, in terms of playing strategic roles in providing the needed expertise as major stakeholders and thus be well equipped in order to meet the challenges of actualizing the Federal Government Vision of making Nigeria twenty largest economies by 20-20.

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