

ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF FADAMA III PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AMONG FADAMA USERS GROUP IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the level of Fadama III project implemented among Fadama Users Group (FUGs) in Osun state, Nigeria. Forty per cent of the 20 participating Local Government Areas (LGAs) was randomly selected from the six administrative zones, resulting to eight LGAs in all. Interview schedule was used for data collection. Some of the findings indicated that majority of the respondents were married with mean age of 49.7 years. The results also show that of the 13 Fadama III projects that were proposed to be completely implemented, only two (15.4%) were completely implemented, six (46.1%) were averagely implemented and five (38.5%) were fairly implemented. Construction of animal pen ranked highest among Fadama III project implemented in the study area, while procurement of tricycle and tractor ranked lowest. Also, four factors were identified to have greatly affected and delayed the implementation of these Fadama III projects. The results indicate that most of the projects were not completely implemented as proposed in the implementation manuals. Based on the findings, it was concluded that Fadama III projects were all implemented to certain extent but not completely implemented as proposed at the initial stage. Therefore, considerable attention must be given to address the problems hindering the execution of these projects.

Key words: Fadama III, Fadama Users Group, Implementation

Introduction

Nigeria has implemented several agricultural and rural development policies and various programmes over the years but is still battling with food insecurity and rural poverty whereas similar policies and programmes have been successful in other climes (Koyenikan and Foby, 2010). In Nigeria, successive governments embarked on one form of agricultural and rural programme or the other. However, the extent to which these programmes have impacted the livelihood status of the beneficiaries remains uncertain. The Government of Nigeria is a signatory to the United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) aimed at reducing poverty by half in 2015, and in response to the dwindling performance of agriculture in the country embarked on Fadama III project which explicitly recognizes the strategic importance of the agricultural sector and listed a number of special initiatives that the Federal Government intends to pursue to promote increased production and restore the agricultural sector to its pride of place in the economy.

Many countries of the world, especially in the black continent of Africa, have been suffering from hunger, diseases, and educational set-back, which are clear indicators of poverty and low socio-economic status of the citizens. As a developing nation, Nigeria is plagued by the problems of underdevelopment, which include widespread illiteracy, endemic poverty, unemployment, uneven distribution of resources and incomes, low productivity, food insecurity, poor public infrastructure among others (Ekong, 2003). In view of the prevailing poverty condition of the people, the Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the World Bank introduced, among other measures, the Fadama Project as an intervening tool to the prevailing poverty in the country. The design of the National Fadama Development Projects (NFDP), was thus a strategic response by the stakeholders to alleviate the aforementioned scourges. Ghanem (2005) described the Fadama Project as “one of the important projects that have been supported in Nigeria”, noting that, “it is aimed at fighting poverty”.

Fadama areas are typically waterlogged in the rainy season but retain moisture during the dry seasons. Fadama III spanned between 2008 and 2013. It was a tripartite funded intervention programme by World Bank, the Federal Government of Nigeria and participating States with objectives targeted towards poverty reduction. It made use of Community Demand Driven (CDD) approach in project implementation in a socially inclusive manner. The project was designed to improve the capacities of beneficiary groups: the Fadama Users Groups (FUGs) which are aggregated into Fadama Community Associations (FCAs) in the states. Of the three (3) phases of the Fadama projects, Fadama III was established in order to address the inadequacies observed in Fadama I and II. The major Project Development Objective (PDO), among others, was to uplift the incomes of users of rural land and water resources on a sustainable basis by ensuring that about 75 per cent of the Fadama User Households (FUHs) have increased their incomes by not less than 40 per cent by 2013 (Osun State Fadama III project implementation manual, 2008).

Problem Statement

For various rural agricultural policies and programmes, their results do not seem to justify the huge financial allocations to them. Rural people's perceptions of government agricultural policies and programmes are largely that of ineffectiveness and irrelevance in their lives as government policies and activities contribute little in their struggles to survive and rarely help them to improve their livelihood status (Omokore, 2009). More disturbing is the fact that despite the colossal amount of resources committed to these programmes, the poverty situation still remains unabated, and more people fall into the poverty region instead of escaping (Oboh, 2008). Recent studies on rural and agricultural programmes (Idi *et al.* (2006), Koyenikan and Foby, 2010) indicated that considerable gap exists between the target objective (livelihood improvement) and achievement. It seems that the efforts of various governments are ineffective and therefore not much has been done to actualize the benefits (Omokore, 2009).

Weak administrative capacity, lack of transparency and accountability in the use of public funds, the disconnect between the decision-makers and beneficiaries and the lack of community-based project planning have been identified as some of the constraints to effective implementation of rural development programmes. For a long time, top-down planning has been employed to implement rural development programmes in efforts to improve living standards in Nigeria (Iwala, 2014). However, this had mainly led to the development of programmes that failed to match community needs and thus, unable to impact on the livelihood status of the rural dwellers. Therefore, Fadama III project was designed to tackle these shortcomings in a sustainable manner, with the overall aim of improving livelihood of its beneficiaries as well as achieving the SDG of poverty reduction. Stakeholders have attended to issues on Fadama III project, however, there is dearth of information on the level of Fadama III project implemented in the study area; hence, it is necessary to assess the level of Fadama III project implemented among the

FUGs in Osun State. The study assesses the level of Fadama III project implementation among Fadama Users Group through:

- i. describing the socio-economic characteristics of the beneficiaries;
- ii. examining the extent to which beneficiaries participated in Fadama III project;
- iii. assessing the level at which Fadama III projects were implemented in the study area; and
- iv. examining the factors affecting Fadama III project implementation.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Osun State, Nigeria. The area is situated in the south-western region of the country and lies within the coordinates $7^{\circ}30'$ and $4^{\circ}30'$. This area was chosen because of its participation in the National Fadama III development project. A multistage sampling procedure was used to select respondents for the study. At the first stage, forty per cent (40%) of the 20 participating Local Government Areas was randomly selected from each administrative zone, resulting to one LGA from each of Osogbo, Ife, Ede, and Ilesha administrative zones and two LGAs from each of Ikirun and Iwo administrative zones to make a total of eight LGAs in all. At the second stage, Twenty per cent (20%) of the Fadama Users Group (FUG) that benefitted from each LGA was randomly selected, resulting to eighty FUGs. At the final stage, Systematic random sampling at interval of two was used to select three respondents from each FUG using registered beneficiaries as sample frame and this gave a total number of 240 respondents. Data were collected through the use of well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage and mean.

Results and Discussion

Socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents:

Age of respondents:

The mean age of the respondents from the survey was 49.7 years, while the minimum and maximum were 20 and 70 years respectively (Table 1). The finding reveals that majority of the participating respondents were within their middle age range and were likely to be more productive. This indicates that youths were involved in Fadama III project in the state as well as the aged who were mostly in the vulnerable groups.

Sex of respondents:

The sex of respondents from the survey showed that there were more (58.7%) male than female (41.3%) beneficiaries of Fadama III project in the study area. This might be due to the fact that males benefit more in government intervention projects than females. This indicates a higher proportion of male folk in the programme. This agrees with the finding of Emodi (2009) who found a higher percentage of male rice farmers than female in his study in south-east Nigeria.

Farming occupational level

The results in Table 1 reveal that a greater proportion (53.7%) of the beneficiaries took farming as a part time occupation, while 46.3 per cent took farming as their major occupation. The finding reveals that many respondents have other source of income apart from farming so as to meet up with their need. This agrees with the findings of Yahaya (2002) who noted that the ever increasing socio-economic crises and poverty had forced people to opt for livelihood diversification in order to support their families.

Educational level

The level of education of the respondents in Table 1 reveals that 13.5 per cent of the beneficiaries had no formal education, 25.1 per cent completed primary school, 29.6 per cent had secondary education, 24.7 per cent attended post-secondary education and 7.2 per cent attended adult education. The finding reveals that most of the beneficiaries attended one form of formal education or the other.

External orientation

Data in Table 1 show that 2.7 per cent of the respondents had travelled to other countries of the world. Majority (61.9%) of the respondents had travelled to other states outside Osun, about 20.6 per cent had travelled to other villages outside their Local Government Area. Also, about 10.3 per cent of the respondents had travelled to other villages within their Local Government Area, while very few (4.5%) had been to other farms within their village. It can be deduced from this finding that majority of the Fadama III project beneficiaries travelled outside their Local Government Areas and States which indicates a high external orientation and this could have a significant impact on their livelihood status, as they would be opportuned to learn from others outside the rural domain.

Table I: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
Age (years)				
≤ 30	13	5.4		
31 – 60	197	82.1	49.7	11.0
≥ 61	30	12.5		
Sex				
Male	141	58.7		
Female	99	41.3		
Farming occupation level				
Full time	111	46.3		
Part time	129	53.7		
Educational level				
No formal education	33	13.5		
Adult education	18	7.2		
Primary education	60	25.1		
Secondary education	70	29.6		
Post-secondary education	59	24.7		
External orientation				
Travel within the village	12	4.5		
Travel within LGA	26	10.3		
Travel outside LGA	50	20.6		
Travel outside the State	145	61.9		
Travel outside the country	7	2.7		

□

Source: Field survey, 2015

Extent of Participation in Fadama III project

This was measured by the frequency of FUG meetings and attendance in FUG meetings.

Frequency of FUG meeting

The results in Table 2 show that majority (68.2%) of the Fadama users group (FUG) investigated did meet twice in a month (fortnightly), while 31.8 per cent had meetings once in a month. This result reveals that majority of the respondents had meetings frequently with each other and also with their facilitators as stated in the Osun state Fadama III project implementation manual. This result implies that there was adequate and easy flow of information among the beneficiaries owing to good facilitator/FUG relationship.

Attendance in FUG meetings

The results in Table 2 show that majority (65.5%) of the Fadama III project beneficiaries investigated did attend meetings regularly; some (31.4%) attended meetings occasionally, while very few (3.1%) rarely attended FUG meetings. The above finding reveals that all the respondents attended FUG meetings but few did not attend on a regular basis and this may be due to the nature of their work. This implies effective communication network among the respondents resulted into high attendance at meetings.

Table II
Distribution of respondents by frequency of meeting and attendance at FUG meeting.
n= 240

n= 240		
Variables	F requency	Percentage
Frequency of FUG meeting		
Once in a month	78	31.8
Fortnightly	162	68.2
Attendance in FUG meetings		
Rarely	10	3.1
Occasionally	74	31.4
Regularly	156	65.5

Source: Field survey, 2015



Level of Fadama III project implemented

This was measured by investigating the 13 Fadama III projects that were expected to be implemented in the study area. Results in Table 3 reveal that construction of animal pens (mean= 3.29) ranked first among the Fadama III projects implemented in the study area. This was followed by construction of lock up shops (mean= 3.27), construction of fish pond and fishing equipment (mean= 2.28) and input support like farm inputs and equipment (mean= 1.95). Also, construction of cold rooms (mean= 1.88) ranked higher than supports like grants and loans (mean=1.77), construction of processing shed (mean= 1.74), procurement of machines (mean= 1.68) and construction of bore hole with accessories (mean= 1.28). Furthermore, establishment of rural market (mean= 1.26) ranked higher than rehabilitation/construction of bridges (mean=1.23), rehabilitation/construction of roads and culverts (mean=1.14) while procurement of tricycle and trailer (mean= 0.77) ranked least among Fadama III projects implemented.

It is evident from this results that only two Fadama III projects (construction of animal pens and construction of lock up shops) were completely implemented, six projects (construction of fish pond and fishing equipment, input support, construction of cold rooms, supports like grants and loans, construction of processing shed and procurement of machines) were averagely implemented in the study area. Whereas, only five Fadama III projects (construction of bore hole with accessories, establishment of rural market, rehabilitation/construction of bridges, rehabilitation/construction of roads and culverts and procurement of tricycle and trailers) were fairly implemented. In summary, 38.5 per cent of the Fadama III projects were fairly implemented, 46.1 per cent were averagely implemented while only 15.4 per cent were completely implemented. The results indicate that most of the projects were not completely implemented as proposed in the implementation manuals. This implies that the projects aimed at improving the level of living of the beneficiaries were all implemented but not completely implemented as stated in the Fadama III implementation manual. Only two projects were completely implemented and the remaining eleven projects were not completely implemented. On the basis of this, the huge finances allocated for Fadama III project implementation was not well justified in the overall result of the project. Compared to other documented results in different poverty alleviation programmes across west Africa, it is a step in the right direction.

Table III
Distribution of beneficiaries by the level of Fadama III project implemented

(n=240)

Variable	Ranked mean	S.D	Remark
Construction of animal pens	3.29	0.9877	Completely executed
Construction of lock up shops	3.27	0.969	Completely executed
Construction of fish pond & fishing equip.	2.28	0.939	Averagely executed
Input support like farm inputs & equip.	1.95	0.8923	Averagely executed
Construction of cold rooms	1.88	0.9165	Averagely executed
Supports like grants & loans	1.77	1.0764	Averagely executed
Construction of processing shed	1.74	1.2417	Averagely executed
Procurement of machines	1.68	0.9866	Averagely executed
Construction of borehole with accessories	1.28	1.2072	Fairly executed
Establishment of rural market	1.26	1.0479	Fairly executed
Rehab./construction of bridges	1.23	1.0529	Fairly executed
Rehab./construction of roads & culverts	1.14	0.9517	Fairly executed
Procurement of Tricycle & trailer	0.77	1.0438	Fairly executed

Source: Field survey, 2015 Grand mean = 1.81

Factors affecting Fadama III projects implementation

The results in Table 4 show that expensive nature of project, political interference and lack of co-operation within FUG group were identified as factors affecting Fadama III project implementation. About 69 per cent of the respondents subscribed to expensive nature of project as the main factor hindering complete implementation of Fadama III project in the study area, also 60 per cent of the respondents subscribed to political interference while 48 per cent subscribed to lack of co-operation within the FUG group as a factor mitigating the complete implementation of Fadama III project.

Table IV
Distribution of respondents by factors affecting Fadama III projects implementation.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
n= 240		
*Factors		
Expensive nature of project	166	69
Political interference	144	60
Lack of co-operation	115	48

Source: Field survey, 2015 * Multiple responses

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this survey, it could be concluded that all the Fadama III projects were implemented but only very few were completely implemented as stated in the implementation manual. The extent of participation of the beneficiaries was moderately high and that most of them regularly attend the FUG meetings at interval of two weeks (fortnightly). Some of the factors responsible for the failure to complete Fadama III project implementation are expensive nature of project, political interference and lack of co-operation within various FUGs. On the basis of this finding, the level of Fadama III project completely implemented among Fadama Users Group was assessed to be very low and these totally negate the initial plan of the project. The study recommends as follows;

1. Massive enlightenment seminars on group cooperation and conflicts resolution among the members of the FUGs should be embarked upon, in order to foster peaceful co-existence within the groups;
2. Henceforth, Fadama III projects should be demand-driven in the communities rather than by design by the programme. In other words, beneficiaries should be allowed in decision making on issues like contractors and resources to be used in implementing projects.
3. Fadama III officials should be encouraged to monitor the progress made during and after implementing projects for proper documentation and accountability.
4. The contribution quota expected to be paid by the beneficiaries before a programme can be implemented should be lowered, so that beneficiaries would be able to choose programmes that will solve their immediate problem.
5. Policies should be formulated by government and other financing institutions on proper monitoring and evaluation of various programmes targeted at improving the living standard of the rural dwellers.

Limitation of the Study

The study was limited to a state in Nigeria (i.e. the sample frame), this was due to huge financial requirement in covering the whole state in the nation and also enumerators were employed in solving language barrier problem while in the field.

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