Capacity Development in Anti-poverty Programmes: Analysis of the Impact of FADAMA III Capacity Building, Communication and Information Support in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria

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Abstract: **This study empirically explores the relationship between capacity development and poverty reduction using beneficiaries' views of Third National *Fadama* Development Project (NFDP III) from Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria. Using survey design, data for the study was obtained from Two hundred and forty-five (245) NFDP III's selected project beneficiaries. Grossman reflexive comparison was used as a frame for discussion. The study used Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and *t-test* in the data analysis. Results indicate that, Capacity building, Communication and Information Supports (CBCIS) has strong and positive correlation with poverty reduction. R= 0.734, p= 0.000. Results also show that, there was no significant difference in the level of provision of CBCIS amongst the project beneficiaries in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria because all the potential beneficiaries underwent same capacity building processes and the trainers followed strictly, the stipulated guidelines as contained in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM), nationwide. However, the Capacity building process fell short in the management of group-owned sub-projects. For example, bore hole constructed at Anguwan Galadima, Makarfi, Kaduna State stopped functioning due to poor maintenance. Open market stalls at Maraban T/Yari, Makarfi, Kaduna State is dilapidated, Para-vet Clinic at Dagawa, Yabo, Sokoto is decaying. Several other productive assets including poultry houses, rice hullers, rice processing machines and grinding machines, *etc* could not in most cases, function beyond four (4) years after NFDP III. The study recommends the establishment of Farmers' Skill Acquisition Centers (FSACs) who should focus mainly on building the capacity of FUGs in the management of productive assets and in the adoption of best practices in agricultural technology. There is also the need for the inclusion of Credit Service Providers (CSP) to enable farmers' access to loans to boost agricultural activities.**

Keywords: **Capacity development, group management, poverty reduction.**

I. INTRODUCTION

There is emerging agreement in the global community that capacity development is generally the engine of human development. In the development parlance, building the capacity of project beneficiaries needs to be developed using existing local knowledge, structures and processes. This is a bottom-up approach that involves extensive discussions, conversations, and decision-making with the target community hence, community group members create content according to their capacities and interests. This process facilitates engagement with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) with the goal of strengthening individual and social development. This participatory content's creation is an important tool for poverty reduction strategies and creating a digitally inclusive knowledge farming societies (Watkins and Tacchi, 2008) In view of the above, the Third National *Fadama* Development Project (NFDP III) considers Capacity building, Communication and Information Support (CBCIS) as integral components through which the livelihoods of the beneficiaries could be enhanced. Therefore, NFDP III provides 100% grant funds with beneficiaries enjoying full capacity development at no cost (FGN, PIM 2009).

The NFDP III sought to promote institutional and social capital development which is translated into CBCIS geared towards promoting group management. This is achieved when project beneficiaries have the ability to identify community-owned project, have the ability to develop the Local Development Plans (LDPs); have the capacity to adopt best practices in agricultural technology; being able to manage productive assets, have the ability to formulate demands for advisory services and Group management which is acquired through organizing meetings, proper keeping of records of meetings, income and expenditure, *etc*. As provided by Idris (2018), there are three (3) fundamental routes through which the CBCIS process meant to reduce the incidence of poverty amongst project beneficiaries, thus: i) strengthening community's ability to invest in projects; ii) promoting savings culture for the acquisition and enhancement of productive base, and iii) increasing farmers' access to information about market conditions and farming activities which would enable them take viable decisions in storage for value-addition to generate higher income.

One of the fundamental defects in strategies with the previously implemented agricultural cum anti-poverty programmes in Nigeria is the inherent failure to target the poor. As established by Abang (2015) and Idris (2018), the poorest of the poor, are hardly ever reached or left out in

many of the intervention programmes. Equally, lack of identification of specific category of the poor whose poverty reduction impact would significantly reduce the poverty situation in the country was also as a result of the overly technical, expert-driven, and top-down approach that failed to produce desired outcomes, over the years (Brock, 2002). In order to target the poor and to empower them, NFDP III was anchored on Community-driven development (CDD) approach as implementation strategy.

The main objectives of this study is to assess the extent to which provision of Capacity building, Communications and Information Support impacted on the incidence of poverty of NFDP III beneficiaries, and to establish whether a significant difference exist in the level of provision of this study constructs in the two (2) States under study. However, the study posits that, the level of provision of CBCIS has no significant impact on the incidence of poverty amongst NFDP III beneficiaries.

The study was prompted by the ever increasing incidence of poverty in the country despite the surfeit anti-poverty measures put in place to fight the menace, over decades. This amongst other reasons spurred our interests to fill knowledge gap and extend the frontier of knowledge. The findings of this study will help policy makers/development administrators to chart a course of action that would help sustains and scale up the impact NFDP III in the promotion of poverty reduction in Nigeria. The study covered the period of eight (8) years (2009-2017) i.e. four (4) years NFDP III implementation period (2009-2013) and four (4) years after NFDP III implementation (2013-2017). This was to determine the level of impact of the project during and after the project implementation.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Article 25 (1) of the United Nations (UN) proclaimed that:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability… in circumstances beyond his control (United Nations, 2001).

The above United Nations' affirmation underscores the fundamentals of poverty reduction which gives governments, international donor agencies, independent evaluators and other research efforts a lot of concerns and worries to design effective strategies that can reduce the menace to tolerable level and ultimately, alleviate it.

The provision of CBCIS aimed at empowering farmers for poverty reduction, focuses on series of actions directed at helping the peasant farmers in the development process to increase their knowledge, skills and understandings and to develop the attitudes needed to bring about the desired developmental change (FAO, 2012). Capacity development is also an approach and a process in development; a means by which individuals, institutions and societies are empowered to make choices and chart their own development course. The CDD is a developmental approach that supports participatory decision making, local capacity building and community control of resources. CDD treats poor farmers and their community groups as assets and partners in development process. The pillars of CDD are participation, empowerment of communities, accountability and transparency as well as capacity building. Empowerment could be in the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in and negotiate with and exert influence and control. These are achieved through provision of information by Facilitators, provision of matching grants, social inclusion/participation in project cycle at all levels. The community orientation of development programme will make positive impact hence sustainability is expected to be achieved (FGN-NFDP III PIM, 2009). When organizations such as Farmer groups (in this case, the *Fadama* User Groups, FUGs) are vehicles for beneficiary participation, group consciousness for collective action becomes necessary and vital criterion. In this way, collective information sharing and decision-making would foster cohesiveness.

Capacity development is aimed at building human asset. Human assets are considered as one of the main roots out of poverty. Capacity building is a vital part of the package needed to advance farm productivity, raise incomes, and reduce poverty levels (Johanson, 2005). Saint (2005) posited that, adequate communication and information supports, rural infrastructure and access to market conditions amongst other factors, can improve the living conditions of the poor and lift them out of poverty. In the views of Irz, Lin, Thirtle and Wiggins (2001), skills development in form of education and training are very important to reducing poverty and promoting people's welfare. Consistent with other studies, Scherr and Hazell (1994) and Nkonya, Pender, Jagger, Sserunkuuma, Kaizzi, and Sali (2004), education reduces the propensity to adopt labour-intensive technologies (soil and water conservation structures and soil fertility practices). However, skills development increases the probability of adopting livestock management practices, which are likely to have higher returns to labour, given that demand for livestock products has been increasing in Nigeria and elsewhere in the world because of increasing incomes (Ogunyika and Marsh, 2006).

The NFDP III trained and built capabilities of the beneficiaries to gain access to information on how best to run and maintain the productive assets acquired by the *Fadama* Community Associations (FCAs)/FUGs and other resources (public infrastructures) to which they have access to, provide support network to enable them make better choices. Smallholder farmers can increase their incomes by selling what they grow but, getting crops to markets can be a formidable task in areas where transportation is arduous, infrastructure is challenging, and information about the pricing and conditions of markets are scarce. Therefore, the

value chain system should help farmers to have access to information that will support their decision-making and choice of market (Idris, 2018).

There are strong and positive relationships between Capacity building and poverty reduction. Narayan, Patel, Schafft, Rade-macher and Koch-schulte (2000) undertook a study, "*Voices of the Poor*" interviewed 6,000 poor people in 60 countries found out that poor people who demanded for development process by themselves had higher impacts on poverty reduction than those who received intervention through supply-driven. When asked to indicate what might make the greatest difference in their lives, they inter alia responded that, organization of their own so that they can negotiate with government, traders, and Non-Governmental Organizations and direct assistance through community-driven programmes so that they can shape their own destinies. Amongst smallholder farmers, poverty reduction can occur through raising incomes, which results from a) higher agricultural productivity and b) better market linkages and competitiveness (Johanson, 2005). The type of communication gadgets available in any rural area is another important infrastructure. Through an effective communication system, the dissemination of information on innovations and technologies to farmers could be affected. Capacity building is expected to have significant impact on FUG's ability to identify, discuss, and prioritize what sub-project best suit their living conditions.

Loewen (2009) expresses that whereas a programmatic intervention is generally directed at assisting groups and individuals to adapt to the imperatives of systems, systemic interventions are generally designed to realign a system to accommodate the needs of particular groups and individuals. Drinkwater and Maxwell (2000) provide a symmetric relationship that the greater the share of resources devoted to food and health service acquisition, the higher the vulnerability of the household to food and nutritional insecurity. Therefore, livelihoods are secured when households have secured ownership of, or access to, resources (both tangible and intangible) and income earning activities, including reserves and assets, to off-set risks, ease shocks, and meet contingencies.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Collective Action theory propounded by Olson (1965) provides a theoretical foundation upon which this study is hinged. Problems of low-productivity agriculture, food insecurity and high incidence of rural poverty necessitated renewed attention for collective action (World Bank, 2008). Collective action, as is possible through farmer groups is useful avenues for increasing farmer productivity and for the implementation of food security, other development projects and poverty reduction. The reality is, in Nigeria, there is a strong push for the use of organized groups in the implementation of numerous development programmes, notably, the World Bank-assisted First, Second and Third National *Fadama* Development Projects (NFDPs I, II, and III). There are three (3) core components underlying Collective Action theory. These are: *Participation* and *Empowerment*. Olson (1965) expressed that participation represents action, or being part of an action such as involvement of the people (project beneficiaries) in the various stages of the intervention.

Putting collective action into perspective, NFDP III is aimed at empowering beneficiaries to take the leading role to analyze their existing situations, develop Local Development Plans (LDPs), implement; monitor and evaluate sub-project activities; and gain control over projects, resources or services. The appeal of CDD arose from recent efforts to empower local communities to participate in decision-making and implementation of development programmes (Dasgupta and Beard, 2007). Khwaja (2001) observed that projects managed by communities are more sustainable than those managed by local governments because of better maintenance. The NFDP III ensures that each participating FUGs submit a proposal to an FCA where most responsive projects are evaluated and prioritized for funding. Also, the approach enhances the chances of making development objectives and outputs relevant to the perceived needs of the people and lastly, participation can lead to improvement in knowledge, skills and distribution of power across individuals and communities and, thus, improve equity. The FUGs needed access to inputs/resources for farming, marketing of their farm outputs, sharing a common property resource. Collective action helps FCAs/FUGs to own public infrastructures such as feeder roads, culverts, bridges *etc* which go on to enhance the people's living conditions, raising their incomes, and enabling them acquire the requisite productive assets.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is survey research. It employs Grossman (1994) reflexive comparison as a frame. Reflexive design treats project participants to serve as both treatment and reference group. The study had six (6) *Fadama* Community Associations (FCAs), three (3) each from Kaduna and Sokoto States consisting of five (5) *Fadama* User Groups (FUG) each per FCA, making up of fifteen (15) FUGs per State and thirty (30) FUG units. Seven hundred and fifty (750) target project beneficiaries were determined to be parent population. Krejcie and Morgans' (1970) Population and sample size Table was used to draw the sample size. Two hundred and fifty-four (254) (34%) project beneficiaries were determined whom copies of questionnaire were issued to out of which two hundred and forty-five (245) (96.5%) were duly filed and returned.

Cluster and purposive sampling techniques were used. The targeted FUGs were clustered according to their respective FCAs. From each of the six (6) FCAs, five (5) numbers of FUGs each were randomly selected. Three (3) LGAs per State (One LG each) was purposively selected based on intensity of *fadama* activities. The questionnaire instrument was

structured using Likert (1932) scale of Very high, High, Average, Low and Very low. Data for the study was presented and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Percentage and frequencies were used to depict the bio data of the respondents whilst mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the study hypothesis at 0.05 levels of significance.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Analysis of Respondents by State

State			
		Frequency	Percent
	Kaduna	128	52.2
	Sokoto	117	47.8
	Total	245	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

A total of 128 of the respondents representing 52.2% are from Kaduna State whilst the remaining 117 representing 47.8% are from Sokoto State.

Table 2: Analysis of Respondents by LGAs

Local Government		Frequency	Percent
	Igabi	42	17.1
	Kubau	43	17.5
	Makarfi	43	17.5
	Sokoto-south	40	16.3
	Wamakko	41	16.7
	Yabo	36	14.7
	Total	245	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The respondents were categorized into the six (6) Local Government Areas selected. The first three (3) are from Kaduna State and the last three (3) from Sokoto State. Igabi LGA had 42 or 17.1% respondents. Kubau and Makarfi LGAs had 43 or 17.5% respondents, respectively. Sokoto-south LGA had 40 or 16.3% respondents. Wamakko LGA had 41 or 16.7% respondents whilst Yabo LGA had 36 or 14.7% respondents. This implies that amongst the selected LGAs in Kaduna State, Kubau and Makarfi LGAs marginally had the highest number of beneficiaries selected whilst in Sokoto State, Wamakko LGA marginally had the highest number of respondents.

Table 3: Beneficiary Category

		Frequency	Percent
	Crop farmers	152	62.0
	Livestock owners	93	38.0
	Total	245	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The NFDP III beneficiaries selected from Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria were categorized into Crop farmers and Livestock owners. Table 3 above shows that 152 or 62.0% of the respondents are Crop farmers and the remaining 93 or 38.0% are Livestock owners.

Table 4: Analysis of Mean Distribution on Capacity building, Communications and Information Support on Poverty Reduction

s/n	Items	Response categories					Mean	Std.dev	Remark
		VH	H	Av	Low	VL			
1	FCA's ability to identify own project	3	169	59	9	5	3.6367	1.0111	Positive
2	Community's ability to develop LDP	3	17	67	135	23	2.3551	0.841	Negative
3	Functionality of FCA/FUGs	7	187	38	10	3	3.7551	1.021	Positive
4	Community's ability to invest in project	3	132	105	4	1	3.5388	.0894	Positive
5	Information sharing and market knowledge	7	194	37	4	3	3.8082	.0711	Positive
6	Adoption of best practices in agricultural technology	2	198	41	2	2	3.8000	1.0121	Positive
7	Formulation of demands for advisory services	2	126	99	16	2	3.4490	0.813	Positive
8	Management of productive assets	1	42	185	16	1	3.1061	0.6416	Positive
9	Savings culture for the enhancement of productive base	1	42	158	43	1	2.9959	0.877	Negative
10	Evidence of significant increase in productivity level	31	185	25	3	1	3.9878	0.674	Positive
	Cumulative mean						3.443		Positive

Decision mean – 3.000

Table 4 above shows that the level of provision of CBCIS has significant impact on poverty reduction. Reason being that the respondents' overall mean scores of responses was 3.443 which is found to be greater than the decision mean of 3.000. Specifically, majority of the respondents rated information sharing and market knowledge with a highest mean response of 3.8082 with details showing that 7 of the respondents rated it very high whilst 194 considered it high as against 37 that rated it as average, whilst only 4 of the respondents rated it low and 4 very low. It was also discovered from the Table that adoption of best practices in agricultural technology had the second highest mean response of 3.8000 with details showing that a total of 200 of the respondents rated it high whilst 41 rated it average and the remaining 4 rated it low or very low. In summary, level of provision of CBCIS has significantly impacted on poverty reduction through: i) strengthening community's ability to invest in projects; ii) promoting savings culture for the enhancement of productive base, and iii) increasing access to information about market conditions and farming activities which enabled the beneficiaries to decide what type of grains to store for value-addition that resulted in generation of higher income.

Table 5: *t*-test Distribution on the Difference in the level of Provision of Capacity Building, Communications and Information Support amongst NFDP III Project beneficiaries in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria

Variable	States	N	Mean	Std.dev	Std.err	df	*T*	P
Difference in the level of provision of CBCIS amongst NFDP III beneficiaries	Kaduna	128	35.0078	1.99802	.17660			
						243	1.084	0.074
	Sokoto	117	34.0940	2.76363	.25550			

Results of the independent *t*-test statistics as shown above, there is no significant difference in the level of provision of CBCIS amongst beneficiaries in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria. This is because the computed means in the levels of provision of CBCIS are very close 35.0078 and 34.0940 for Kaduna and Sokoto and States, respectively. This was because beneficiaries underwent same capacity building processes and the trainers followed strictly, the stipulated guidelines as contained in the PIM, nationwide.

Hypothesis Testing

Level of provision of Capacity Building, Communications and Information Support has no significant impact on the incidence of poverty of NFDP III beneficiaries in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria.

Table 6: Level of Provision of CBCIS and Reduction in the incidence of Poverty amongst NFDP III Beneficiaries

Variable	N	Mean	Std.dev	Correlation index	Df	P
Poverty Reduction	245	19.3551	2.88588			
				0.734**	243	0.000
Capacity building, Communications and Information Support	245	34.57	2.43			

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Results of the PPMC statistics show that the level of provision of CBCIS has significant impact on poverty reduction. Results r= 0.734, p= 0.000. This shows that there is a strong and positive correlation between CBCIS and poverty reduction. Thus, the nature of the relationship between the associated variables is directly proportional. That is, the higher the level of provision of CBCIS, the greater the impact of NFDP III on poverty reduction amongst the beneficiaries. Therefore the study hypothesis which states that level of provision of CBCIS has no significant impact on poverty reduction amongst NFDP III beneficiaries in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria, is hereby not accepted.

VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Results indicate that, CBCIS has strong and positive correlation with poverty reduction. R= 0.734, p= 0.000. Results also show that in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria, there was no significant difference in the level of provision of CBCIS amongst the project beneficiaries because all the potential beneficiaries underwent same capacity building processes and the trainers followed strictly, the stipulated guidelines as contained in the PIM, nationwide.

The Capacity building process fell short in the management of group-owned sub-projects. In fact, more than eighty percent (80%) of FUGs surveyed have failed to properly maintain group-owned rural infrastructure and productive assets. For example, bore hole constructed at Anguwan Galadima, Makarfi, Kaduna State stopped functioning due to poor maintenance. Open market stalls at Maraban T/Yari, Makarfi, Kaduna State is dilapidated, Para-vet Clinic at Dagawa, Yabo, Sokoto is decaying. Several other productive assets including poultry houses, rice hullers, rice processing machines and grinding machines, *etc* could not in most cases, function beyond four (4) years after NFDP III. It was also discovered from field observation that none of the FUGs visited was able to draw an LDP by itself without Facilitators during the four (4) years implementation period of NFDP III.

VII. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The central theme of this study was to assess the level of provision of CBCIS and its impact on poverty reduction with particular reference to NFDP III beneficiary communities of Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria. There is evidence that as project beneficiaries gained more control over the project, their empowerment increases. Project beneficiaries were empowered when they have direct control over key project decisions, including management of investment projects. Beneficiaries contribute directly when they participate as groups. Organizations such as Farmer groups are therefore considered as vehicles for beneficiary participation which led to collective action as necessary and vital criterion. In this way, collective information sharing and decision-making foster cohesiveness. The CDD approach is meant to stimulate the level of beneficiary participation in the project design, planning and implementation thereby enabling the poor (target beneficiaries) to decide what sub-project to be executed.

Furthermore, the results in Tables 1 and 2 which addresses the objectives of the study and tested the postulated hypothesis showed that, level of provision of Capacity building, Communications and Information Support has significant impact on poverty reduction amongst NFDP III beneficiaries. Reason being that respondents' overall mean score of 3.443 is higher than decision mean of 3.000 and the results of PPMC statistics indicated r= 0.734; p= 0.000 which showed that, there is a strong and positive correlation between CBCIS and poverty reduction. Based on respondents' ratings, the outcome of Capacity building process had a profound impact on beneficiary's group management hence 169 of the respondents' rated FCAs/FUGs' ability to identify own project as high, 194 rated information sharing and market knowledge as high. One possible explanation is that, as part of governments' continued commitment to sustain the impact of NFDP III, the Sokoto State government has in 2013 established Farmers' Information Technology Centre (FITC) in Bodinga. The Centre enables farmers to access information about farming activities. It provides a wide range of mobile phone-access information service for the rural farmers. Buttressing the study findings, Johanson (2005) contend that, capacity building programmes are geared towards increasing the ability of the project beneficiaries to assess their needs, participate in planning, and implement and manage economic activities. Social inclusiveness is emphasized to ensure high level of community participation in decision-making which according to Labonne and Chase (2008) is meant to improve trust amongst group members, increase participation in village assemblies, and generally increase the social capital of community members.

VIII. CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

From the results obtained in the study, there is evidence that capacity development has significant impact on poverty reduction. The study equally established that the nature of the relationships between the main study variables is directly proportional. That is, the higher the levels of provision of CBCIS, the greater the impact on the livelihoods of the potential beneficiaries. The study submits that, the levels of impact of CBCIS on poverty reduction as provided by NFDP III in Kaduna and Sokoto States, Nigeria would have been greater if, the project had succeeded in maintaining group-owned productive assets and other public infrastructures.

This study, therefore recommends policy measures that could further scale-up the momentum of the project impact through the establishment of Farmers' Skills Acquisition Centers (FSACs) all over the country with much concentration in rural areas so that the seventy percent (70%) of the Nigeria's population engaged into farming could acquire relevant skills on modern and commercial agriculture as a departure of subsistence farming that dominated the Nigeria's food production chain, over the years. These FSACs should focus mainly on building the capacity of FUGs in the management of productive assets and in the adoption of best practices in agricultural technology. Through this scheme, the Nigerian government should subsidize farmers' inputs and other production equipment and make farmlands more affordable for the peasant farmers to engage in agricultural produce for income generation.

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