

**Institute of Social Policy
University of Nigeria, Nsukka**

Director's Statement

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the succeeding Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by United Nations as a universal call to action to World Governments to pay special attention to policies that seek to meet human needs for security, health, education, work, general welling and the environment. These target goals coupled with the efforts of some international organisations like the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) UNICEF that have conventionally focused on social policy issues relating to the wellbeing of the less privledged members of the society like children, women and other vulnerable groups, have continued to promote emphasis on social policies by governments.

The Institute of Social Policy, University of Nigeria was established as a relatively autonomous academic unit to focus on imparting knowledge and skills in designing and implementing social policy. This was as a result of the identified huge manpower gaps in the area of social policy programming. Indeed, it can be seen from the state of human security challenges in most developing countries especially in Sub-Saharan Africa that effective formulation and implementation of social policies have remained sub-optimal in many countries. Issues of poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion, social discriminations such as gender, race, disability, sexuality and age have increasingly become entrenched.

The Institute was established to provide a mix of programmes to satisfy the needs of both academic and professional social policy analysts. The Institute is currently the only tertiary academic centre offering Post-Graduate Diploma (PGD), Professional Master's degree (MSP), Master of Science degree (M.Sc) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) courses in Social Policy in Nigeria. Although many institutions, do offer post-graduate courses in policy studies in other relevant disciplines such as public administration, political science. Sociology, Social Work etc., few actually specialise in social policy. The Institute provides the unique opportunity for a focused training and appropriate skills development in social policy. The major objective of the Institute of Social Policy, University of Nigeria, is to enhance knowledge in Social Policy to promote inclusion and contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The postgraduate programmes in social policy are designed based on the philosophy of human capacity building as a factor to support development planning and management. They provide opportunities for students and practitioners to broaden their knowledge in the areas of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation with a view to addressing the existing and emerging complex social challenges. They aim at equipping clients with the capacity to suggest, initiate, and supervise the implementation of social policies. Some of the objectives pursued by the Institute are: To

- ❖ Improve students' understanding of social policy formulation, programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- ❖ Equip the students with skills for conducting evidence-based research in social policies that are relevant to Nigeria and the international environment;

- ❖ Prepare students to develop the capacity for data generation for policymaking and analysis;
- ❖ Train students to develop the capacity to identify social problems and proffer sustainable solutions;
- ❖ Equip students to understand the condition and needs of the vulnerable groups in society;
- ❖ Provide a forum for students to share ideas on effective and transparent ways of solving intractable social problems;
- ❖ Equip students with skills to implement innovative development interventions and effective monitoring and evaluation of interventions, and,
- ❖ Expose students to opportunities to integrate the SDGs into all facets of social policy planning and implementation.

The major specialisation areas in our programmes include

- ❖ Social Protection
- ❖ Rights, Poverty, and Inequality
- ❖ Gender and Social Issues, and
- ❖ Public Financial Management

Some of the stress areas include:

- ❖ Community Development
- ❖ Social Welfare
- ❖ Social Development
- ❖ Social Inequality
- ❖ Social Gerontology
- ❖ Social Justice
- ❖ Social Inclusion
- ❖ Gender Analysis
- ❖ Poverty Studies
- ❖ Health Policy
- ❖ Programme Planning, Management and Evaluation.

The Institute parades a team of experts from various disciplines in social sciences and humanities including but not limited to the following academic backgrounds: Public Administration, Political Science, Economics, Social Work, Sociology, Psychology, Geography, Agricultural Economics etc. The Institute collaborates with various International and Non-governmental Agencies and provides professional support for various levels of government and philanthropic organisations.

Prof Okey Marcellus Ikeanyibe
Director