

## **Education & Developmental Initiatives: Examining the Role of Adult Education in Rural Community Development in Nigeria**

**Ifeoma Felicia Uzoagu (Ph.D.)**

Department of Adult and Non-formal Education  
Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

**Abraham Oriji (Ph.D.)**

Department of Curriculum Studies & Educational Technology  
Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

---

**Citation:** Ifeoma Felicia Uzoagu and Abraham Oriji (2022) Education & Developmental Initiatives: Examining the Role of Adult Education in Rural Community Development in Nigeria, *European Journal of Training and Development Studies*, Vol.9 No.2, pp.11-26

---

**ABSTRACT:** *Rural community development is a critical driving force in a nation's advancement. The effort is to address and successfully support the specific needs and opportunities of the communities and their inhabitants. As a result, any nation that has weak or undeveloped rural communities finds it extremely difficult to reach the height of its developmental strides. In the same manner, the role of education in modern times cannot be quickly exhausted in a hurry for its contributions to the development of individuals and its impact on rural community development. As a result, this paper attempts to identify and conceptualize the following terms - "Community", "Education", "Development", "Community development", "formal education", "Informal education", "Non-formal education", "Adult education", and "Rural area". It also attempts to understand the functions of a community, and how individuals in a rural community could contribute meaningfully to the development of their rural communities. Also discussed the purpose or the importance of community development in Nigeria. The paper further examined the purpose/benefits of adult education in community development, and the challenges or obstacles hindering the effective implementation of rural community development initiatives. However, the authors finally made suggestions for combating the effective implementation of rural community development programmes and projects in Nigeria.*

**KEYWORDS:** community, community development, education, adult education, formal, informal and non-formal education

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is a saying that states that human needs are insatiable. Based on this, Members of any community will continue to request something that will enable them to improve the lives of their people. Presently, as the number of members of the community increases, the demands also rises.

Presently, the needs of all the communities, especially in Nigeria are on the increase with little attention being received from the government; therefore, the members of every community need to organize their members and source for their development without delay (Galadima, 2012). To achieve this noble goal, the community members should initiate community development programmes to enhance development in their various communities.

There has been a general observation that the concept of community and community development changes as society advances, especially as we progress in the digital community. In the same vein, this progression has also affected the economic, social, spiritual, and political life of human beings (Goel, 2014). The role of education in the growth and progress of individuals and the entire humanity cannot be overstressed. Education is pivotal to the total development of any nation. Quality investment in the education industry of any nation is a *sin qua non* to the quality output of such a nation in all aspects of human endeavour. Anoenmuh (2019) declares that education remains the main tool for the rapid development of any community.

Education is acclaimed to be one of the key components that build or break the advancement of a nation. It has been stated that if the citizens of a society are educated, they can provide significant contributions in the fields of arts, literature, science, technology, and others, and help establish a well-rounded and stimulating community (<https://www.consultstraza.com/community-development-what-it-is-its-importance-and-how-to-contribute-in-your-city/>)

Education is fundamental to quality reasoning and enables imaginative thinking that makes for better choices, decision-making and problem-solving skills. A well-educated citizen is a person that possesses the right sets of skills for self-actualization and the responsibilities and tasks of the present knowledge society. Hence, the importance of education is very vital to any society's growth and subsequent development.

#### Conceptual Clarity

Community: Firstly, what is "community"? A community is made of a group of persons and is the most common unit of the society following the family setting (Goel, 2014). Human beings as a social entity are made up of the community associates or units that usually form relationships with each other based on the shared identity of place, class, race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, and various other mechanisms that help form these identities (Goel, 2014). A community is often referred to as a geographical area (e.g., a local government region or a particular town); it could be defined based on shared interests, identity, or characteristics (e.g., a particular cultural and linguistically diverse community). Community in a community development refers to the citizens of the area.

[

Education: Many educationists, philosophers, and authors have defined education based on their perceptions. However, Education has been defined as the socially organized and regulated process of continuous transference of socially significant experiences from previous to following generations (Naziev1, 2017). Ohaka and Akpomi (2018) have severally define education thus:

Education is an aggregate of all the positive dispositions (values, attitudes, skills, and beliefs system) an individual acquires, which enables him to contribute to the society in which he lives and to himself. Education is the aggregate of the process, skills, depositions, and belief systems, which a learner(s) acquire/achieve for his positive development and meaningful contribution to the society he lives in. Education can also be seen, as the acquisition of positive values and goals; such values and goals are meant for the self-actualization of the individual, which the social system has a keen interest in its attainment. These values can be transmitted, and inculcated in the learner(s) through a comprehensive educational system. (P.11).

Education is also referred to as the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life; the act or process of imparting or acquiring particular knowledge or skills, as for a profession. (<https://www.dictionary.com/browse/education>). Education could also be seen as a conscious and deliberate effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that learners actively develop their potential to have the spiritual strength of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed for themselves and society at large. We have formal, informal and non-formal education. Adult Education: Adult Education accommodates all forms of education formal, informal and non-formal. It is in adult education that greatest emphases are place on life-long education, education as a process and agent of liberation, liberating man from constraint, from ignorance, from exploitation and from vicious circle poverty, education for self and national development, for cultural awareness and integration, for conscientization and group dynamism ( Nzeneri 2012).

UNESCO (1976) in Nzeneri (2012) defines adult education as the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever content, level and method, whether formal or orderwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons regard as adults by the society to which they belong, develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their attitudes or behaviour in the two-fold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development.

Development: Akarowhe (2017) states that the word development is a polysemous in nature, meaning that it has several meanings. Thus, development connotes different meanings to different people based on the person's discipline. Kingsley (2017) asserts that it is a term commonly associated with the third world or least developed countries (LDC). Generically, Akarowhe (2017) refers to development as an institutional change, which is accompanied by increase in welfare, and fall in cost of living. The scholar further stressed that it is a reduction in unemployment, inequality and poverty for a given nation; also referred to the later stage of growth. Conclusively, Kingsley (2017) refers to it as a term used to appreciate the need for institutional change from the primitive society to a more advance society in the less develop, least develop and even developing countries of the world.

---

**Informal Education:** Informal education refers to education that is not mediated through institutional arrangements but by informal actors, such as the family and the community (<https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/design-science-research-for-non-formal-education/51878>). Informal education refers to a lifelong learning process, whereby each individual acquires attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her environment and daily experience. People learn from family and neighbours, in the marketplace, at the library, at art exhibitions, at work, and through playing, reading, billboards and sports activities. The mass media are very important medium for informal education, for instance through plays and film, music and songs, televised debates and documentaries. Learning in this way is often unplanned, unstructured and could also be referred to as incidental, accidental or unintentional learning (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-youth-foundation/definitions>).

**Formal Education:** Smith (2004) defines formal education as the hierarchically structured chronologically graded education system running from primary school through the university and including general academic studies, a variety of specialized programmes and institution for full-time technical and professional training. Nzeneri (2012) defines formal education as consciously planned and systematically organized programme of activities, usually undertaken by social agents of education such as the schools, colleges and universities. It is hierarchically graded into various levels.

**Non-formal Education:** National Policy on Education (FGN, 2004) in Galadima (2012) defines non-formal education as all forms of functional education given to youths and adults outside the formal school system such as functional literacy, remedial and vocational education. The above definition implies that non-formal education covers continuing education, literacy, civic education, post-literacy, correspondence education, and self-improvement classes outside formal education for anybody who cannot have access to the formal education system. In addition, Smith (2004) also defined non-formal education as any organized educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives.

**Rural Area:** A rural area is defined as a geographical area that is located outside towns or cities, characterized by a low population density and fewer buildings (Anoemuah, 2019).

### **What is Community Development?**

There is a saying that states, for any nation to develop, the communities within the nation need to be developed. However, there have been various conflicting definitions among scholars in in this field on how to define community development. The definition had long been dichotomized by professionals in community development. The main argument is however based on the fact that community development is both a process and a product; hence, community development does not entirely focus on the material resource development or systems, which are meant to address the community needs.

On the above premise, Hatcher (2015) informs that community development is about the betterment of social, political, and economic institutions in our nation's communities. Meade (2011) points out that community development is a unique form of practice, which has an intrinsic orientation toward democratic and participatory outcomes of collective change, inclusion, and equality. Generally, community development is mainly based on the two principles of equality and social integration/inclusion as perceived by Hart (2012) in Shava1 and Thakhathi (2016). Other scholars have offered their definitions as observed below.

Galadima (2012) defines Community development as an initiation put in place to develop an area or put those amenities that are lacking in place. While Straza (2022) defines community development as, "a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems". Community development is as well understood as a professional discipline; hence, defined by the International Association for Community Development as, "a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality, and social justice, through the organization, education, and empowerment of people within their communities, whether these be of locality, identity or interest, in urban and rural settings" (Gilchrist & Taylor, 2011).

Community development as a term is seen as the process by which efforts of the people themselves are united, with those of the government to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the people to integrate them into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress (Galadima, 2012). In totality, therefore, community development necessitates that people within a given community come together with one accord to solve an identifiable problem with or without external help. Atieno (2022) defines community development as the process whereby a community comes together and works collectively towards finding solutions to the problems that affect them.

Community development further entails the coming together of citizens of a place that come to work together to make the community better by meeting their political, social, cultural, and economic needs to make the entire community stronger. Community development directly impacts the quality of life of the inhabitants in a particular rural community. Straza (2022) opines that developing the community includes projects like libraries, schools, and parks; it also includes providing care and resources for the elderly, homeless, city planning, beautification, etc.

Smart (2019) defines community development as a process where community members are supported by agencies to identify and take collective action on issues, which are important to them. While Uwaka (1989) conceptualizes community development as a process by which efforts of the people themselves are united, with those of the government to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the people to integrate them into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

From the definitions above, one could deduce that community development is democratic, and involves community members that come together to take collective actions and generate solutions to solving common problems that affect the area. Community development is also a participatory activity within a geographic area that is aimed at unifying the citizens for their betterment; that is, for the provision of essential amenities that are lacking in the place, such as that outlined by Olaitan (2008) as follows:-

- (i). Provision of educational facilities
- (ii). Provision of essential amenities, such as (feeder roads, culverts, bridges, markets, stalls, etc.).
- (iii). Provision of a cooperative organization
- (iv). Participation in environmental sanitation
- (v). Construction of dams and sinking of wells to provide water for both humans and animals
- (vi). Provision of health facilities such as dispensaries, maternities, and leprosy clinics).

At the same time, community development strives for the social, political, and economic needs and development of the citizens in urban and rural settings. Furthermore, community development involves people within a rural area that work in unity with government functionaries to solve any identifiable problems that concern them.

#### Contributing to Community Development

As a citizen of a community, there are various ways and means of rendering services to your community development programmes or projects. What first step will you personally take to help the development of your community? What recommendations do you have for others to participate in community development programmes?

Nonetheless, these procedures have been outlined by Straza (2022) as follows:-

1. Attending a City Council meeting
2. Volunteer to help at a local event hosted by the city
3. Ask local representatives if they would be willing to go out for a cup of coffee to talk
4. Serve on a Board
5. Volunteer time for a Committee that helps with Community Development
6. Volunteer to help people outside your usual circle of friends and influence
7. Encourage others to be involved with local organizations

#### Functions of Community

##### The Purpose/Importance of Community Development

Communities through identification and symbolic artifacts provide a sense of belongingness to their people. Human beings associate and form relationships with each other based on the shared identity of place, class, race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, and various other mechanisms that help form these identities. This sense of belongingness connects people and builds social capital that is referred to as relationships based on mutuality, trust, and cooperation. One of the key purposes of

the community is to build communities based on justice, equality, and mutual respect (Wikipedia, 2022).

The purpose of community development is to work with the citizens to achieve participative democracy, sustainable development, rights, economic opportunity, equality, and social justice (Wikipedia, 2022). Both modern and ancient communities usually function toward meeting the goals of human society. Communities through identification and symbolic artifacts provide a sense of belongingness to their people. Human beings associate and form relationships with each other based on the shared identity of place, class, race, ethnicity, cultural heritage, and various other mechanisms that help form these identities.

This sense of belongingness connects people and builds social capital that is referred to as relationships based on mutuality, trust, and cooperation. Community development seeks to empower individuals and groups of people with the skills they need to effect change within their communities (Wikipedia, 2022). Community development, as observed world over, is predicated on principles of social justice and environmental justice (Ledwith, 2005). The author further states that the end goal of a successful community development program leads to sustainability and the creation of an ecosystem wherein everything flourishes. Community development is a force that could lead to positive change.

Olaitan (2008), in a discussion of the objectives of community development, states as follows:-

1. Provision of educational facilities
2. Provision of essential amenities such as feeder roads, culverts, bridges, markets, stalls, etc.
3. Provision of a cooperative community development organization
4. Participation in environmental sanitation
5. Construction of dams and sinking of wells to provide water for both humans and animals
6. Provision of health facilities such as dispensaries, maternities, and leprosy clinics.

Community development entails bringing about change in the society, empowering members of the community and empowering their participation and voice in the decision-making process which is the cornerstone of the community development process.

Straza (2022) understands the importance of community as an improvement in the lives of its citizens, creates strong, diverse communities that can attract and keep talent, start and grow businesses, and overcome issues that arise. Improves community service, keeps the citizens happier, healthier, richer, and longer lives. Straza (2022) further expresses that businesses will have a larger base of customers who can purchase their products and services, and the city will earn tax income to continue to support important programs and reduce debt.

Some of the importance of community development is especially derived when it is effective. This, Straza (2022) claims will reduce crime, less disparity between citizens, better jobs available, a

more talented workforce, and fewer overall issues that impact residents. Community development reduces problems and increases opportunities for growth; the scholar further affirmed that without community development, both economic and business development suffer greatly.

Atieno (2022) further expresses the importance of community development to the citizens. The scholar enumerates them as :-

- Agriculture is the main strength of most nations globally. Some nations solely depend on agricultural produce. Community development, therefore, helps in agricultural growth, as most of the community's activities include farming and rearing of animals for sustenance. Community members make sure those members of the community get the right information on the best farming methods, equipment needed, and the best ideas required for the production of the right crops.
- The health sector is not excluded from the importance of community development of the people. Public health facilities are created via community development programmes. These programmes help the residents in treating some minor or common ailments, such as malaria, typhoid, and others diseases that may affect members of the community.
- Community development helps in the provision of schools and educational centres. A good example of this is the Community Secondary School, Rumuekini in Obio\Akor Local government of Rivers State that was initiated by the women organization (Nma Nnwere Bu Nzi Social Club, Rumuekini, PortHarcourt). This effort by the women has given the community a secondary school, which will help shape the future of the populace in the community and even the surrounding communities.
- Community development helps create leaders, who make a decision and also oversee (administer) the projects embarked upon by the community.
- Community development help create jobs for citizens, thereby significantly improving the living standards of the inhabitants of the community. For instance, some community projects, such as the schools, farms, and health facilities/centers will require personnel to make them function. Hence, community development leads to the development of human resources, which eventually helps in the reduction of the crime rate in the area and beyond.
- It inculcates a sense of inclusion or belonging since it encourages the participation of both adults and youths and eventually brings a sense of unity among the persons within the area.
- Community development empowers community members and creates stronger and more connected communities (Smart, 2017).
- Through community development initiatives as declared by (Ife, 2016), community members can become more empowered, such that they can increasingly recognize and challenge conditions and structures, which leads to their disempowerment or negatively impacting on their wellbeing
- Children and families directly involved in community development initiatives may benefit from increases in skills, knowledge, empowerment, and self-efficacy, and experience enhanced social inclusion and community connectedness (Kenny, 2007).
- Community development and empowerment initiatives can achieve long-term outcomes such as stronger and more cohesive communities, evidenced by changes in social capital, civic



engagement, social cohesion, and improved health (Campbell, Pyett, & McCarthy, 2007; Ife, 2016; Kenny, 2007; & Wallerstein, 2006).

#### Purpose/Benefits of Adult Education in Community Development

Generally, education is one of the vital instruments for change; it is concerned with improving attitudes, fitness, interests, skills, understanding, and appreciation. Galadima (2012.) notes that with education, community members can plan, organize and execute programmes in the community. The rationale for education is towards enhancing the values, norms, customs, and traditions of the communities in the rightful or gainful direction, such as expressing creativity, perfecting knowledge and skills, and interacting with others in the community.

Galadima (2012), (Olaitan, 2006) and (Oreh, 2001) have further outlined the following points as some of the functions and/or benefits of education in the community:

1. Education is a weapon for the development of the people in a society.
2. It helps to promote understanding and cooperation among a group of people for the present and the future.
3. It helps to create peace through understanding and respect for individual differences.
4. In the community, adult education is the most needed education because it helps communities to be mobilized for contributing towards their development for their survival and their future generation.
5. Education modifies the behaviour and the critical thinking quality of the citizens.
6. It provides the needed skills that will lead to better occupations.
7. It develops individuals' respect for standards.
8. The moral quality of individuals is at an acceptable level by community members.
9. Education helps to reduce the criminal behaviour of individuals resulting from ignorance and illiteracy.
10. It also helps to develop individuals' creativity and independent living.
11. It makes an individual become an acceptable member of his community through systematic adjustment.

For any community to function effectively and develop rapidly, they need formal and non-formal education programmes to quicken its developmental processes. Therefore, any community with educated adult members is likely to benefit as stated below.

- Adult education encourages a better understanding of relationships with other members of the community.
- With education, members are more competitive in development.
- Adult educate helps members of the community know their rights; hence, they take bold steps to demand from the government either their rights from the government or through individuals or delegation of members to government officials for the provision of essential basic needs or amenities, such as electricity, water, good roads, security, markets, housing, communication equipment, higher education, agricultural technologies among others.

- Adult educate helps the community members to recognize their community's culture (language, political, social, and religious interest) and rights; they also preserve their community's cultural rights, behaviours, and jealously guide same.
- Adult educate empowers members of the community to quickly adapt to change and even eradicate some old cultural practices that were handed over to them by their ancestral parents through generations that are no longer in tune with contemporary practices. Adult education exposes community members to their rights and equally know when to demand their rights, and how to communicate directly with the government authority for the provision of essential basic needs of the community.
- Good community relationship within and outside is encouraged when the community has educated adults. They will effectively participate in social, political, and economic matters affecting the community.
- Adult education helps to improve the critical thinking superiority of the citizen in the community.
- As an instrument for change, it modifies the moral behaviour of citizens to an acceptable level by community members. Education provides the needed skills needed in relevant occupations.
- Education accords individuals with some respect and standards in the community.
- Education modifies individuals' morals and reduces the criminal behaviours of individuals resulting from ignorance and illiteracy.
- It also helps, promotes, or develops individuals' creative abilities and independent reasoning and living.

### **Barriers/Obstacles to Community Development Programmes**

The challenge of community development is a universal problem that is not limited to a particular geographical area like Nigeria. There are basic amenities required by various local communities of any nation. Globally, governments adopt some developmental strategies to enhance service delivery, promote rural economic development and integration, social interventions to uplift the living standards of the citizens through sustainable development but, due to dwindling economic resources, corruption, or outright negligence by government officials (stakeholders in the government), some governments backslide from attending to these promises.

Communities globally, knowing that the government has failed to address the challenges, hope to meet the above needs. Hence, in attempts to meet the yearnings of these developmental approaches, which the government could not fulfill, communities, in attempts to meet up with these necessities, encounter various challenges, such as corruption, skills shortage, poor infrastructure, lack of monitoring and evaluation of development projects, and a poor revenue base among others, as revealed in the findings of a study by Shava1 & Thakhathi (2016).

Despite good policies developed by various governments at all levels in any democratic setup, poor or improper implementation of public policies due to corruption and largely poor managerial expertise has been the major challenges affecting developmental strides. Brynard (2007) consents

that lack of women's access to information and technology, low levels of income, limited education, and noninvolvement in Information Communication Technology (ICT) are barriers to community development.

The SA Local Government Research Centre (2014b) observes that poor community service delivery has been experienced in municipalities because service providers are appointed based on political influence thereby manipulating the accurate supply chain process. Following this line of argument, community development projects have been ripped apart due to nepotism and corruption in the procurement systems which are backstabbed to achieving effective community development.

What was noticed in South Africa is not different from what obtains in Nigeria. As observed in the South African Local Government Research Centre (2014b), poor community service delivery has been experienced in municipalities because service providers are appointed based on political influence thereby manipulating the accurate supply chain process. In view of this line of argument, community development projects have been ripped apart due to nepotism and corruption in the procurement systems, which made it impossible to achieve effective community development.

A direct observer in Nigeria will practically observe that there is a dearth of infrastructure facilities that aid the development of rural communities. In South Africa, the Sakhisizwe Municipality IDP (2013- 2014) opines that the lack of proper infrastructures, such as roads and railways was observed as a major setback in the transportation of people and goods across the district. Additionally, Thioune (2003) affirms that the lack of technical expertise among women was a critical challenge to the failure of women cooperatives in Sakhisizwe Municipality. This situation is not different from the Nigerian situation.

Other barriers to community development with regard to women have been observed by Thioune (2003). They are as follows:

- lack of women's access to information and technology,
- low levels of income,
- limited education and non-involvement in information communication technology.

The author further observed that service providers are appointed based on political patronage thereby influencing the accurate supply chain process; hence, community development projects have been ripped apart due to nepotism and corruption in the procurement systems, which is backstabbed to achieving effective community development. Thioune (2003) reveals that in South Africa, cooperative societies, which are the foundation of community development projects, have experienced cash flow challenges as a result of the community's inability to access equity capital from the members. Banks also find it difficult or reluctant to fund cooperatives due to a lack of collateral securities.

Many cooperatives projects or programmes have crumbled due to lack of bank loan facilities and effective funding. Another barrier as pointed out by SA Local Government Research Centre (2014) is lack of financial sustainability and poor revenue collection mechanism to improve the revenue base of rural communities. The geographical location and the poor climatic conditions of a community could pose a serious threat to the community development projects in the surrounding communities, such as the Niger Delta area, especially in the riverine area of Nigeria.

Shava & Thakhathi (2016) have also observe a similar situation in the Sakhisizwe District in South Africa where the prevalence of terrestrial summer rains often accompanied by storms and thunder, coupled with the weakened soil cover, flooding, and erosion is common in the aforementioned district. In a similar situation, Ndlovu (2012) in her study revealed the failure of the Eastern Cape government to respond to the effects of bad climatic conditions and prioritize agriculture, which posed a serious threat to the local residents, thereby subjecting them to high food insecurity. These revelations have exposed how climatic conditions of a particular community could pose a serious threat to the community development projects or programmes.

Furthermore, governments' inability to respond to these serious geographic and climatic conditions has posed great challenges to community development, not only in Nigeria but to all global communities aspiring to develop their rural areas. The prevalence of terrestrial summer rains often accompanied by storms and thunder, coupled with the weakened soil cover, flooding and erosion is a common sight in Sakhisizwe District. Ndlovu (2012) in her study also revealed that the failure of the Eastern Cape government to respond to the effects of bad climatic conditions and prioritize agriculture posed a serious menace to the local residents, thereby subjecting them to high food insecurity. Environmental degradation and poor waste management as noticed by Sakhisizwe Local Municipality IDP Review (2014/15) in Shava & Thakhathi (2016) are some of the factors that threaten public health and the sustainability of the community development projects in South Africa, which is not different from the Nigerian situation.

### **Solutions to Obstacles/Challenges to Community Development**

The rural communities/areas are poverty-driven, suffering from all forms of diseases, superstitious in their beliefs, low income, and low productivity. The development of rural areas in Nigeria has been bedeviled with lots of problems due to perpetual neglect over the years as the government is highly concerned with developing the urban cities. Vosejpkova (2002) opines that the problem areas in rural community development requiring solutions among others are poor transport services, non-existing cooperation inside the transport and mutual losses compensation, poor technical equipment of municipalities, securing constant support of rural development, establishing functioning ties to the community centre areas in the micro-regions, the establishment of foundations, decomposition of rural development aims, public administration. Others are lower educational attainment, lack of broadband and Internet access, teacher shortages, and lack of health care services.

However, the purpose of offering solutions to community development is to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of the people living in a comparatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. Therefore, addressing these problems among others would help to decrease the disparities in rural communities. Discussed hereunder are some of the possible solutions to ameliorate some of the major obstacles/challenges confronting effective community developmental processes.

1. Gate keepers: According to Holton (2007), there is a social group in the community called “Gate keepers”. This group lived and made a living, and prospered while raising their children. They are the most resistant to change; they fill that the community was, and is still good for them and nothing is wrong with the community that needs to be changed. As a result, as the author stated, the mindsets of this group must be changed by initially involving them in any community developments.

2. Poverty: There is no gainsaying that majority of Nigerian populace live below poverty level; they are multi-dimensionally poor, including uneven number of women and people with disabilities. Therefore, eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions is very vital to community development in order to leave no one behind in Nigeria.

3. Women’s Access to Information and Technology: There is need for women to have access to information and communication technology to participate effectively in community development initiatives.

4. Clean and Affordable Energy: It is on record that most rural communities in Nigeria have no access to electricity. In fact, it is not an overstatement to say that even those that leave in urban areas hardly get power. There is no way people in these rural communities will prosper without reliable, safe, and affordable energy to power everything from lights to vehicles to factories and to hospitals. Therefore, there is need to provide clean and affordable energy for rural dwellers to perform effectively rural development programmes (<https://www.undp.org/development-challenges-and-solutions>)

5. Income: The low level income among the rural populace is a very big problem, which affects the effective performance of rural communities and their development. Therefore, governments at all levels should as a matter of necessity and urgency improve the income of the rural dwellers by enhancing their economic empowerment.

6. Limited education: There is no reservation that most of the rural communities are far from government and even private schools. Even where the schools exist, they are not as furnished as those in urban areas in Nigeria. Most of us can attest to the importance of education to the development of both individuals and the communities at large. Therefore, it has become paramount to make education accessible to rural communities. Educated members of the rural communities will effectively contribute to the development of rural communities in Nigeria.

7. ICT: There is a saying that “Knowledge is power”. Consequently, access to Information and Communication Technology to citizen of a rural population is very paramount to the development of the rural communities. When the citizens are informed, they will be able to perform their duties and contribute meaningfully to the rural communities. There is a great divergence or widening technology gap between the urban and the rural communities. This gap has virtually and continually narrowed developments in rural settings, especially the use of new

technologies, such as cellular communications and the Internet services or tools (Dews & Saxena, 2014). Additionally, in a write-up in Beijing in 2014 titled: “Enhancing ict access for rural transformation” affirmed that access to ICT, such as the Internet can enhance the lives of rural citizens, provide information about agricultural and off-farm livelihoods, deliver public services, and disseminate educational and health knowledge. Conclusively, mobile phone and web applications can facilitate access to agricultural information, which will enhancement or improve productivity for farmers in the rural communities in Nigeria.

8. Security: It is on record that conflict settings lead to economic stagnation and a range of social and political problems. Hence, for any government to make any headway in rural community development, it can make a difference by providing infrastructure and increasing security within the rural communities. A typical example is what is currently happening mostly in Northern and Eastern parts of Nigeria.

### Summary

This paper has briefly examined the concepts of the following terms, “community”, “community development”, “education”, “adult education”, “formal education” and “non-formal education”. It also examined adult education as a critical agent for community development. The authors examined various ways and means of rendering services to one's community development programmes or projects. This paper also looked into the importance/purpose of community development, and the possible obstacles facing community development in contemporary times, and the solutions to the barriers/obstacles as envisaged in the topic were succinctly discussed.

### CONCLUSION

As Galadima (2012) put it, both adult education and community development have common aims and goals, which impact programmes planning, improving attitudes, aptitudes, interests, skills, understanding, and appreciation. The scholar, Galadima (2012) further stated that whatever form of adult education, they are geared towards enhancing the values, norms, customs, and the traditions of the communities in the rightful or gainful direction, such as expressing creativity, perfecting knowledge and skills, and interacting with others in the community.

### References

- Anoemuah, R. A. (2019). Innovative ict solutions and entrepreneurship development in rural area such as Michael and Cecilia Ibru University (MCIU) Community, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Applied Science (IJRIAS)* iv(x), October 2019. Pp. 52-56.
- Atieno, S. (2022). The importance of community development. Retrieved 25 February, 2022 from <https://www.civskkenya.org/about-us/our-blog/147-importance-of-community-development> 3
- Brynard, P.A. (2007). The policy gap in South Africa. *Journal of Public Administration*, 42(3): 357-361.

- 
- Campbell, D., Pyett, P., & McCarthy, L. (2007). Community development interventions to improve aboriginal health: Building an evidence base. *Health Sociology Review*, 16, 304-314.
- Dews, F. & Saxena, E. (2014). Six big ideas to tackle development challenges in difficult environments. Retrieved 21 April, 2022 from <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brookings-now/2014/08/07/six-big-ideas-to-tackle-development-challenges-in-difficult-environments/>
- Education. Retrieved 17 March, (2022). from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/education>
- Enhancing ict access for rural transformation. Retrieved 22 January, 2022 from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2014/05/12/enhancing-ict-access-for-rural-transformation>
- Galadima, A. I. (2012). The role of adult education in community development. *Knowledge Review*, 26(2), 54-58.
- Gilchrist, A. & Taylor, M. (2011). The short guide to community development. Policy press. p. 2.
- Goel, K. (2014). Understanding community and community development. Ph.D. thesis, University of South Australia.
- Hart (2012) in Shava1, E. & Thakhathi, D. R. (2016). Challenges in the implementation of community development projects in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *Hum Ecol*, 56(3): 363-373.
- Hatcher, M. (2015). The importance of public administration in community development scholarship and practice. *The American Society for Public Administration*. Retrieved 23 February, 2022 from <http://patimes.org/importancepublic-administration-community-developmentscholarship-practice/>.
- Holton, M. (2007). 10 reasons rural community development is hard to do. Retrieved 17 April, 2022 from <https://www.beefmagazine.com/americancowman/cowman-commentary/rural-community-development>
- Ife, J. (2016). Community development in an uncertain world: Vision, analysis and practice (2nd ed.). Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- The Importance of Community Development. Retrieved 12 March, 2022 from <https://www.civskkenya.org/about-us/our-blog/147-importance-of-community-develo%20pment>
- IvyPanda. (2019). Challenges of community development. Retrieved 23 February, 2022 from <https://ivy panda.com/essays/challenges-of-community-development/>
- Kenny, S. (2007). Developing communities for the future (3rd ed.). South Melbourne: Thompson
- Kingsley, A. (2017). Information communication technology (ict) in the educational system of the third world countries as a pivotal to meet global best practice in teaching and development. *American Journal of Computer Science and Information and Technology*, 5(2). doi: 10.21767/2349-3917.100010
- Meade, R. (2011). Government and community development in Ireland: The contested subjects of professionalism and expertise. *Antipode*, 1-25.
- National Policy on Education (FGN) (2004) in Galadima, A. I. (2012). The role of adult education in community development. *Knowledge Review*, 26(2), 54-58.
- Naziev, A. (2017). What is an education? International Conference: The Future of Education, 12

June, 2017.

- Ndlovu S 2012. Community development projects and food security: The case of Zanyokwe irrigation project Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Masters Thesis, Unpublished. Alice, South Africa: University of Fort Hare.
- Nzeneri, I. S. (2012). Hand Book of Adult Education Principles and Practices; Uyo, Abigab associates Ltd.
- Ogwo, B. A. & Oranu, R. N. (2006). Methodology in formal and non-formal technical/vocational education: Nsukka, University of Nigeria Press.
- Ohaka, N. C. & Akpomi, M. E. (2018). Information and communication technology (ICT): A potent tool for problem-solving in business education program. *International Journal of Innovative Information Systems & Technology Research*, 6(4):9
- Olaitan, S. O. (2006). Community-based financing of development projects. Nssuka, ExcellentPress, University Road, Nigeria.
- SA Local Government Research Centre (2014b). *The salocal government briefing*. June Additional Issue. Cape Town: SA Local Government Research Centre.
- Sakhisizwe local municipality integrated development planning, 2013-2014. Eastern Cape: Government printers.
- Shava1, E. & Thakhathi, D. R. (2016). Challenges in the implementation of community development projects in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. *Hum Ecol*, 56(3): 363-373.
- Smart, J. (2019). What is community development? Retrieved 20 January, 2022 from <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/expert-panel-project/what-community-development>
- Smith, M. K. (2004). Non-formal education from Retrieved 13 March, 2022 from <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b.nonfor.htm>.
- Straza, M. (2022). Community development: What it is, its importance, and how to contribute in your Retrieved 25 February, 2022 from <https://www.consultstraza.com/community-development-what-it-is-its-importance-and-how-to-contribute-in-your-city/>
- Thioune, R.M. (2003). Opportunities and challenges for community development: information and communication technologies for development in Africa. Canada. *International development research centre*, Dakar, Senegal, pp. 1-29.
- Wallerstein, N. (2006). What is the evidence on effectiveness of empowerment to improve health? Copenhagen: World Health Organization.
- Wikipedia (2022). Community development. Retrieved 20 February, 2022 from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community\\_development](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_development)