

Challenges and Prospects of Rural Community Water Supply by the North-East Arid Zone Development Programme (Neazdp) in Northern Yobe State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Rural community development involves a process and a series of actions and decisions that improves the situation of a community, not just economically, but also as a strong functioning community. It is through action, participation and contact that the community becomes more vital, more able to manage change with stronger networks, organizational ability, skills, leadership and passion. Although water covers 70% of the earth's surface, it is still a scarce global resource. Yobe states located on the fringes of the desert, the problem is even more acute than elsewhere nationally. This had revealed that access to clean water still remains a major challenge to almost half of the populace. This research attempted to address these problems and proffer solutions to it. The general objectives of the study was; the performance Evaluation of the North East Arid Zone Development Programme (NEAZDP) in Rural Community Water Supply in Northern Yobe State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to: examine the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries of NEAZDP, assess the constraints of the people in terms of water supply and identify the sources of water supply to the community before and after NEAZDP intervention. The research utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Combinations of quantitative and qualitative methods were used as the research methodology. Purposive sampling was used in the sample selection. A total sample of 400 respondents were selected and interviewed. Regression analysis was used to examine the impact of NEAZDP on the rural community development. The major findings of the study showed that, the people in the rural areas lack basic necessity of life, and the provision of good drinking water supply. Based on the findings, there were low living standard and quality of life, a fragile production base and increased pressure on land from growing population. The capacity of the governments to improve the situation is very low compared to the magnitude of the problems. The study recommend that government need to study the factors that led to the poor maintenance of equipment such as boreholes/water-pumps in the rural community, government should ensure prompt and adequate supply of fuel/diesel to reach the rural communities through month end.

Keywords: Water supply, Rural Development and Neazdp

INTRODUCTION

The North East Arid Zone Development Programme (NEAZDP) is an integrated Rural Development Programme initiated and financed jointly by the then Borno State Government, Federal Government of Nigeria and the European Economic Community (EEC), now European Union (EU).

The programme implementation commenced in February 1990 financed under the sixth European Development Fund (EDF) of the Lome III Convention agreement. The commitment of the

fund was for five years (February, 1990 – February, 1995) fixed at:

- European Currency (ECU) 29 million by way of special loan with 1% interest rate, 40 years repayment period with 10 years grace period ; and,
- ECU 6 million by way of grant to University of Maiduguri Centre for Arid Zone Studies (CAZS) and Ramat Polytechnic Centre of Appropriate Technology (RAMCAT) to

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support the NEAZDP directly in areas of adaptive research and appropriate technology (NEAZDP Report, 1990).

The programme was meant to cover the area above Latitude 12° in the then Borno State (North – West of Yobe and North East of Borno). Due to the complexity of the area and fund limitation at that time, the first phase of the programme started in February, 1990 covering the north and western parts of the then Borno state. However, following the creation of Yobe state on 27th August, 1991, the programme area fell entirely within the boundaries of Yobe State covering nine (9) out of the seventeen (17) Local Government Areas in (the Northern part) of the State. The Local Governments Areas covered are: Bade, Bursari, Geidam, Jakusko, Karasuwa, Machina, Nguru, Yunusari and Yusufari.

In 1992, a feasibility study was prepared for the expansion of the NEAZDP to the North-East of Borno state. This study was subjected to a moderated workshop held in April 1993 by the EEC and FGN, leading to a project implementation study in October, 1993. The implementation study was carried out as scheduled and the report was submitted to the Commission of the European Community (CEC) in Brussels in January, 1994. The study was approved by the European Development Fund (EDF) Committee in March, 1994 for the project take-off with the following objectives, to:

- Combat natural and man-induced desertification processes;
- Increase agricultural productivity through improved ecologically and technically appropriate farming techniques;
- Change attitude to the environment;
- Develop conservation and agricultural extension services;
- Expand the socio-economic infrastructure within the programme area through community based initiatives;
- Increase the technical expertise of the community, State and Local Government organizations; and,
- Improve education and health system of the rural population for sustainable development

of the communities within the programme area.

Just as the project was taking off, European Union development assistance to the Federal Government was suspended in 1995 due to the political situation at the time. Thus, NEAZDP and all other EU-assisted programmes ceased to receive funding from the European Development Fund (EDF). Consequently, NEAZDP together with all other former EU-funded programmes were taken over by the Federal Government and their respective State Governments. Since then NEAZDP has been receiving inadequate allocation from the Federal Government to finance capital projects, but staff salaries/allowances from the Yobe State Government have been regularly paid. In addition, the state Government occasionally comes to the aid of the programme where time specific activities are involved. NEAZDP is currently supervised by the National Planning Commission which approves its budgets, sets limit to the programme expenditure, appoints External Auditors and provides all necessary checks and balances in order for the programme to operate as per their approved Work Plan/Cost Estimate (NEAZDP Management Report, 2013).

Areas, NEAZDP has implemented projects, include Karasuwa, a few kilometres off the Gashua-Nguru road. In that community NEAZDP has also several projects, and whenever meetings are called to discuss projects many people turn up. Several committees have been set up by NEAZDP through the Village Development Association to manage various services in the community besides their managerial significance, the meetings also serves as a public space. Most men in the community are not only aware of the projects funded by NEAZDP, they also participate in them as volunteers and beneficiaries. Women, however, are not only under-represented in the institution, they also benefit from their projects (NEAZDP Management Report, 1990).

In Nguru as in Karasuwa NEAZDP has implemented several projects. However, when meetings are called in Nguru in contrast to Karasuwa very few people turn up. Furthermore, meetings are less frequent because the Village Development Association has set up few committees to manage projects in the community. Neither managerial nor public space aspects of meetings are realized.

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Karasuwa is more egalitarian, and has less contentious ethnic and partisan politics. Nguru is almost opposite of Karasuwa, however, in both community women are subordinated.

Since the 1980s, major rural institutional reforms have been implemented in Nigeria. These include the Better Life for Rural Women Program, the Directorate of Food, Road and Rural infrastructure (DFRRI), National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) and the North East Arid Zone Development Programme (NEAZDP). The first three programmes are funded by the Nigerian Government while the fourth is funded mainly through a loan and grant of the European Union. These programs have commitment to grassroots development and expansion of local public spaces (Kole, 1996)

THE BETTER LIFE FOR RURAL WOMEN PROGRAMME (BLP)

The Better Life program is one of the most remarkable institutional changes introduced in 1987. The program was initially under the Presidency with a National Organizing Committee chaired by the first lady. Members of the Committee included, among others, the wives of Service Chiefs. Similar structures were provided for at the levels of state and local governments, district, and village administrations. At all these levels, the spouses of the highest political authority were supposed to chair an organizing committee. In 1989, a National Commission on Women was set up. The Commission has a board with a chairperson while the routine activities of the Commission were run by a Director General. A Department of Better Life was created in the Commission to give the organization a formal recognition. Similar bodies have been set up at the state level (Kole, 1996).

Prior to Better Life, the attention of the state to women's issues was very minimal. At the federal level, it was only in 1973 that the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development set up a Home Economics Division, which was supposed to be the centre for women activities. In 1976, a Unit for Women and Development in the Ministry of Information, Youth, Sports and Welfare was created. According to Bolanle Awe (1989), the Unit had low priority and was starved of funds and personnel. A decade later the Unit was upgraded to a Division. In addition, the

government formed Women and Development Committees (Cited in Kole, 1996).

Between 1987 and 1989, the BLP was mainly attached to DFRRRI some funding for the organization was from DFRRRI. For example, BLP received N14 million from DFRRRI as part of its rural productive projects. BLP also received funding and logistical support from governmental and international governments and non-governmental organizations including the Peoples Bank of Nigeria, the National Directorate of Employment, agricultural programs, the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture, the Nigerian Petroleum Corporation, the Nigerian Television Authority, the World Bank, UNICEF, (The Presidency 1990, Cited in Kole, 1996). It is difficult to estimate the amount of money or quantify the logistic support BLP received from these organizations.

THE DIRECTORATE OF FOOD ROAD AND RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE (DFRRI)

In October 1985, the military government declared a National Economic Emergency. A decree was promulgated to effectuate the emergency. Under the emergency decree, the government was empowered to take all necessary measures to respond to the economic situation in the country. Most of the steps taken were essentially stabilization measures which did not involve fundamental structural changes. Three months later, in the 1986 budget, important changes were introduced. Two of the most important were reduction of fuel subsidy by 80 percent and the setting up of the Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure. It was estimated that the government would gain the sum of N900 million from the removal of the subsidy and half of that amount would be given to DFRRRI. The mandate given to DFRRRI was stated in the 1986 budget in unequivocal terms:

To change the previous strategy of rural development which was preoccupied with food and fiber, and shift the emphasis to the alleviation of rural poverty and enhancement of the quality of rural life (Koinyan 1991 la, 10-1 1, cited in Kole, 1996). The immediate task given to the program was to construct 30,000 kilometer of rural feeder roads. In order to give the program the necessary political clout a member of the Armed Forces Ruling Council, was appointed as the Chairperson of DFRRRI, he was also

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the Chairperson of the National Directorate.

Furthermore, DFRRRI was placed directly under the Office of the President at the national level and therefore answerable to the president only, not to a minister or a ministry. At the state level, a State Directorate was chaired by the state governor and each local government council was constituted as a Rural Development Committee chaired by the local government chair. Similar structures were provided for at the district and village levels (Koinyan 1991 la, 10-1 1, cited in Kole, 1996).

Between 1986 and 1992, DFRRRI received N1.95 billion from the federal government. That amount is made up of N1.85 billion in annual allocation and N100 million derived from interests. The annual allocation to DFRRRI declined from 7.29 percent of the federal government capital budget in 1986 to 1.57 percent in 1992. What was allocated to DFRRRI by the federal government was spent in the 30 states of the federation (Koinyan 1992. 84-91).

The establishment of DFRRRI was both a continuation of, and a change from, the way rural development had been organized in Nigeria. At the conceptual level, there was a clear link between the economic in the country and the need to change direction in favour of rural areas. The government reasoned that the adverse overdependence on oil was a direct consequence of the neglect of the rural areas. Furthermore, it saw rural development as an integrated process with social and political components as well as economic ones. For example, whereas Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) and the Green Revolution were agricultural programmes, while DFRRRI includes other aspects of rural life such as housing and rural industry. It also set out to make a quick impact. For instance, of all the previous major institutions in the rural communities, only the Agricultural Development projects constructed rural feeder roads, even then about 9,000 kilometres in 10 years (Gaviria, Bindish and Lele 1989, 15), the immediate target of DFRRRI was 30,000 kilometres in two years.

The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) is the response

to the development challenges of Nigeria. It is the government's ways of letting the people know how it plans to overcome the deep and pervasive obstacles to progress that the government and the people identified. Although Nigeria is rich in natural and human resources, 7 of every 10 Nigerians live on less than US\$1 a day (2004, National planning Commission). NEEDS wish to make poverty a thing of the past in Nigeria, they focus on four key strategies; (i) reorienting values, (ii) reducing poverty, (iii) creating wealth and (iv) generating employment. But its weaknesses are;

Non-State actor groups questioned the real inclusiveness of NEEDS articulation process, The underlying framework planned appeared inadequate towards supporting the slated pro-poor orientation of NEEDS; (2004-2007, National Planning Commission) There were no articulated resources to determine the capability of the nation to finance the initiative.

On the other hand, the central objective of these institutions of rural development is the empowerment of marginalized- groups. Empowerment is trendy, and is used by different groups for different purposes. All these institutions claim that their objective is to alleviate rural poverty through the establishment of participatory grassroots development projects. The purposes of these grassroots projects are to solve the material and social concerns of the people as well as improve the public life of rural populace. In other words, the prime objective of empowerment is to give voice and benefit to hitherto excluded groups. Hence, the performance of these institutions must be measured against the purpose for which they are set up: to improve production and social services in material ways and to expand the scope of public life in the rural areas.

The North East Arid Zone Development program (NEAZDP) has come to play a significant role in the rural areas of its partners under the Lome Accord, an agreement between the European Union and its members' former colonies in developing countries of Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific. The EU since its inception has provided funds for rural development projects. However, its interest in rural development became more pronounced after the Lome Convention II. During the period covered by the convention, out of a total investment of European Currency (ECU) 4.6

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billion, 44 percent went to the agricultural sector. Under Lome III, 60-90 percent of aid projects were in the rural sector (CEU 1990). The Program is implemented with technical and management support, the institutional structure of the program gives it more autonomy from state control and funding. General program control is the responsibility of an Executive Committee made up of the State Governor, a representative of the National Authorizing Officer, the EU Delegate, the Program Manager and the Deputy Program manager. The daily running of the Program is vested in the program Management Unit (PMU) which has vested total control of the program. It has such a wide latitude that the Delegate of the EU has very little supervisory role in the programme. Another innovative institutional structure of NEAZDP is the institutional structure at the local level. In each village there is supposed to be a Village Development Association, Women's Committee, a Village Development promoter and project committees to manage different projects. Eighteen villages make up a Development Area (DA) and a Development Area Promoter (DAP) appointed. Several Field Technicians work at the local level as well. NEAZDP is also a departure from most previous rural development projects in its conception of development. Although it funds large scale projects, the emphasis is on village micro projects. The objectives of the projects include poverty alleviation, community self reliance, Sustainability, and participation. The intended beneficiaries of its projects are the marginalized. This is an important shift from the focus on progressive and absentee farmers in previous rural development programs funded by many foreign agencies. These programs concentrated on creating the enabling environment for agricultural and rural development through the provision of infrastructure and other productive projects. On the other hand, programs such as NEAZDP have a greater institutional autonomy from state control and funding than BLP and DFRR. The program is not involved in direct production, but stimulates rural development through various lending projects (NEAZDP reports, 1992, Kole, 1996)

Although water covers 70% of the earth's surface, it is still a scarce global resource. For

Nigerian states located on the fringes of the desert such as Yobe, the problem is even more acute than elsewhere nationally. This had revealed that access to clean water still remains a major challenge to almost half of the populace (47 per cent). In January 2011, the Federal Government inaugurated the water roadmap. According to the government, the roadmap will serve as a blueprint containing the objectives for developing the nation's water resources between 2011 and 2015. The plan includes the promise that 75 per cent of Nigerians will have access to clean water by 2015. The Minister of Water Resources, (March.3, 2013) said for Nigeria to meet the Millennium Development Goal with respect to adequate water supply by 2015, the country would need to expend N360bn annually on development projects in the sector. According to the minister, the sum will be needed annually for the next three to five years to meet the nation's water supply and sanitation need.

THE STUDY AREA

- The study was undertaken in Yobe North Senatorial District of Yobe State. Yobe state is located in North Eastern Nigeria. Yobe state was carved out of Borno state on August 27th, 1991. The state shares borders with Bauchi, Borno, Gombe and Jigawa states. It borders the Diffa and Zinder regions of Niger Republic to the north (see Fig1). The state lies mainly in the dry Savanna belt. Its conditions are hot and dry for most of the year, except the southern part of the state which has a milder climate. The NEAZDP programme headquarters is located at Garin Alkali, Bursari Local Government, five kilometers to Gashua in Yobe State. The Doum Palm (*Goruba*) symbolizes the programme (Logo), it is a well known indigenous and valuable resource that is used for a variety of purposes by the people of the area.
- Economically, Yobe State is an agricultural state. It also has rich fishing grounds and mineral deposits such as gypsum in places like Fune L.G.A., as well as Kaolin and Quartz. The state's agricultural products include Gum Arabic, groundnuts, cowpea, and cotton. The state is also said to have one of the largest cattle markets in West Africa located in Potiskum. (NEAZDP Report, 2011)

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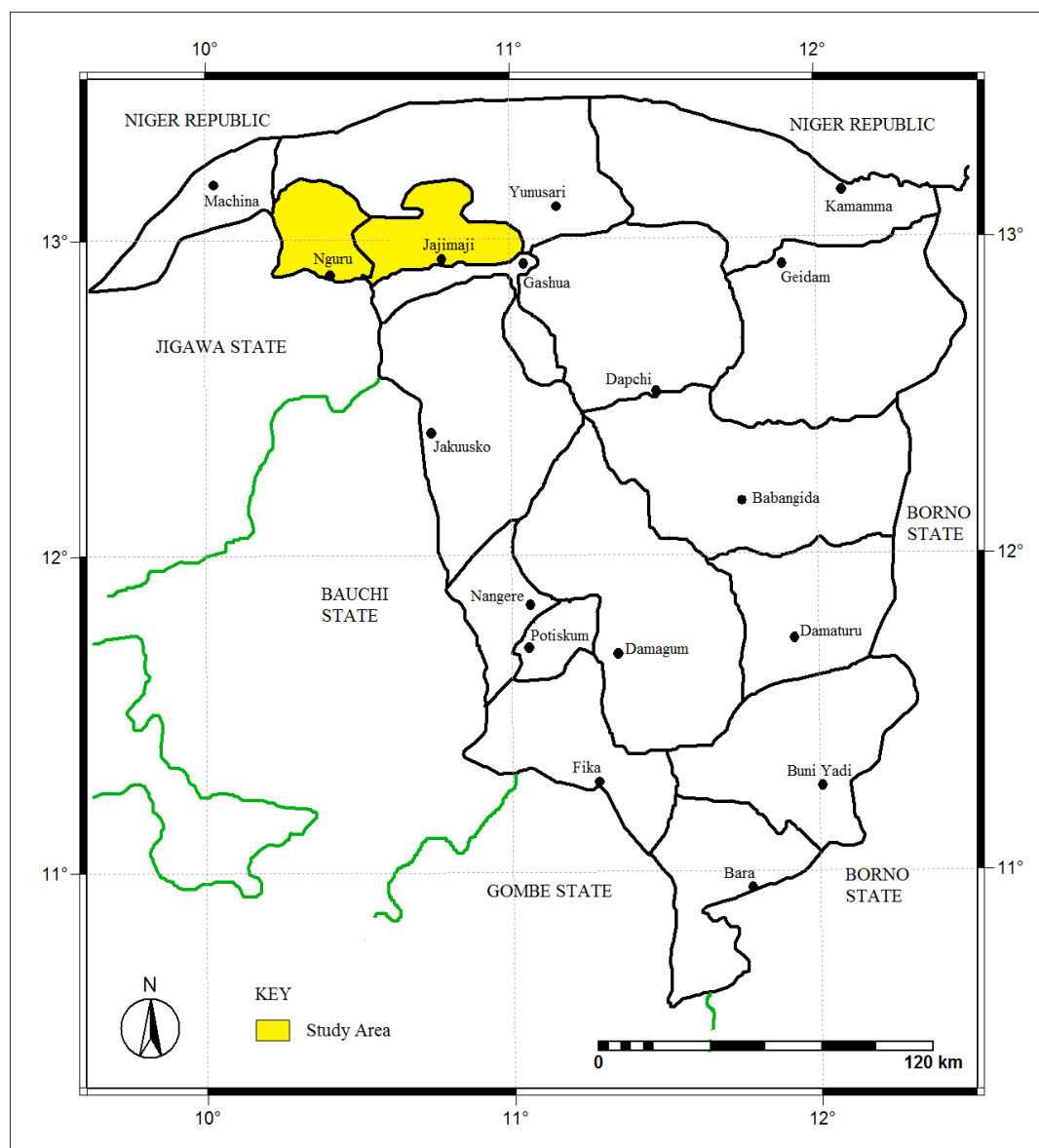


Fig1. Map of Yobe State Showing Yobe North Senatorial District

- The major ethnic group living in Yobe state are, Kanuri (including the quite extensive Manga cluster); while others include, Ngizim, Kare-kare, Bolewa, Bade, Hausa, Ngamo, Shuwa Arab, Fulani and Bura (NEAZDP Report, 2011)
- Physically as well as geographically, the programme area is part of the Lake Chad Basin and topography is flat or very gently sloping towards Lake Chad to the east. Sandy soils cover 90 percent of the land. The other 10 percent belongs to the floodplains of the Komadugu Yobe and Komadugu Gana Rivers, seasonally flowing from west to east (NEAZDP Report, 2011)
- The climate of the Yobe area has varied in cycles over the years. Rainfall is seasonal, concentrated in the three months from July-September, since early 1970s, the trend has been towards a drier climate. The current annual rainfall (400mm in the south west, 250mm in the north east) has decreased by some 15 to 20 percent over the last 25 year (Data from 21 NEAZDP Meteorological Stations 2010).
- Occupations and land use in the NEAZDP area determined by the low rainfall and its pattern of seasonal distribution. Rainfall farming for millet and sorghum is the primary source of income for most families. But soil fertility has decreased and drought has increased over the recent years, and dry land farming has become increasingly marginal. The limited areas of floodplain are more fertile and produce higher value crops of rice and vegetables. But floodplain

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farmers also face difficulties as flows in rivers are lower and more variable than they were 25 years ago (NEAZDP Report,2010)

- The water resources of the Komadugu Yobe basin should be considered as one system and managed as a whole by a single agency, with all planning and developments taking into consideration the benefits and developments to all water users within the five states of the basin.
- The NEAZDP area covers 22,860 sq. km. (2,286,091 hectares) within the eight Northern Local Government Areas of Yobe State. It shares borders with the Niger Republic in the north, Jigawa state in the west and Borno state in the east. It is one of the driest regions in Nigeria (NEAZDP Report, 2011)

• Land Resources

The natural resources of the programme area are characterized by low productivity. The dominant soils are sandy and inherently infertile. The rainfall which was always low and erratic has become more so since 1971. The rise in human population shows no sign of abating. It is, therefore, realistic to recognize that major changes are required in resources and land management, for serious problems of resource degradation and human hardship are to be avoided and sustainable development is to be achieved. The vast majority of crop land is sandy soils for upland farming, but with the *fadama* soils along the river, the rice cultivation and small scale irrigation farming are taking place in the area. NEAZDP area is also rich in grazing and wood land resources (NEAZDP 2012).

• Population of the Study

The target population of this research is the people of the two Local Government Areas, Nguru and Karasuwa. There are eight (8)

selected villages for the two local govt. areas, these are, Nguru town, Bilallan, Balanguwa, Kakuri, Karasuwa town, Afunori, Jajimaji and Bukarti. In Nguru town villages certain numbers were selected for the study from 67-68 respondents from each village making it to 270 respondents. While in Karasuwa town 32-33 respondents were selected from each village making it to 130 respondents from Karasuwa L.G.A. Based on the number of the Local Governments Areas, the total of 400 respondents were selected for the study. The in-depth interview on the other hand was used as the qualitative method in order to get in-depth information from the respondents. The respondents selected for the in-depth interview are village heads, a religious clerics, compound heads, etc.

• Sampling Procedure

Sampling process allows the researcher to study a relatively small number of units representing the whole population (Sarantakos, 1998). According to National Population Commission (NPC) 2006, Nguru local government has a population of 150,632 while Karasuwa local government has a population of 106,992. Stratified sampling was employed for the selection of the respondents to obtain the sample for the study. Due to the fact that the size of the Local Government Areas varies in population, the sample size consists of male, female, young, and old. The total of 400 respondents will be used as sample size.

- A list of respondents in each Local Government Areas selected was generated by development promoters and extension officers and was used as sampling frame for the selection of the sample. From Nguru LGA 270 respondents were selected, and in Karasuwa 130 respondents were proportionately selected, giving a total of 400 respondents selected for the study.

Table1. List of selected Local Government Areas

Senatorial District	Local Govt. Areas	Selected LGA	Sample Population
Yobe North Sen. District	Bade		
	Busari	Nguru	Nguru-270
	Dapchi	Karasuwa	Karasuwa-130
	Geidam		
	Karasuwa		
	Machina		
	Nguru		
	Yunusari		
	Yusufari		

- **Data Collection**

The data for the study was obtained using both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources include questionnaire, interviews, and observations. Questionnaires were used to obtain information and related data for the purpose of this research. Interviews with both staff of NEAZDP and community people were conducted. This strengthened and complemented those data collected through questionnaires and observations. The secondary sources of data include textbooks and other related materials, such as NEAZDP publication and reports, journals and magazines.

- **Data Analysis**

The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The data obtained was organized using descriptive statistics, such as, frequency, percentage and mean. Inferential statistics, Regression analysis was used to examine the impact of NEAZDP on the rural community development.

- Regression analysis was employed to determine the relationship between independent variables and performance of NEAZDP in water supply.

SUMMARY

This study revealed that adequate good water supply is central to life and human development. In fact, of the five basic human needs (water, food, health, education, and peace) water is a common factor to the other four. Water is a very important factor in settlement development and determines population growth as well as influences world health and living conditions. Nigeria is blessed with abundant water resources estimated at 226 billion m³ of surface water and about 40 billion m³ of ground water. However, Federal Ministry of Water Resources (FMWR, 2004) noted that out of the 85 million people living in urban and peri-urban areas in Nigeria, less than half have reasonable water supply. It is worth noting that despite the fact Nigeria is one of the signatories to the United Nations International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade whose objective was to supply water to all citizens of the country between 1981 and 1990, and in spite of the efforts of various Governments at all levels, the water supply coverage in the country appears to be decreasing and deteriorating, (FGN, 2000). One of the reasons for this deterioration

according to (FGN, 2000) is the enormous socio-economic rate of development which far outstrips the level of water supply development. Other reasons include low investment level in operation and maintenance which accounts for frequent breakdown of the production facilities, and lack of proper management of the nation's water resources. In a bid to effectively manage water resource, there are challenges of poor state of infrastructure, climate change, and intensive cost on investment, rapid urbanization process, corrupt practices, and problem of inadequate measures for cost recovery and inability by state, local or community to adequately pay their counterpart funding. Meanwhile, the important role water play in the economic, social, recreational and human development and aquatic lives is the basis why emphasis should be laid on the management of this scarce natural resource. The main findings and problems identified in these two communities are to indicate the enormous work of male and female, in both the two local government areas the male are the one with the population of 74.0% while the female are 26.0% out of the total number of 383. In term of age the majority are those between the ages of 35-45 with the highest number of 146 (38.0%), while the able body men were within this age group. This age group is very important in the rural community, since we know that farming is the most important activity of the rural people. The type of their educational level indicated that those with qur'anic/tsangaya school were the ones with the percentage of 23.0%, showing that rural people lack formal education; it could be due to the poor educational system in the rural areas. Similarly, there is a strong gender division of labour at the level of the household in the context of the communities where the research was conducted. In both chapters, the aims were to show the divergent interest in the communities regarding water supply. Comparing the two Local Governments of Nguru and Karasuwa, NEAZDP has developed a bottom up strategy to facilitate local institutional participation and resources. NEAZDP ensure the availability of basic facilities for the population to be able to take an active part in development. They ensure that, the benefits of their efforts are to the greatest possible extent being tied in building up internal strength in the form of additional employment, creation of private production and services enterprises for satisfying the internal demand from the area; and also provide basic education

and health facilities to upgrade the awareness and strength of the people. There are functional structure and persons such as Development Areas (DAs), Development Area Promoters (DAPs), VDPs, Village Development Plans, local financial contribution and control and local government participation. NEAZDP has done better in the project of water supply, than the other development agencies. Moreover, the concept of community development was used in this study including NEAZDP to understand the extent of rural development and activities.

The study identified success primarily in terms of productive and social projects, their quantity and quality of the projects and success in reaching the intended beneficiaries. I shall argue that NEAZDP development projects have performed better than others rural development programme. The reason is that NEAZDP has a better institutional arrangement, a bottom up strategy, resources, despite the fact that in the overall picture NEAZDP has performed well but its women's projects have consistently underperformed in comparison to its other projects.

CONCLUSION

The overall objective of the NEAZDP is to motivate and assist the rural population to improve their standard of living by the proper use and management of natural resources. Thus, combining sustainable agricultural development with environmental protection and preservation of unique habitats and emphasizing its development strategy at village level, and with the direct participation of existing institutions, private enterprises and the communities.

NEAZDP's achievements so far in alleviating these overall problems reflect various degrees of success in different fields of its activities. It should be emphasized that the study is limited to one sector of NEAZDP's overall activities, i.e. water supply sector. Financing an integrated rural development programme requires a lot of investment/resources as it covers wide range of activities that affect rural life. At the phase 1 of NEAZDP during the European Union Funding, the programme has created awareness in the rural areas and had the capacity to implement quite a number of projects as being requested by rural communities. However, with the European Union Funding, NEAZDP has to scale down the volume of its activities to match with the reduced support received annually from the Federal Government. Therefore, in order to

continue with the pattern of the operation started earlier, much more financial support is required at appropriate time. This will enable timely execution of appropriate sustainable projects. Therefore, inadequate and late release of fund is the main constraints of the programme. NEAZDP's activities in relation to education are that, they have been to overcome local reluctance to enroll children in primary schools. However, the parents are still reluctant and as their economic base is low in some cases because they need the labour force of the children. Lack of qualified teachers is still a problem, and therefore the training of teachers should continue. There is also a need for teaching and learning materials. The local government and NEAZDP should also continue their joined efforts in close cooperation with the communities to rehabilitate and construct class rooms and others offices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the identified problems in the study area, the following recommendations are proffered for the future improvement of NEAZDP's intervention in the rural communities and other local government projects.

- The government should provide facilities and funds so as to motivate the rural people to improve their economy and standard of living, without fear of jeopardizing their livelihood. Various institutions have been created to cater for the problems of rural people; it is now time for these institutions to coordinate their efforts and to work together in solving the people's socio-economic development problems. They should know that with few resources available in our country budget for them and with many problems facing them, they should complement each other, and address together the main concerns for the rural people in general, they should put more emphasis on action oriented activities. This when done with all seriousness, good will, political will and commitments our societies will be transformed to paths of greater socio-economic development and advancement. This will then establish a strong foundation for the growth and development of the whole economy.
- Women in rural areas play a central role in food production, household management, child-bearing and care, and many other

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essential activities. However, although some advances have been made in promoting rural women welfare, they are still faced with many problems. Lack of access to land remains the major constraint to their fuller participation in the development process. This calls on rural development planners to give special attention to rural women in order to make the best use of the vast reservoir of energies, talents and creativity that they are immensely endowed with.

- The government and NEAZDP should make conscious efforts in the supplying of basic amenities for the rural people to enable parents send their children to schools to acquire formal education. The low level of women's education and their lack of capital pose major obstacles to their participation in rural development.

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