

The Subsidy Reinvestment And Empowerment (Sure) Programme Implementation in Nigeria: Potentials For National Youth Unemployment Reduction

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Abstract

The unrelenting youth unemployment in Nigeria has constituted a socio-economic malaise that ravages all aspects of the country. This article x-rayed the programme thrust of the recently initiated Oil Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment (SURE) policy of the President Goodluck Jonathan's administration, with regard to its amelioration of youth unemployment in Nigeria. In this context, the study adopted a histo-analytical cum quantitative methodology and hypothesized in the process that the SURE programme if well managed could be the rescue to the festering youth unemployment phenomenon in Nigeria. Based on the study's findings which validated the earlier hypothesis, recommendations of the study were proffered.

Keywords: Subsidy, Reinvestment, Empowerment, Programme, Youth Unemployment Reduction, Nigeria

"It is better to employ people on useless project like building or digging holes and filling them up again, than not to employ them at all...Any of these may be better than doing nothing at all. Those who are taken into useless employment will by what they earn and spend, give useful employment to others. Enforced idleness is a waste of real resources and a waste of lives, which cannot be defended on any financial ground" (William Beveridge, 1944).

Introduction

The challenges of youth unemployment in most regions of the world have been observed to be increasing sharply from the end of 2008. This scenario of rising global youth unemployment has been worsened by the recent world economic crisis that began in 2009, which eroded the gains recorded in the pre 2008 years. In this regard, the International Labour Organization (2012:11) has reported that:

The global youth unemployment rate has proved sticky, and remained close to its crisis peak. At 11.28 percent in 2011 and projected at 12.7 percent for 2012, the global youth unemployment rate remains at least a full percentage point above its level in 2007. Nearly 75 million youth are unemployed around the world, an increase of more than 4 million since 2007.

In contrast to other adult groups in the world, it has been demonstrated by analysts such as Adebayo (1999), Chigunta (2002), Alanana (2003) and ILO (2012) that the youth groups are hit hardest by the unemployment quagmire. In line with this assertion, the ILO (2012:13) has averred that the:

Youth face a particularly difficult situation as is captured by the ratio of youth-to-adult unemployment rates. Globally, this ratio was 2.8 in 2011 and is projected at 2.7 in 2012. This means that, in comparison with adults, youth continue to be almost three times as likely to be unemployed, and elevated unemployment rates continue to hit them disproportionately.

The prevailing estimates from International Labour Organization (ILO, 2007) and Adewuyi et al (2008) for the sub-Saharan African countries demonstrate that unemployment, as a social catastrophe afflicts a broad spectrum of socio-economic groups especially the youth. The categories of these unemployed youth encompasses both the well educated, less well educated and youth from low-income background.

In recognition of the devastating aftermaths of this unrelenting unemployment generally and youth unemployment in particular, various levels of government in Nigeria have initiated multitudinous policies and programmes targeted at the reduction of the phenomenon of unemployment in the country. Some of these programmes and policies are the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) established 1986, the implementation of the 6-3-3-4 educational policy, the Better Life programme for rural women, the Family Support Programme, the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) etc.

Regrettably, in spite of the implementation of some of these laudable programmes in Nigeria, it is disheartening to state that these catastrophic phenomenons have continued unabated. Rather than youth unemployment reduction, there is upsurge in the levels and varieties of this social malaise. Dele, et. al. (2009:2) in utter disappointment of this increasing unemployment in the country has averred that:

Recent statistics has it that the country records about 40 million unemployed people, majority of who are youths. To a responsive and focused government, the deteriorating unemployment situation in Nigeria should be a source of worry, especially with the attendant social dislocation, exemplified by high crime rate, and youth restiveness.

It is against the foregoing background that this paper intends to explore the issue of reducing youth unemployment in Nigerian, using the instrumentality of the recently initiated Oil Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment (SURE) programme of the federal government of Nigeria. Towards this, the objectives of the paper are:

- ✓ To analyze the guiding national development objectives associated with the 2011 SURE programme of the President Goodluck Jonathan's administration.
- ✓ To demonstrate the extent of youth unemployment situation in Nigeria; and

- ✓ To ascertain best measures that can be adopted in the use of the implementation strategies of the SURE programme to ameliorate the burgeoning youth unemployment malaise in Nigeria.

In the study's attempt at accomplishing the above objectives, the methodology of historical research was adopted. This research method borders on the explanation of the implementation dynamics of the SURE programme as it relates to the amelioration of youth unemployment in Nigeria. It seeks to generalize on the developmental strategies undertaken by the SURE programme in respect of youth employment in Nigeria, with the aim of making reliable recommendations on the way forward.

To ensure the effective utilization of the historical research design, the data for the study were collected through secondary sources only. In the analysis of these data, the study employed eclectic style in combination with descriptive, analytical and quantitative approach. The essences of the use of these methods were to ensure comprehensiveness of analyzed information on the subject matter.

Conceptual Explications

Youth: The variables that represent the concept of youth is devoid of unanimous definition among social scientist and analysts. In this regard, various conceptualizations according to socio-economic and philosophical prepositions abound, leading to fundamental incongruence in its definitions. Biologically, youth is the quality of being young, youthfulness and juvenility. It is that aspect of one's existence that succeeds the child hood stage but precedes the adult age. Apart, from the biological perspectives, other allusions to the youth concept borders commonly on agreed aspects as rate of dependency on parents, physical development, behavioural tendencies and age categorizations.

For this paper, we are adopting the age categorization to distinguish the concept of a youth, as a result of the fact that, this age variable is more commonly accepted across countries. In line with this, the United Nations (2002) indicates that, in some countries, the lowest age limit for a youth is 10 years (Haiti) while in Costa Rica it is 14 years. In Nigeria, the lowest age limit for a youth is 16 years.

For the upper limit agreement on the concept of youth, there are variations across countries. In countries like Honduras and New Caledonia respectively, the maximum age limit for a youth is 29 years, while most European and North American countries peg their maximum age limit for a youth at 25 years. For Nigeria however, the maximum age limit for a youth is pegged at the age of 30 years, as reflected in the National Youth Service Scheme. In Nigeria's cultural parlance, the concept of youth is devoid of chronological age limits. In most ethnic culture of Nigeria, a youth suffices for any person who is still not too minor in age nor too old in age. In this sense, most people in this bracket are regarded as the Nigerian youth irrespective of their chronological age.

In terms of the implication of the age limit on youth unemployment phenomenon, it is instructive to emphasize that it affects the comparability of youth unemployment statistics across countries. This wide variety in youth unemployment estimation also bears consequences on the kind of solutions for tackling youth unemployment in the development programmes of countries.

Unemployment: In the literature of microeconomics, the concept of unemployment is one of the most contested ideas. The nuances in the different definitions are caused by environmental determinism and socio-cultural factors etc.

Jhingan (2011) defines unemployment as an unacceptable idleness of a person willing to work at prevailing labour payment system but still unable to find one. In Jhingan's views, persons who reject certain work on the basis of low payment should not be regarded as unemployed.

For the International Labour Organization (2010), the issue of unemployment borders on the fact that a country's population consists of the economically active and inactive component. The economically active populations are those of working age group either working or seeking for paid working. It is in this regard that ILO (2007:3) regards the employed as those individuals of 15 years and above that are:

- Without a job of any type;
- Available to start work in the next two weeks if offered employment, but yet seeking for one.
- Actively looking for work or have found one and is waiting to start it.

For the purpose of this paper however, unemployment comprises of those tenets as espoused by both Jhingan (2011) and the ILO (2007) but involves excruciating situations of people whose human capital are not demanded for any economic activity in exchange for income returns to the person. In other words, there is no choice for the unemployed than to remain in that status due to unavailability of work.

Theoretical Perspective

In this study, social contract theory is utilized. The historical antecedent of the social contract theory of governance is traceable to ancient Indian scholars as Mahabliarata and Arthasastra of Kautilya, Roman lawyers like Polybius and Cicero, and philosophers like Benedict Spinoza and Richard Hooker. However, a clearer and a more lucid expression of this theory was propounded by the trinity of Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) John Locke (1632 – 1704) all of England and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712 – 1778) of France. In adumbrating on the premise on which the social contract theory is based, the three major proponents according to Johari (2007:105) assumed:

An elaborate hypothesis to demonstrate, that, the existence of political authority was based on the consent of the people. To prove it, they supposed a period without authority of any kind, what they called "state of nature" and its termination by a covenant, whereby the people surrendered their natural rights, to be translated into civil rights by the action of a political authority instituted by them.

In the details of their treatise on the social contract theory, there are differences in terms of areas of emphasis as to the nature of the relationship between the governed and the rulers, and how the civil society or the commonwealth will be established. In this dispensation, this study adapts the peculiar view of John Locke, as we believe that it suits our explanation of the variables inherent in our study more than that of Hobbes and Rousseau.

For Locke, the state of nature is not the Hobbesian violent and anarchic type but also not a perfect social bliss expected of an organized society. Locke as quoted in Johari (2007:114) has opined that:

The state of nature had the ill-condition which was full of fears and continual dangers and suffered from three main shortcomings – the non-existence of an established and settled legal system, the absence of an

appropriate authority to execute the laws, and the want of an impartial judge to give and endorse just decisions. Hence, in order to escape from this ill condition and gain certainty and security, men enter into the civil society or commonwealth. Thus the men living in the state of nature voluntarily compacted and agreed to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe and peaceable living, one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties and a greater security against any that are not of it.

And to give effect to this civil or political society, Locke assumes the making of two contracts, which we can attribute as constituting part of the features of the social contract theory as follows:

- 1) The first level contract is a scenario in which each citizen agrees to submit not his natural rights, but the singular right of interpreting and executing the natural law to the community as a whole, on the “understanding that, the natural right be guaranteed and preserved”;
- 2) The second level contract is the governmental type in which the community as a whole (in a corporate capacity) makes a contract with a ruler (government) who “takes upon himself the responsibilities of removing the ill-conditions” that once existed in the state of nature” (as a compulsory condition for governance);
- 3) Another feature of the social contract theory is that the second level contract is subordinated to the first level, being that the government or the ruler’s powers, are only fiduciary powers, entrusted to it by the community, and can be removed from the government whenever her performance of treating the community well is lacking. This is done in the pattern of democratic institutions delivering the welfare of the citizens as its supreme law.

In relating the social contract theory to our study – The Federal Government’s Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment (SURE) programme and the implementation of the national youth empowerment reduction programmes in Nigeria, this discourse makes the following propositions:

- a. That the Nigerian federal government that adopts the SURE programme is arrived at from the consent of the generality of Nigerians through an election.
- b. That the SURE Programme and its implementation is an attempt by the Nigerian state to improve the welfare of the poverty-stricken population of the country (of which youth unemployment reduction is one of them), which is one of its compulsorily assigned responsibilities.
- c. That the Nigerian masses expect the Nigerian state to live up to its expectations of effectively implementing these youth unemployment reduction programmes to the satisfaction of the citizens – thereby ensuring the essence of governance.

In analyzing the philosophy of SURE programmes of youth unemployment reduction in Nigeria, it is the contention of this study that the Nigerian state is obligated as one of its social contract duties to the citizens, to provide for their well being, especially the eradication of youth unemployment among others. The SURE policy document (SURE 2011:8) even accented to this notion when it stated that one of its objectives is the reduction of youth unemployment in the country through the use of women and youth empowerment schemes (WYE). It is against this background that one of the challenges of SURE programme is not only to reform the Nigerian economy towards economic growth but also to

empower the youth through employment, as a means of revitalizing this weakened social pillar.

An Overview of Nigerian Subsidy Re-Investment and Empowerment (SURE) Programme

The Subsidy Re-investment and Empowerment (SURE) programme of the President Goodluck Jonathan's administration was announced towards the end of 2011. However, the actual implementation of the policy was embarked upon in the early 2012 on February 13th, during which members of the SURE Board lead by Dr. Christopher Kolade was inaugurated.

The fundamental socio-economic and political issues according to Obuzuwa (2012) that led to the establishment of the SURE programme was the January 1, 2012 federal government of Nigeria's announced removal of the popular fuel subsidy which increased the pump price of the premium motor spirit (PMS) to over 100 percent. In this exercise the pump price of fuel was increased from its last price of N65.00 per litre to the all high price of N145.00 per a litre. The arguments of the federal government for the removal of the fuel subsidy are multifaceted. Among some of the arguments is that:

- The Federal Government intends to save that subsidy money and invest same in the economic development of the nation and thereby eradicating the suffering of the Nigerian masses; and that
- The Federal Government intends to spend the subsidy savings in improving the various sectors of the economy especially in infrastructural and services development (Obuzuwa 2012).

Based on the eventual partial removal of subsidy on the pump price of the fuel product that later settled at N97.00 per a litre, the SURE programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria, under the administration of Goodluck Jonathan was birthed. In line with the Federal Government's arguments for the removal of the fuel subsidy, the objectives of the SURE programme according to the Federal Government's SURE programme (2011:6) are:

- (a) To mitigate the immediate impact of the petroleum subsidy discontinuation on the Nigerian population, but particularly for the poor and vulnerable segments. This applies to both the direct and indirect effects of the subsidy removal.
- (b) To accelerate economic transformation through investments in critical infrastructural projects, so as to drive economic growth and achieve the vision 20:2020, which is part of spirit of the administration's transformation agenda.
- (c) To lay the foundation for the successful development of a national safety net programme that is better targeted at the poor and the most vulnerable on a continuous basis, including public works and employment schemes, maternal and child health, mass transit programmes and vocational training skill acquisition schemes.

In furthermore of the implementation of one of the key planks of the Subsidy Re-investment and Empowerment Programme (SURE) which is the government led generation of employment for the Nigerian masses, especially the youths, President Goodluck Jonathan had in his 2012 budget speech before the Joint Sessions of the National Assembly on December 12, 2011, did aver that:

This administration believes that it is time to give Nigerian youths an opportunity to enjoy the dignity of a job, the support for innovation, the confidence to be an entrepreneur and the sheer optimism to be an employer of labour, along with security of an income that can

contribute to our economic development. We are conscious of the fact that we have the task of transforming the huge potential of our youths into real, tangible outcomes which all of our people can experience and call their own.

However, in the detailed implementation of the SURE programme, a lot of schemes ranging to about eight components were marshaled out for execution, within the programme's life span, that will terminate in 2015. These components and their subsets are outlined below as follows:

- ✓ Social safety net programmes with subset schemes as maternal and child health services, generation of public works/women and Youth Empowerment Programme through women and youth employment, the improvement of the urban transportation through the urban mass transit scheme and the vocational training schemes.
- ✓ Niger Delta Development Project with essential aspects mainly on accelerating and completion of Niger Delta roads.
- ✓ Other national road infrastructural projects as Abiya-Abaji-Lokoja dual carriage way, etc
- ✓ The rail transport projects which involves the rehabilitation and restoration of abandoned railway infrastructure and the construction of new ones such as Lagos-Ibadan standard dual Gauge etc
- ✓ The water and agricultural projects involving the revitalization of some irrigation projects as Lower Anambra River and Adani Rice etc
- ✓ For some rural, urban and regional water schemes, the following among other 22 projects are involved in this area. These are Aba/Umuahia, and Greater Onitsha water projects etc
- ✓ Selected Power Projects for renovation, construction and completion are about 17 in number. Some of them are Manbilla Hydro power project and Waye small Hydro power plant etc
- ✓ The petroleum/NNPC projects will involve the restoration of the petroleum pipeline system and the upgrade and construction of Green field refineries in Bayelsa, Kogi and Lagos States respectively and finally,
- ✓ The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects which includes among others as the boosting of the national broadband connectivity and the establishment of ICT infrastructures in all tertiary institutions of Nigeria.

In terms of the mechanisms of funding these SURE programmes in Nigeria, the federal government in the SURE Programme Document (2011:4) has stated that:

The total projected subsidy reinvestible fund per annum is N1.34 trillion based on an average crude oil price of US\$ 90 per barrel. Out this N478.49 billion accrues to federal government, N411.03 billion to state governments, N203.23 billion to local governments, N9.86 billion to the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and N31.37 billion as transfers to Derivation and ecology, development of natural resources and stabilization funds.

In an attempt to spread the implementation of the SURE programmes to all levels of governance in the country, the federal government of Nigeria as stipulated in the SURE document (2011:4) emphasized that:

This programme is focused on utilization of federal government share of the subsidy. Every state and local government is expected to design its own programme and utilizing its portion of the subsidy reinvestment funds. The subsidy reinvestment funds from the discontinuation of the fuel subsidy will be used for the implementation of the programme and to reduce our borrowing needs. The federal government has decided to channel its own share of the resources into a combination of programmes to stimulate the economy and alleviate poverty through critical infrastructure and safety net projects.

Youth Unemployment Situation in Nigeria

The global labour participation rate for the world youth since 2007 to date is increasing dropping. Within the context of the Nigerian youth unemployment situation, it is to be stressed that accurate youth unemployment and infact general unemployment statistics are difficult to access.

Basically, Nigeria's unemployment scenario can be observed from two categories according to Okafor (2011:362). These categories are the "older unemployed who lost their jobs through retrenchment, redundancy, or bankruptcy; and the younger unemployed, most of who have never been employed". In this regard, detailed assessments of the statistics of the youth unemployment scenario in Nigeria are also observable. For instance from records of the rural sector as reported by the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics and the International Labour Organization 2003 to 2011 respectively, it is disturbing to note the gravity of this social plague of youth unemployment in the country.

For this rural records, table 1 below indicating "Unemployed Persons by Educational Level, Age Group and Sex Categories" from the years of 2003-2011 demonstrates the pervasiveness of the youth unemployment scourge in Nigerian rural settings.

TABLE 1: UNEMPLOYED PERSONS BY EDUCATIONAL LEVEL, AGE GROUP AND SEX AS AT DECEMBER (RURAL), 2000-2011

LEVEL	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007*	2009	2010	2011	
	ILO	NIG	ILO	NIG	ILO	NIG	ILO	NIG	ILO
All levels	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No schooling	11.5	53.6	19.0	59.8	19.7	59.9	19.7	59.9	19.7
Primary	16.9	20.8	15.4	17.8	15.3	17.7	15.3	17.6	15.3
Secondary	63.3	22.3	52.8	18.9	52.6	18.7	52.6	18.7	52.6
Post secondary	8.3	3.3	12.8	3.5	13.3	3.6	13.4	3.6	13.4
Age group									
All groups (15-59)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
15-24	56.1	18.0	55.1	21.4	55.1	21.6	55.1	21.6	55.1
25-44	33.3	47.1	38.3	46.6	38.5	46.6	38.5	46.6	38.5
45-59	4.6	22.7	3.4	21.3	3.1	21.2	3.1	21.2	3.0
60-64	2.8	6.5	1.3	5.8		5.7		5.7	
Gender	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Male	54.3	64.3	58.8	64.1	58.9	64.1	58.9	64.1	58.9

Female	45.7	35.7	41.2	35.9	41.1	35.9	41.1	35.9	41.1
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Sources: National Bureau of Statistics (2011); ILO= International Labour Organization NIG = Nigeria (2012) * = Estimates

A cursory look at the above table 1 shows that the level of youth unemployment in the rural areas of Nigeria is alarming. For the age bracket of 15-24 years, it is observable that the level is very high ranging from 56.1 percent of the totality of unemployed people in Nigeria in 2003, to 55.1 percent for the years of 2004 to 2011. The magnitude of this level of youth unemployment in the Nigerian rural areas are even more glaring when the additions of the age bracket of 15 years to 44 years of unemployed person are considered. For instance, for the year 2011, it is observable that an addition of 55.1 percent for ages 15-24 and 38.5 percent for ages 25-44, gives a wholesome figure of 93.6% of all the unemployed in Nigeria. In other words, the over 90 percent of the unemployed in Nigeria for the year 2011 are constituted of the Nigerian youths. Additionally the picture of this high level of youth unemployment can be seen even from the educational level of those that are unemployed in Nigeria. The rural sector as shown in table 1 above demonstrates clearly that the majority of the unemployed are youth comprising of secondary school leavers. In this rural sector, the statistics are 63.3 percent for the year 2003 and 52.6 percent for the years 2007 to 2011.

Further to the above however, the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2010) has stipulated that Nigeria's youth population tantamount to 80 million of the 140 million Nigerians, which statistically represents 60 percent of the entire population of Nigeria. More detailed figures from the NBS (2010) indicate that about 64 million of these 80 million youth are unemployed with 1.6 million of them under-employed. In the decade of the 1990s to 2000, the Nigerian youth unemployment statistics demonstrates that the largest categories are secondary school graduates.

In a seminal study, Okafor (2011:363) has analyzed the nature and characteristics of youth unemployment in Nigeria in terms of their educational levels and age categories within the decade of 1990 to 2000. In his reporting of the statistics from the Nigerian Manpower Board, Okafor has indicated that:

Also 40% of the unemployment rate is among urban youth aged 20-24 and 31% of the rate is among those aged 15-19. Also two-thirds of the urban unemployed are ranged from 15-24 old. Moreover, the educated unemployed tended to be young males with few dependents.

For the youth unemployment phenomenon in Nigerian local governments, there is hardly any reliable statistics to indicate these levels. However, in Enugu State, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in (2007) has demonstrated enormous evidence of youth unemployment in all local governments in the state. In the general year 2007 registration exercise of unemployed persons carried out in all local government areas of the state, it is shown that, the youths constitute the majority. In the registration exercise, the NDE (2007) records indicated that over 73,000 people of the age bracket of 15 to 44 years out of 82,046 registered persons are unemployed. This over 73,000 unemployed youth represents over 88.9 percent of all registered unemployed persons in Enugu State for that year respectively. All these are manifestations of the ugly picture of youth unemployment in Nigeria.

The Potentials of SURE programme Implementation in Youth Unemployment Reduction in Nigeria

In the history of public employment generation for Nigerian youths, a lot of approaches have been initiated towards its successful implementation. Nonetheless, in the life span of the Yara'Adua/Goodluck administration, the first to be inaugurated was the Nigerian Youth Empowerment Action Plan (NIYEAP) which initially was meant to be implemented between 2009-2011. However, in the administration of Goodluck Jonathan, which started in 2011, the first youth empowerment scheme that was embarked upon is the Youth Empowerment with Innovation in Nigeria (You Win) programme, which was launched by President Goodluck Jonathan at Abuja in October 2011, with subsequent launching at the various state capitals, including the federal capital territory. In discussing imperatives of the (You Win) programme in his 2012 presidential address to the national assembly on Monday 12, December 2012, Goodluck Jonathan had emphasized that his:

Government is focused on stimulating entrepreneurial activity and setting a framework for young people with creative tendencies to showcase their business acumen, build capacity and create jobs. In this spirit and to move beyond the conventional paradigms of job creation, the government partnering with the organized private sector and our development partners, took bold steps to initiate the youth enterprise with innovation in Nigeria (You Win) programme.

In spite of some of the approaches stated above, the approach adopted in this paper as essential rescue to the burgeoning youth unemployment in Nigeria is the use of the public works/women and youth empowerment scheme (PW/WYE) of the Subsidy Reinvestment and Empowerment Programme (SURE) of the present federal Government of Nigeria. The PW/WYE is one of the critical components of the SURE programmes targeted at creating immediate empowerment opportunities for women and youths in the labour intensive public works areas of employment generation. In expiating on the philosophy of the PW/WYE the SURE document (2011:8) has maintained that:

The specific objective of this programme is to provide employment to youth in labour intensive public works. This is consistent with the priority of the government to tackle youth unemployment in Nigeria and improve the livelihood of the youth. The direct women and youth employment intervention will target large numbers of the unemployed youth from the poorest populations in each state of the federation and the federal capital territory (FCT). These women and the youth shall receive payments based on the amount of work put in.... In addition, the level of remuneration will be such that it will ensure the self selections of only the poor.

In terms of the expectation of the volume of job opportunities to be created, it has been stated by the SURE Board document (2002:2) that:

The project is expected to generate 500,000 skilled jobs and 320,000 unskilled jobs opportunities and would be implemented in partnership with the states, the local governments and the private sector.

Then as to how the State Government and the local government are to generate their share of the jobs, there have been mapped out certain amounts of money distributed to these levels of government based on their usual federal financial percentage allocations. The allocation are calculated on annual basis but distributed monthly, along with other monetary shares to these states and local government. For the 2012 distributions to various states and their local governments in Nigeria, the table 2 below shows the details.

Table 2: 2012 Annual Distribution of SURE Allocation Shares to Nigerian States and their Local Governments

S/NO	STATES	STATE ALLOCATION (₦)	STATES AND THEIR LGAS	LOCAL GOVT. ALLOCATIONS
1	ABIA	7,460,062.24	17	4,238,037.28
2	ADAMAWA	7,093,217.24	21	5,453,941.40
3	AKWA IBOM	43,406,731.87	31	7,192,651.57
4	ANAMBRA	7,164,697.14	21	5,406,502.22
5	BAUCHI	8,309,773.31	20	6,252,967.94
6	BAYELSA	33,839,652.09	8	2,300,560.20
7	BENUE	7,658,631.38	23	6,357,999.06
8	BORNO	8,451,350.27	27	7,307,086.59
9	CROSS RIVER	7,718,686.26	18	4,540,847.09
10	DELTA	40,965,476.92	25	6,001,812.30
11	EBONYI	5,880,552.15	13	3,235,045.01
12	EDO	9,432,709.30	18	4,544,886.73
13	EKITI	5,931,760.50	16	3,697,048.21
14	ENUGU	6,692,449.99	17	4,380,299.45
15	GOMBE	6,291,166.08	11	3,196,301.41
16	IMO	8,729,126.56	27	6,342,352.58
17	JIGAWA	7,848,086.61	27	6,654,099.65
18	KADUNA	8,944,553.13	23	7,136,961.50
19	KANO	11,210,304.04	44	11,712,750.53
20	KASTINA	8,535,402.69	21	8,563,272.60
21	KEBBI	7,131,000.67	21	5,319,281.53
22	KOGI	7,113,202.30	16	5,513,261.00
23	KWARA	6,482,037.63	20	4,234,044.54
24	LAGOS	10,126,514.01	20	7,114,676.51
25	NASSARAWA	6,073,343.25	13	3,388,143.83
26	NIGER	8,294,895.04	25	6,865,934.91
27	OGUN	6,932,554.10	20	5,080,656.46
28	ONDO	12,554,345.28	18	4,689,711.39
29	OSUN	6,575,162.77	30	6,391,233.41
30	OYO	8,283,911.05	33	8,172,704.52
31	PLATEAU	6,956,827.74	17	4,678,163.80
32	RIVERES	44,628,272.62	23	6,125,835.15
33	SOKOTO	7,395,670.79	23	5,872,227.28
34	TARABA	7,005,145.87	16	4,674,398.11
35	YOBE	6,952,382.78	17	4,533,026.64
36	ZAMFARA	6,973,520.31	14	4,255,704.32
	FCT ABUJA		6	1,811,053.26
	TOTAL	411,034,1576.00	774	203,235,480.00

Source: SURE Document (2011) National Planning Commission Abuja

From the above table 2, it is observed that the share of Rivers, Akwa Ibom, Delta and Bayels States tops the annual allocations of the SURE programme to the states. In the contrast, the shares of Ebonyi, Ekiti, Nasarawa and Gombe states constitutes the least shares in the 2012 SURE programme financial allocations to the States.

From the local government shares under the SURE programme, the table 2 above demonstrates these amounts shared according to the number of local governments in each

state of the federation. A quick glimpse at the above table shows that Nigerian local governments from Kano, Kastina, Oyo and Borno States top the list of the highest receivers of the SURE allocation for the year 2012. On the other hand, Bayelsa, Gombe, Ebonyi and Nassarawa are the least states in terms of SURE allocation to Nigerian local government for the year 2012.

From these allocations to these Nigerian levels of government within the context of the SURE programme, a relevant question that requires an answer is: To what extent can these SURE financial allocations to the federal, state and the local government be used to ameliorate youth unemployment in Nigeria? In other words, can these recovered monies from the subsidy programme be utilized to rescue Nigeria from the social malaise of excruciating youth unemployment?

It is the opinion of this paper that the answer to the above questions is in the affirmative. In the context of this affirmative answer, this paper recommends as follows:

- The SURE programme on the social safety net and its implementation in the advancement of the health of maternal and child population of the rural dwellers should be used to engage the unemployed female youths of various communities in Nigeria. This is possible through effective training, employment, mobilization and deployment of thousands of these youths as female village and community health workers, in the positions of **Skilled Birth Attendant** (SBA) and midwives. These categories of health workers are to essentially assist in reducing the rate of maternal mortality among pregnant women and improving the national child morbidity and mortality rates through effective immunizations.
- The public works/women and Youth Employment (PW/WYE) programme of the SURE policy, is another relevant platform for curbing youth-unemployment in Nigeria. The projects that will generate youth employment in the PW/PYE programme of SURE are:
 - (a) Employment of Nigerian youth in all communities of the country's local governments in the execution of flood and erosion control works
 - (b) Employment of the youth in the community projects of waste disposal and sanitation management.
 - (c) Engaging Nigerian youth in community projects as desertification control through exhaustive tree planting in the states and local governments especially the northern state.
 - (d) The employment of Nigerian youth in the rehabilitation and maintenance of health and education infrastructure in all communities in Nigeria. Another vital aspect of the SURE programme that will go a long way in reducing the increasing youth unemployment in Nigeria is the adoption by various level of governance, the execution of the Vocational Training Schemes (VTS) as contained in the SURE document. The VTS' as the name implies is the training of the unemployed youth of the country in multifarious vocational skills, free of charge by the government. The whole idea is the impartation of these skills in the youth for easier obtaining of gainful employment or for sustainable self employment. Apart from the vocational training centres that will be established at each state capital by the federal and state government, it is recommended here, that all local government in the country, use part of the SURE finances allocated to them for the purposes of establishing viable vocational training centres at their local government headquarters for training the idle youth of various communities in marketable and employable skills.

With the acquisition of these skills through the VTS programmes it is opined by this discourse, that these skilled Nigerian youths will be effectively used in the other areas of the SURE programme implementation as:

- ✓ The road and bridge network construction in different parts of Nigeria.
- ✓ The railway projects of the SURE programme.
- ✓ The various SURE projects bordering on water, irrigation and the agricultural sector.
- ✓ The SURE projects of the petroleum and NNPC projects; and finally
- ✓ The SURE projects on Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Conclusion

Going by the details in this paper as shown on youth unemployment in Nigeria, there is no gain-saying the fact that it is one of the scourges afflicting the socio-economic development of Nigeria. It is the assumption of the paper that with careful implementation of the SURE programme as applied to youth unemployment in Nigeria, the phenomenon and its dynamics will sooner or later be highly ameliorated in the country.

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