

Title of Article: Rural Women and the Development Question; Any Hope for Nigeria in the 21st Century?

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Abstract: Nigeria's detachment from the apron's strings of the British government and her gallant entry into independence on October 1st 1960 has much been celebrated. The aftermath of this epoch making event has no doubt birthed several reforms, policies and programmes aimed at transforming the lives of the citizenry. It is worrisome however that, nearly fifty years after, there seem not to be any remarkable progress and desired transformation in view especially for the rural women who constitute the lot of these women Hunger, poverty, disease, ignorance and gender violence Against this backdrop, the paper appraises the plight of Nigeria's rural women, their strategic roles in development and the militating factors impeding their economic empowerment from independence till date. It examines a few post-independence programmes targeted at uplifting women and why remarkable progress has not been achieved. The theoretical perspective adopted for the article is the political economic theory, while data from secondary sources mainly, content analysis was utilized. The paper concludes with suggestions on urgent pragmatic steps and lessons for the way forward.

Key words: Rural women, Post-independence programmes, Development, Poverty.