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Constraints of Participants to the Effective Performance of Agriculture and Rural Development Programs in Nigeria: YOBE IFAD-CBARDP Experience

Galadima M.

Department of Sociology, Yobe State University Damaturu, Nigeria

Abstract:

The effectiveness of the roles and Performance of Agriculture and Rural Development Programs in Nigeria should be measured against their ability to engender the preconditions to the attainment of rural development objectives. The major thrust of this study was to examine the constraints faced by participants of IFAD-CBARDP in Yobe State, after the first phase of its program. Objectives were achieved using multi-stage sampling techniques. A well-structured questionnaire was used to elicit primary data from respondents. Secondary data were journals, Annual reports and baseline data of IFAD-CBARDP, previous researches and other related periodicals. Descriptive Statistics were utilized for the analyses. The findings revealed that, the majority (51%) of respondents were male with age ranging between 20 and 65 years averaging 40 years. About 97% were married, having a household size range of 5-10 persons and about 68% had formal education. The result revealed that, cultural factors and inadequate capitals were among the major constraints that hindered the effective performance of the program. It is therefore recommended that, mass sensitization should be adopted as a tool for curbing the cultural predicaments and participants were also encouraged to form cooperative groups in order to pool their resources together so as to improve their financial capability. Program planners and implementers are therefore urged to intensify awareness creation among rural dwellers and adopt the use of community driven development approach (CDD) in the execution of rural development projects with poverty alleviation thrust as in the case of IFAD-CBARDP.

Key words: Constraints, IFAD-CBARDP, Participants, performance, Rural Development

1. Introduction

In Nigeria and elsewhere, research findings on the constraints to the effective performance of Agriculture and Rural Development Projects have indicated that, project implementation has been characterised by many impediments; among the most important factor mentioned was “top down” approach in which the rural farmers were not involved in the concept, planning and monitoring, which often leads to massive failures in the project implementation [12] Other factors that equally militate against project implementation according to him included lack of understanding the socio-economic, socio-cultural and religious factors of the benefitting communities. Bhagyalakshmi [2] revealed that, in rural development perspectives, empowerment, and information go hand in hand; without information, no development can take a firm root. The new opportunities can only be provided when all the information needs of the community can be met to stimulate their awareness and better their capabilities. Verhelst [11] also reported that rural development program is, however, meaningful when applied with the traditional knowledge and cultural values of the community. Imposition of external impetus serves to exacerbate or worsen the problems.

More so, [9] reported that in Nigeria, findings on the constraints to the effective performance of Agriculture and Rural Development Projects have indicated that, most past policies, strategies and interventions failed to achieve their objectives as a result of poor design. Note that, most of those policies were not successful due to “top-down policy in which development is forced on people regardless of their “felt needs” [5]. In the same manner, it was equally revealed that, lack of understanding the socioeconomic and socio-cultural factors of the communities or participants by projects’ implements were stumbling block to the effective performance of Agriculture and Rural Development Projects [11]. It was also observed that, lack of education among women, linkages with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the problem of leadership, politics, funding and awareness on the activities; capacity building and training were among the constraints that, limits the effective performance of community based organizations on rural development [7].

However, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Community-Based Agriculture and Rural Development Program (IFAD-CBARDP) is an integrated agriculture and rural development program aimed at improving of livelihood and living conditions of the rural poor with emphasis on women and other vulnerable groups, especially physically challenged and dejected people, using Community Driven Development approach (CDD). The program is jointly funded by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN), and seven participating States -Borno, Jigawa, Katsina,

Kebbi, Sokoto, Yobe and Zamfara; Sixty nine Local Government Councils (LGCs) in the seven states, where two hundred and seven (207) village areas (VAs) have been selected from the participating Local Government Councils and World Bank (WB) is the cooperating institution, Annual Progress Report [1].

In Nigeria the first phase of the program came into being in January 2003 and elapsed in March 2010. The Yobe state program was declared effective on the 31st January, 2003 following the fulfillment of loan covenants set forth for effectiveness. The program had been implemented in Nine Local Government Areas of the State, namely; Karasuwa, Yusufari, Bursari, Nangere, Yunusari, Tarmuwa, Machina, Fika, Fune and their respective 27 village areas.

This paper seeks to explore on the constraints faced by participants of IFAD-CBARDP in Yobe State, after the first phase of its program. The objectives were however made to identify the socioeconomic characteristics of participants in the study area, and also, to identify the constraints faced by participants of IFAD-CBARDP in the study area.

2. Methodology

The study was carried out in Yobe State. The State is located in the North East zone of Nigeria with its headquarters at Damaturu. It lies between latitude 12° 00' N and longitude 11.300° E, covering a land area of about 45,502 square kilometers (km²), with a population of about 2,321,591 people [6]

However, in order to examine various constraints faced by participants of IFAD-CBARDP in Yobe State, all the three senatorial zones of the State were selected; taking one Local Government Area from each zone that participated in the IFAD-CBARDP. The zones include: Northern senatorial zone; Central and South Zone respectively. To determine the sample size of the population in the study area, a multistage sampling technique was employed to get the respondents. In the first stage, three Local Government Areas were purposively selected in each zone: Karasuwa in Northern zone, Bursari in Central and Fune in South zone, out of the nine benefiting LGAs in Yobe state, for easy accessibility and to cut across the State. In the second stage, the simple random sampling technique was used to select two benefiting villages from each Local Government Area, making a total of six villages. Thirdly, 10% of the population were randomly selected from each village, which form the sample size of (160) of the total population. The data collected includes; socioeconomic characteristics of participants in the study area and data on the constraints faced by participants of IFAD-CBARDP in the study area. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, involving frequencies and percentages.

3. Results and Discussions

This section presents the results and a discussion of the data obtained from IFAD-CBARDP participants on their socioeconomic characteristics and various constraints faced in the course of the program.

3.1. Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

The socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents identified include; Gender, Age, Marital Status, Household Size, Level of education, Membership of cooperative society, Experience in IFAD-CBARDP and Access to Credit. Evidence from the descriptive analysis of socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents in the study area as shown in Table 1, revealed that 51% of the respondents were male and 49% were female. This showed that both genders were adequately represented in the IFAD-CBARDP, with little variation in favor of male respondents, which may be as a result of the cultural barrier in the area of not allowing women to come out and participate in any programs freely. The data in Table 1 also, revealed that the age of the respondents ranged between 20 and 65 years with an average of 40 years. This implies that, the respondents are middle aged and so still active and can participate adequately in development programs. The age distribution as evident in the data is expected to have a positive influence on the respondent's participation in IFAD-CBARDP program, which invariably meant better livelihood. It was equally observed in Table 1 that 97% of the respondents were married and 3% were single. This shows that most of the respondents will have greater responsibility than the single, which may encourage respondents to be committed towards their participation in IFAD-CBARDP program. As noted by [8], that there is a trend for rural youth to start having responsibilities at an earlier age than urban youth. Hence, the tendency to marry early helps in building a virile farming population. In the same manner, the result in Table 1 indicates that about half (49%) of the respondents had 6-10 people in their households, while, 31% had household size of less than 6 people. This implies that respondents had dependents to cater for and their participation in programs like IFAD-CBARDP could help in engaging them on the farm and improving their livelihood. Table 1 also, reveals that about 68% of the respondents had formal education. Such level of education is expected to have a positive impact on the respondents' participation in the IFAD-CBARDP. The respondents with no formal education were about 32%. This implies that the majority of respondents had formal education. More so, the result indicates that, Participants of IFAD-CBARDP belong to cooperative society; the maximum number of years spent as members of cooperative society was 9 years and a minimum of 1 year. Respondents with 4 – 6 years of membership duration constitute 61%, while 20% had 1-3 years of membership of cooperative society (Table 1). With this level of membership duration, it could be said that the majority of the respondents has had long duration of experience as members of cooperative group which can facilitate understanding of the program due to interaction among members.

The result in Table 1 revealed that the majority (62%) of the beneficiaries had between 4 and 6 years of experience in IFAD-CBARDP activities, while 24% of the respondents had experience of 7 to 9 years and the lowest percentage (13%) falls within 1 to 3 years of experience in IFAD-CBARDP. These years of experience in the program are expected to translate into better utilization and understanding of the program which may invariably result into better income as well as standard of living. To respondents' access to credit facilities, it was equally observed in Table 1 that 56% of the respondents had no access to credit facilities. This low access to credit could be attributed to the fact that IFAD-CBARDP seldom grants financial credit to participants. Rather,

participants are trained in entrepreneurial development. Ekong (2003) asserts that credit is a very strong factor that is needed to acquire or develop any enterprise; its availability could determine the extent of production capacity.

Variables	Frequency	Percentages	Mean
Gender			
Male	82	51.2	
Female	78	48.9	
Age (years)			
20-29	19	11.9	
30-39	52	32.2	40
40-49	54	33.8	
50-59	34	21.2	
60-69	1	0.6	
Marital status			
Married	156	97.5	
Single	4	2.5	
Household size			
0-5	49	30.6	
6-10	78	48.8	
11-15	29	18.2	
16-20	3	1.9	
21-25	1	0.6	
Level of education			
No education	51	31.9	
Adult education	21	13.1	
Primary	34	21.2	
Secondary	38	23.8	
Tertiary	5	3.1	
Others	11	6.9	
Membership of cooperative society (yrs)			
Non members	5	3.1	
1 -3	32	20.0	
4 -6	97	60.6	
7 -9	26	16.2	
Experience in IFAD-CBARDP (yrs)			
1 -3	21	13.1	
4 -6	100	62.5	
7 -9	39	24.4	
Access to credit			
None	89	55.6	
Access	71	44.0	
Total	160	100.00	

Table 1: Socioeconomic Characteristics of Respondents

3.2. Constraints Faced by Participants of IFAD-CBARDP in the Study Area

This section analyses the constraints faced by the participants of the program. Various factors such as lack of awareness, cultural barriers, inadequate capital and illiteracy were ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th respectively (Table 2) as factors affecting the program. Information creates awareness, which can lead to development. Most of the respondents were noticed to be married women, according to the culture, they are not supposed to associate with other people especially men. This impedes information and participation of an individual in a program. This finding agrees with that of [7] who observed that lack of education among women, linkages with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), lack of good leadership, policies, funding, awareness of the activities, capacity building and training were among the constraints hindering the effective performance of community based organizations in rural development.

Constraints	*Frequency	*Percentages	Ranking
Lack of awareness	61	38.1	1 st
Cultural barrier	52	32.5	2 nd
Lack of inadequate capital	43	26.9	3 rd
Illiteracy	20	12.5	4 th
Inadequate facilities	20	12.5	4 th
Lack of mobility	6	3.7	6 th
Lack of good leadership	3	1.8	7 th

Table 2: Constraints Encountered by Participants of IFAD-CBARDP
*Multiple Responses

4. Conclusion

From the data presented, it can be concluded that, out of the 160 respondents, 51% were male, while 49 % were female with ages ranging from 20 to 65 with an average 40 years. While 97% of the respondents were married, the majority (80%) having household size of less than 10 members, whereas, 48% had formal education. The majority of the respondents had spent 4-6 years as members of cooperative societies. While (63%) of the respondents had between 4 and 6 years of experience with IFAD-CBARDP and 56% had no access to credit facilities. Notwithstanding, respondents highlighted various constraints encountered in the program according to their severity to include lack of awareness, cultural barrier, inadequate capital and illiteracy. Others include inadequate infrastructure/facilities, lack of mobility and lack of good leadership. These constraints serve as an impediment to the respondents' participation in IFAD-CBARDP in the study area. Despite all the constraints encountered by participants; the program has recorded successes in the improvement of participants' livelihood status in the study area.

5. Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings obtained from the study:

- In order to eliminate the cultural barrier which impedes the effective performance of the program, mass sensitization should be adopted as a tool for curbing the cultural predicaments in the study area.
- It was equally observed that, inadequate capital was one of the major constraints of the respondents. The participants should be encouraged to form cooperative groups in order to pool their resources together so as to improve their financial capability.
- Program planners and implementers are therefore urged to intensify awareness creation among rural dwellers and adopt the use of community driven development approach (CDD) in the execution of rural development projects with poverty alleviation thrust as in the case of IFAD-CBARDP.

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