

## The Practice of Rural Development in Enugu State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** *Rural development in Nigeria has undergone several modifications in both ideology and practice. However, successive governments have used the mobilization approach. The community development model of rural development has for long been applied to Nigeria before the colonial masters and after their departure and even up to today. Adequate literature was reviewed covering wide range of issues on rural development. Despite, the huge investments on rural development and strategies many Nigerian rural communities are not yet developed. The problem was in the implementation of these strategies. The Capital Maximization Economic Strategy which ensures top-down approach has never had a sustainable impact on beneficiary's living conditions. Using descriptive and analytical approach with anecdotal evidence gleaned from a qualitative and historical literature on rural development, self-help development strategy. The study revealed that control over decision and resources eluded the agents of change in rural community. Since the rural people true were not involved in the decision making their priority were not known. Therefore, they had little or not commitment to the project implementation. If the rural people were involved at the decision stage they will see the project as theirs and even continue where the government stopped if they could not finish the project. Moreover, in many rural communities women are discriminated against in inheritance right, decision making mostly at the village level and non empowerment of women were among the factors led to underdevelopment of rural communities. Based on the finding, the study recommends amongst others that Community-Driving Development (CDD) gives control over decisions and resources to the true agents of change in rural communities, i.e. traditional organizations; peer groups, women's groups, producers' unions organized by co-operatives etc. This approach allows stakeholders to freely decide what action to take, and take responsibility for initiatives that affect their lives. CDD has taught communities how to set infrastructural priorities (drinking water supply, health care centers, roads and schools) and how to achieve these goals in a cost-effective, transparent and sustainable way with little or no government support.*

**KEYWORDS:** rural development, self-help, mobilization, empowerment and underdevelopment

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### INTRODUCTION

Rural development in Nigeria has undergone several modifications in both ideology and practice. Hence, successive governments have used the mobilization approach. Mobilization

approach according to Obanure (1998) is a process whereby human beings are made aware of the resources at their disposal and are also motivated and energized to collectively utilize such resources for the improvement of their spiritual and material well-being.

Before the coming of colonial masters to Nigeria, successful development programmes relied on the premise that the local people themselves were the greatest assets available for development. A big mistake was to believe that because people were poor and uneducated they were of no use in rural development. Investment in people contributed to greater development in the long run. The community development model of rural development has for long been applied in Nigeria. According to Onokorhoraye and Okafor (1994), community development is now widely accepted in the country as an important segment of change oriented mainstream of development administration to achieve sustainable rural development. Social development and welfare movements are known to have contributed immensely to rural development in their various communities. They are means of improving the standards of the mass of the low income population who reside in rural areas; making the process of their development self-sustaining before, during and even after the colonial administration. Welfare movements have often been used to mobilize rural development efforts. Participation of the citizen facilitates growth and development in any community Ukwu (2004) noted that:

“Community development through self-help projects is an honored tradition in Nigeria. In traditional society every member of the community had a role to play in community development, as a member of an extended family, an age set, a guild. With government, assuming formal responsibility for public services, individual participation is now a matter of voluntary effort. It is mediated through various voluntary associations: the most pervasive of which are the community development associations or ‘town unions’. Others include youth associations, women’s organizations, and social clubs as well as business associations and co-operative societies” (Ukwu, 2004, P. 10).

Local leaders like age grade articulate their self-help programmes for the development of their various communities. Age grade comprises persons who according to the society are regarded as people of the same age. There is variation in actual year which could be up to three or even five. One group is clearly distinguished from another one. They are marks of rites of initiation. Okonkwo (2013) noted that:

They had in the pre-colonial and colonial times concerned themselves with such traditional functions as maintenance of law and order, settlement of disputes between warring members, constructions and maintenance of roads and markets maintaining the cleanliness of local streams and protecting their communities from external aggression. However, in recent times the age grades have diversified their roles to include newer activities which aid modernization. They have therefore in recent times played significant roles in educational, economic, political and social development of their various communities (Mabonguna, 1989, P. 12).

Otite (1994) maintained that most town unions, in agreement with their traditional rulers, identified their felt needs. Many of the town unions mobilize their members and embarked on

the provision of pipe borne water for example. Others embarked on rural electrification, construction of access roads, building of post offices and even civic centers/recreational parks. Many town unions have legislated on marriage practices examples of such towns include; Nsukka and Igbukwu town unions. A traditional ruler is a person elected and installed by people of certain community in accordance with the ancestral chieftaincy rules, customs and tradition of the said community and who has received government recognition or staff of office.

Originally, most Igbo people did not have traditional rulers and they depended much on delegated legislature for fear of abuse of office. When colonial masters came they introduced the idea of warrant chiefs to ease the administration of the rural people. The functions of a clan head as noted by section 15(1) of the Traditional Rulers law in Cross River State outline the functions of the clan head as follows:

1. To uphold the culture of his clan,
2. To preside at traditional ceremonies affecting his clan
3. To serve as a co-coordinating force within the clan
4. To promote good relations between his clan and the neighboring clans
5. To disseminate among his people information emanating from the local government and the government and to furnish the local government and government with information relating to the problems and aspirations of his people.
6. In accordance with tradition and custom, to arbitrate in civil disputes referred to him by all the parties affected
7. To serve as a rallying force in organizing community projects affecting the clan
8. To help in organizing his people towards implementation of social welfare schemes for the benefit of his people
9. To perform traditional and ceremonial functions, and
10. To perform such other functions under any other functions as may be prescribed by or under any other written law.

Rural development in Nigeria has assumed several patterns. These according to Igboeli (1982) are:

- a. The sector approach, addressed either to a whole sector such as agriculture or to a few projects within it.
- b. Coordinated approach addressed to economic development of all sectors within a given area and
- c. Participatory approach, designed by the residents first in selecting local economic and social goals and then in pursuing them with some government aid. According to (Chigbu 2012)

Rural development generally refers to the process of improving the quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. Rural development has traditionally centered on the exploitation of land intensive natural resources such as agriculture and forestry. However, changes in global production, networks and increased urbanization have changed the character of rural areas. Increasing tourism, niche manufacturers and recreation have replaced resource extraction and agriculture as dominant economic drivers. The need for rural communities to approach development from a wider perception has created more focus on a broad range of development goals rather than merely

creating incentive for agricultural or resource based business. Education, entrepreneurship, physical infrastructure, and social infrastructure all play an important role in developing rural regions (Chigbu 2012, P. 14).

The needed funds for community development project(s) can be sourced or obtained through diverse ways. The following sources are some of the ways that may be explored or utilized in raising funds for community development projects:

- i. Payment of levies by community members and groups
- ii. Donations
- iii. Project launching
- iv. Conferment of chieftaincy titles
- v. Sale of community resources
- vi. Grants from government
- vii. Grants from local and international donor agencies
- viii. Payment of royalties
- ix. Sons and daughters abroad (Town Unions)
- x. Loans
- xi. Payments by property developers
- xii. Returns on community investments (Adepoju, 1976)

### **Statement of the Problem**

The massive persistence of poverty particularly in rural areas represents a problem for the popular acceptance of continued economic adjustment and it represents a problem for growth itself the problem lies not only in the unintended consequences of the prevailing development paradigm but on the viability of the paradigm itself.

This top-down type of community development has not achieved much because the community members are not consulted and their basic needs not known. When government starts a project and could not finish the project that is the end of the project. The community members see the project as government project and not their own project. The current thinking is to involve the rural people fully through their town unions, age grades, and other similar organizations in planning and implementing policies that are designed to improve their economic, social, political and cultural lives. This direct involvement of the local people will not only help to harness their potential resources for development purposes but will also result in leadership training, active civic culture and patriotism (Onyeishi, 2010).

It was the rejection of the capital maximization approach that led to the basic needs strategy and the social net approach that followed it. For all the merits the Basic Needs Strategy and the social net approach which followed it basically emphasized the consumption needs of the poor are not their surplus producing possibilities. There is need for some sought of transfer of resources to them from more productive and dynamic sectors of accumulation. That is untiring the shackles of poverty among the rural poor.

Many rural areas lack good infrastructural facilities and social services. Since these are the arteries and channels of rural development, it has been difficult to get to some of the rural areas or convince them that they are part and parcel of the government of the day. Undeniably, most rural communities lack many basic facilities. Much of this can be ascribed to the neglect of rural areas by government departments charged with the assignment of providing such basic needs. There is almost lavish and ritualistic supply of infrastructures to urban centers and an utter neglect of the rural areas. The consequence of this neglect for rural development is both direct and indirect. Poor infrastructure affects rural productivity and therefore retards progress. Less directly, the absence of rural infrastructure is a push factor of migration leading to rural depopulation which is definitely a cog in the wheel of rural development (Onokerhboarye & Okafor, 1994).

Empowerment of women entails a process of building their resource capability and skills for leadership rights and meaningful participation in all spheres of the society (Erinosh, 2005). However, many researchers such as World Bank (2000), Chinonye (2010) have shown that poverty is a malady that incapacitates its victims economically and indirectly subjects the victims to a state of destitution, powerlessness, and even violence. Unfortunately, the most affected group and sex by the above incapacitation are women and children. Statistics show that women are poorer than men, for instance the UNDP (1995) estimated that about 65% of the World-poor, are women. Women are poor because they are more vulnerable economically, (women entrepreneurship in Nigeria, 2011:61).

The relationship between women and their male counterparts in many countries have confirmed that women have always been marginalized and discriminated against especially in the economic sector of the country. With the marginalization of women in the political economy of Nigeria, the men have capitalized on their control and manipulate the means of production through the state in their favour, at the detriment of the women, (Otite, 2008). The absence of gender equity has resulted in poor participation of women in rural development in Enugu State. The Nigeria society lacks gender equity due to the fact that there is gender bias – a situation in which cultural beliefs and structural arrangements favour men over women. (Akpochofo, 2008) thus women are relegated to the background making it very difficult for them to exhibit their potentials in contributing their quota towards rural development.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective is to examine why despite the huge investments in rural development in Nigeria much have not been achieved.

The specific objectives include:

- a) To examine the influence of top-down development strategy
- b) To examine the role of gender inequality in underdevelopment of rural communities.
- c) To examine the impact of government not providing incentives for rural development.

### **Research Questions**

- a) Has the top-down rural development approach been useful in rural development in Nigeria?

b) Has gender inequality reduced the acceptance and participation of women in rural development?

c) Has government not providing incentives for rural development affected rural development negatively?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Study design**

The study design was largely descriptive and analytical with anecdotal evidence gleaned from qualitative and historical literature on rural development strategies, gender inequality and equality and the role of government in rural development.

### **Data**

Data for the study were gathered from textbooks, journal articles library materials and internet materials. These were complemented by oral traditions, interviews, group discussion and folklores participant observation interview of key informants etc.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

### **Rural Development in Nigeria**

For the purpose of this work, development is defined as a continuous self-generating process of socio-economic and political improvement in which the generality of the people are meaningful participants and shares in the cost and benefits of development. World Bank (2005) defined rural development as a “strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural poor”.

Chigbu (2012) observed that rural development aims at finding the ways to improve the rural lives with participation of the rural people themselves so as to meet the required need of the rural area. The outsider may not understand the setting, culture, language and other things prevalent in the local area. According to Onwe (2007), indicators of development are as follows:

1. Ability to feed, clothe and shelter oneself, resulting from more income earned from one's occupation;
2. Ability to live much longer life as a result of provision of improved medical facilities;
3. Ability to read, write and understand forces surrounding one through provision of formal and informal education;
4. Provision of infrastructural facilities like roads, water, electricity, telecommunication and improvement in other factors of development;
5. Ability to participate meaningfully in political activities and in policy making at government levels. When these things take place in a given environment, then there is development.

According to Mado (2007) the Nigerian women have different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. All cultures define the mode of interaction between the opposite sex as kins and affines. Women have their basic needs and the cultural means of meeting such needs. The ability of women to surmount all cultural obstacles and achieve their set goals in every culture is the determining factor in women development. Women have to improve their lot for themselves, for there lays the essence of development. Happily of recent, development has been defined in terms of the quality of life of the population (Ukaegbu, 2007). Certain scholars believe that the women's group has to meet its basic needs continually if it is to be seen as developing. Kapour (1981) argues that the object of development is to ensure that people's basic needs such as food, shelter, health, education, water, transport are met through the active participation of the people themselves. Lee (1981) sees basic needs approach to development as stressing such human factors as self-reliance, freedom of movements, eradication of poverty and inequality, as well as effective and maximum utilization of all available and qualified human resources irrespective of age or gender. The changing role of women here for the better depends on their ability to satisfy their basic human needs.

Rural development in Nigeria has undergone several modifications in both ideology and practice. Successive governments have used the mobilization approach. Mobilization approach according to Levi (1986) is a process whereby human beings are made aware of the resources at their disposal and are also motivated and energized to collectively utilize such resources for the improvement of their spiritual and material well being. Some of the mobilization techniques of the Nigerian government include:

1. The National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) which was established in 1973 with the primary aim of increasing staple food production
2. The River Basin Development Authority (RBDA). The Federal Government decided to give priority to irrigation farming after the drought of 1972/3. This was in 1976 recommended by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).
3. The Agricultural Development Project (ADPs) in 1993 when the World Bank, Federal Government and some Northern Governors signed an agreement. The projects were originally sited in Funtua, Gombe and Gusau.
4. The Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) launched by president Obasanjo in 1976. The programme came on board because Nigeria was lagging behind in food production for both domestic consumption and for export.
5. The Green Revolution: It was launched by the then President Shehu Shagari in 1980. The aim was to boost rural agriculture and also ensure integrated rural development
6. Directorate of Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), established by President Ibrahim Babangida in 1986, to improve the rural communities in terms of necessary technical and financial supports for the projects throughout the project development stages.
7. Mass Mobilization for Social Justice self Reliance and Economies Recovery created in 1987 by President Ibrahim Babangida. The themes of MAMSER were self reliance, self sufficiency, economic recovery and social justice.

According to Onugu and Onuoha (2013) in Nigeria, notable programmes such as Nigeria Agricultural and Cooperative Bank; later renamed Bank of Agriculture (BOA); Community Banks, now known as Microfinance Banks (MFDs); the Better life for Rural Women (BLFRW); Family Economic and Advancement Programme (FEAP); National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) and the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) have either been completed or still ongoing to grow the rural economy and reduce its poverty. These efforts initiated by the government have not been satisfactory in its implementation in eradicating rural poverty (CBN, 2005). Despite these efforts and Nigeria's vast resources, it ranks high in the global poverty index. According to UNDP (2009) Nigeria presents a typical case of systemic structure of inequality and poverty, particularly amongst its rural poor that accounts for 65% of poverty incidence.

According to Onyishi (2010) the need for a well-articulated enlightenment programme for mobilization of the rural population for development cannot be over-emphasized. Public enlightenment schemes, including well-chosen slogans, are sine qua non to the realization of their objectives which will aim at educating and mobilizing the people towards: achieving joint community-government policies and programmes on rural development; and highlighting the capability of the people to improve their well being. To achieve these enlightenment objectives, government has to effectively utilize all resources of existing mass media as well as traditional methods of mass communication. In this regard, the assistance of our traditional institution has to be enlisted.

Mabogunje (1980) observed that if a community or groups within it undertake to develop their neighborhoods without government assistance or assistance from international or philanthropic bodies, such a self-help effort becomes the non-directive approach to community development. The non-directive approach is applied in the sense that efforts are made through some kind of self-effort or collective action in various communities to promote better living for the residents of those communities. Such projects, like the building of schools and colleges, construction of feeder roads linking one village or district with another, rural water supply schemes, town or village council halls, market and market stalls and sheds, rural bridges and culverts, recreational facilities, community group farms, farmers' cooperatives, maternity homes, and post offices could be implemented through this approach.

Onyeozu (2007) in his field work on self-help efforts conducted in Benue State reported the same trend in the activities of various communities. In Ankpa Local Government Authority in Benue State, Chiefs and Traditional Heads were made honorary Chairmen of development areas to promote self-help projects. In the study spanning between 1968 to 1978, it was discovered that self-help groups gave priority to economic and social welfare projects and that, based on donations, levies, community labour and matching grants from the local government, primary and post primary schools, clinics, maternity homes, roads, bridges, postal agencies, market stalls and town halls were completed.

### **National Development Plans and Nigerian Rural Sector**

1962-68 National Development Plan was the first comprehensive development plan in Nigeria. The plan was extended to 1967-70 because of the Nigerian Civil War. The highest priority was accorded to agriculture, industry and the training of high and intermediate manpower. A number of important projects such as the Kainji Dam, the Niger Bridge, the oil refinery and a number of roads and industries were completed during the plan period (First National Development Plan, 1962).

The Second National Development Plan (1970-74) was launched in September 1970 nine months after the end of the civil war. The implementation was extended to over one year (1974-1975) the highest order of priority were accorded to agriculture, industry and transportation means that government would allocate a great part of resources to these sectors of the economy in order to generate the necessary impetus for growth (Second National Development Plan, 1970).

In the agricultural sector, the abandoned farms and plantations in the war affected areas were rehabilitated and brought back into production, extension services and supply of inputs to farmers were intensified and the marketing board system was reformed to ensure that farmers received higher prices for their produce. To ensure that the nation was able to feed itself government established food production companies which brought more than 60,000 acres (18,000 hectares) into cultivation for the production of substantial quantities of food items such as rice, maize, cassava, etc. In 1972, the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) was launched to boost food production. Major strides were taken in the provision of irrigation facilities; a notable example was the construction of the Tiger Dam by the Kano State government.

In the Fourth National Development Plan (1981-85) the context of the Fourth Plan agricultural production and processing enjoyed the highest priority in order to feed the rapidly growing population without massive importation of food and to produce the basic raw materials needed for our agro-based industries, and as a strategy for harnessing the development of the rural areas and to reduce migration from rural to urban areas (Fourth National Development Plan, 1981).

The period also saw some major changes in rural development approach. Those changes are themselves attributable to the fresh re-conceptualization of rural development by such agencies as the World Bank, International Labour Organization and Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) (UN, 1977, FAO, 1978). The redefinition was largely accountable for four major approaches to the mobilization of resources for rural development in Nigeria since 1975. These approaches are: (a) Integrated Rural Development, (b) River Basin Development Approach (c) The Basic Needs Approach, and (d).The Instrument of local Government.

In fact, self-help as a strategy for community development has continued to be an issue for serious contentions. Nnoli (1980) sees it as the last resort to their survival due to government neglect. According to him, the community development process, arises from the crying need

of the rural population for social welfare services, the unwillingness of the ruling class to provide these amenities, the exploitation of the ruling class over competition among communities for those social artifacts which are deemed to reflect social progress, and the exploitation by the ruling class over the tendency of Nigerians to invest more time, energy and resources in those tasks approved by their community than in those sanctioned by the national collectivity through the state.

In a similar vein, Graf (1980) has contended that community development ideology was hatched by the British colonialists in Nigeria to under develop the people through this negative manipulative strategy. He noted that this was achieved through the instrumentality of native chiefs and local governments. The same strategy, he said, is employed by indigenous rulers in the post-colonial state. He thus contends that this strategy predicated upon the colonial policy of economic exploitation of the local areas, is an instrument used to sustain the self-interest of the ruling classes while the rural communities suffer under poor, harsh and stagnated conditions.

The Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) was anchored on the philosophy that rural development will move away from past narrow sectoral pre-occupation with the generation of food and fiber surpluses to overall formation of a national rural development strategy with emphasis on the alleviation of rural poverty and enhancement of the quality of rural life (National Concord 1986:20). On the basis of this, the President in his budget speech enlarged the objectives of rural development to include, through DFRRI the following:

1. To embark on education and manpower development for rural development.
2. To improve the quality of rural life.
3. To link communities to local governments, link local governments to states and states to the nation; and to achieve socio-cultural and political mobilization of rural people for the execution of rural programmes on the areas of roads, health, housing, water, industrial and agricultural development, rural sanitation, national market programme, rural, electrification and an addition of 30,000 km of rural roads to the 1986 target of 60,000 km (Guarrdian, 1987). DFRRI was set up to correct the general gross inadequacy of rural infrastructure in Nigeria and also to balance regional disparities in the distribution of rural infrastructure.

In Nigeria, DFRRI has done a lot especially in the area of rural road constructions. Despite, its successes, it does have some pitfalls. For instance, lack of knowledgeable and skilled manpower necessitated its use of members of the National Youth Service Corps who are as well inexperienced. The rural people were not involved in the decision making hence their priorities were not known. Therefore, they' had little or no commitment to the project implementation. If the rural people were involved at the decision stage they will see the project as theirs and will even continue where the government stopped if they could not finish the project.

### **The Impact of Nigeria's Partnership with International Organizations for Rural Development**

**National Fadama Development Projects:** Fadama is the Hausa name for irrigable low-lying plains underlain by “shallow” aquifers found along major river systems. The Fadama concept is an old tradition in Hausa, where flooded land is used for growing a variety of crops and small scale irrigation. The land is sustainable for irrigation, fishing and providing food and water for livestock (Ajayi and Nwalieji, 2010).

Fadama I lasted from 1993 – 1999 though the idea originated in 1990. Following the widespread adoption of simple and low-cost improved irrigation technologies, farmers realized incomes increased from various crops up to 65%. However, as a result of post harvest handling of the output these crops loose quality and could not fetch the best prices available in the markets. Fadama was implemented fully in six (6) states while in other states it is still in pilot stage.

In 2001 Federal Government adopted a new rural development strategy that addressed the constraints in Fadama I and this resulted to Fadama II project. Fadama II aimed to contribute to food security and increased access to rural infrastructural facilities consequently the banks found it worthy to agree to the government request for financing of Fadama II as a follow-up to Fadama I. The new strategy was in line with African Development Bank strategic plan in its focus on poverty reduction, private sector promotion and participatory approach to rural development. Fadama II stressed the principles of non-intervention; consistency, sustainability and greater equity in access to land benefits of resources (Ezemie, 2000).

After Fadama II the federal government wanted farmers and other stakeholders to be assisted to organize into economically sustainable Fadama this development gave use to Fadama III. The objective of Fadama III was to increase the income of farmers, reduce rural poverty, increase food security and contribute to rural development goals. The six components of the National Fadama Development Project III were:

- a. Local governance and communication
- b. Small-scale community owned infrastructure
- c. Advisory service and input support development
- d. Support to the agricultural development programs
- e. Asset acquisition for individual Fadama users or groups
- f. Project management, monitoring and evaluation (Ezike, 2012).

According to Agbarevo (2017) the NFDP is driven by community members who oversee, design and implement the project. The benefits are targeted to lead to empowerment, skill acquisition, improved livelihoods and income generation. Following this local communities have created development plans such as construction of wells, local roads, storage facilities and other initiatives. Moreso, farmers have not only raised income but also acquired pieces of equipment.

Fadama projects incorporated a shift in development strategy from public sector domination in a community driven development (CDD) approach. Under these projects the provisions of production, marketing, process financing and advisory services to project clients were private

sector led. Farmers and other stakeholders were assisted to organize into economically sustainable Fadama which they were better off (Eze, 2014).

**Fadama III Additional Financing:** Following the success of the completed Fadama projects I, II and III, the Nigerian government wanted to expand the success to the Agricultural Transformation Agenda, which led to the additional financing. Fadama III additional financing, which started in 2015, focused on support to value chains of cassava, rice, sorghum and horticulture in six states; Kogi, Niger, Kano, Lagos, Anambra and Enugu. The six states served as hubs of Staple Crops Processing Zones (SCPZs), while surrounding states served as catchment areas to feed the processing zones. Today, Fadama development projects have dominated most states in Nigeria as other states wish to partake in the development process (Egwu, 2015).

To participate in the program, farmers were expected to join cluster groups through Fadama offices in the participating states. The project is expected to reach about 317,000 direct beneficiary households and 1.4 million indirect beneficiary households.

**Annual Income of Fadama Farmers:** Benefits and constraints of Fadama revealed that access to loan and agricultural information were identified as additional benefits of participation in Fadama projects by 50.0% and 33.1% of the respondents respectively. This may have resulted to higher productivity recorded by Fadama participants than non-participants. Agricultural information and agricultural loan are the most important prerequisites for high agricultural productivity mostly among women Fadama farmers.

On the other hand, low awareness (43.1%) and inadequate funding (43.8%) are identified as major constraints to participation in Fadama projects. This implies that more awareness of the project should be created among farmers especially where Fadama projects have not taken place and all stakeholders should be faithful to their financial contribution towards the projects. Both experience and profit from Fadama projects have helped the communities to participate in rural development of their communities' women inclusive (Akinbamowo and Atenda, 2014).

**Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):** These goals commit world leaders to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environment degradation, and discrimination against women. The millennium development goals were:

- a. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
- b. To achieve universal primary education;
- c. To promote gender equality and empower women;
- d. To reduce child mortality;
- e. To improve maternal health;
- f. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- g. To ensure environmental sustainability; and
- h. To develop a global partnership for development (United Nation Millennium Summit, 2000).

The MDGs emphasized three areas: human capital, infrastructure and human rights (social, economic and political), with the intent of increasing living standards. Human capital objectives include nutrition, healthcare (including child mortality, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria and reproductive health) and education. Millennium Development Goals included access to safe drinking water, energy and modern information/communication technology; increased farm outputs using sustainable practices; transportation; gender equality which includes empowering women, reducing violence, increasing political voice, ensuring equal access to public services and increasing security of property rights. The goals were intended to increase an individual's human capabilities and "advance the means to a productive life". The millennium Development Goals enabled women realize their true worth and were in a better position to contribute to rural development through their various associations (Commitment to Development, 2017). Enugu State government like other state governments pay counterpart fund regularly and represented in the state by a focal person who co-ordinate the activities of beneficiaries. The MDGs were attacked for insufficient emphasis on environmental sustainability. For instance, they did not capture all elements needed to achieve the ideals set out in the millennium declaration. Agricultural was not specifically mentioned in the MDGs even though most of the worlds are poor farmers.

**Enugu State Rural Development Strategy:** The government is committed to its Inclusive Rural Development Approach. This made Enugu State Ministry of Rural Development borrow the idea of counterpart funding to develop the rural areas. This involves a community identifying and paying some percentage of the total cost as community fee to the ministry of rural development. Many communities have taken advantage of this golden opportunity to develop their own communities. The problem with this type of development system is that it is only organized communities that can benefit. This is why the government adopted the idea that he who wears the shoe knows where it pinches him. The government gave communities the sum of ten million naira each through the ministry of rural development to solve their immediate needs in 2018. This is to achieve the Inclusive Rural Development Approach adopted by the state government. The idea is one community one project. The idea is to get the government and self help projects nearer to the people. To achieve all inclusive development strategy of the state government, traditional communities have been divided into autonomous communities. For instance, Umuabi community is now divided into four autonomous communities like wise some others.

Counterpart funding believes that a community creates the most effective political and economic solutions to challenges only when its citizens, organizations and networks regardless of their position and condition co-create and implement solutions together. It is also believed that it is possible to accelerate this process by developing the capacities of leaders, organizations and networks to identify challenges and implement their solutions more effectively (Enugu State Blue Print, 2016). The government through the Ministry of Rural Development often organizes seminars and training for community leaders who are expected to coordinate community development projects in their various communities since people

cannot give what they do not have. The government always insisted that women must be included in the training and as community leaders.

**Functions of the Local Government:** Nigeria has seven hundred and seventy four local government areas. The 1976 local government reform noted the functions of local governments to include the following: According to Dibia (2017) establishment of maintenance and regulations of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks and public conveniences, construction and maintenance of roads, streets, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces (Eze, 2008).

The local government system as the third tier of government has never been very useful in rural development which is the essence of their existence. This is because the fund for local government administration does not come to them directly from the federation account but through state governments. This has created the problem of transparency in the handling of the local government fund. Godfatherism in the election or appointment of local government area chairmen is another problem since in most cases appointment or “election” is not based on merit but as patronage with interest in kind or cash. Gender inequality has been the major obstacle delaying sustainable rural development by the all inclusive approach to community development as the government envisaged.

## CONCLUSION

The village is at the centre of community life because most of the activities in the community take place at the village level while the community acts as a co-coordinating agent. Even though most associations cut across the community but they are divided into village groups which is the basis because it is only there that they are known one on one. The government register associations at the community level but they are divided into groups (villages) for convenience FADAMA, farmers co-operative society, other cooperative societies all cut across the community but the government gives loans and other incentives at the village level through the community associations. The same thing happens with banks and other agencies interested in community development. All associations in the community are interested in community development; any association that is not interested in community development is not relevant in the community. The most frequently mentioned projects embarked upon in the selected communities include:

1. Women’s housing projects that address the particular needs of women or women headed household through thrift.
2. Contribution for the purposes of electrification and purchase of transformers
3. Construction and maintenance of small bridges across towns
4. Pulling resources together and establish a garri processing industry
5. Rendering service to the poor and needy
6. Establishment or maintenance of nursery, primary and secondary schools
7. Vocation Centers for women – shoes, bags, dress and hair plaiting
8. Construction and maintenance of town halls

9. Construction and maintenance of customary court houses
10. Construction and maintenance of village roads
11. Building or maintenance of maternity homes
12. Building or maintenance and keeping of day care centers
13. Women association building stores in the local markets
14. Teaching of young girls how to take care of their children and husbands
15. Security of the communities etc.

For all its merits, the Basic Needs strategy, and the “social net” approach which followed it, basically emphasized the consumption needs of the poor and not their surplus producing possibilities. On the contrary, a persistent theme in the economics of the poor is the need for some sort of transfer of resources to them from more productive and dynamic sectors of accumulation.

Poverty is a production problem and poverty alleviation is simply an investment. The idea is to involve the rural people fully through their town unions, age grades, and other similar organizations in planning and implementing policies that are designed to improve their economic, social, political and cultural lives.

Rural development requires the full participation of the vast rural population in the development process. It requires that the rural population have equitable and adequate access to resources, inputs, credit and other support services, and that they participate in the design and implementation of rural development programmes. The rural poor and their institutions can be assets and partners in the quest for sustainable rural development. They need to be given control over planning decisions and investment resources.

Most of the forces creating poverty are essentially social. They reflect systems of resources allocations that are made by societies and as such can be reversed. Pricing policies, credit systems, and social and productive services which neglect the poor, as well as gender discrimination, are not natural, universal and inevitable facts and neither is the poverty they give rise to (Aguene, 1998). Generally, women are not doing well due to lack of institutionalized support and enabling capacity for sustainable community development participation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Government at all levels should stimulate the rural people to enhance the so-called self-help type of rural development. If the initiative for development is not forthcoming, from members of the community concerned, then government can stimulate interest by using enlightenment campaign, the initiation of project and financial incentive for specific projects (Aguene, 2003). In Lagos state breast feeding mothers are given six months maternity leave. Also in Lagos state, domestic violence is an offence. The policy is beat your wife and go to jail. Other states of the federation are encouraged to emulate from Lagos state. Women especially rural women should be reminded through awareness campaigns that marrying early and giving birth to many

children no longer constitute personal fulfillment for them. Rather, the best legacy anybody can live behind is service to humanity which includes participation in community development (Osagie, 1998).

State governors interested in community development should avoid white elephant projects or development but concentrate on community development programmes that will save the rural poor from the shackles of poverty. Human development and welfare should be at the centre of any community development programmes by any government.

The CDD approach breaks with the conventional “top-down” approach that has never had a sustainable impact on beneficiaries’ living conditions. Instead, it developed a more democratic and inclusive “bottom-up” approach. CDD gives control over decisions and resources to the true agents of change in rural communities, i.e. traditional organizations; peer groups, women’s groups, producers’ unions organized by co-operatives etc. This approach allows stakeholders to freely decide what action to take, and take responsibility for initiatives that affect their lives. Therefore, this approach is recommended.

Women should be included in decision making given inheritance rights economically empowered women should be encouraged to join organizations. Meetings for rural development should not be fixed at night or lonely place so that women will not fear sexual harassment. This is because sustainable rural development rests on three pillars of environmental protection economic well being and social equality. Where the initiative for community self help project is not coming from the people themselves, the government should stimulate the interest of the people towards rural development projects by offering incentives to rural people.

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