



ABSTRACT

This journal paper presents a case study on the role of education and sensitization in achieving project sustainability for development agencies. The study focuses on the innovative measures implemented by these agencies to ensure the success and long-term impact of their projects in beneficiary communities.

Through a literature review and a detailed analysis of the case study, the paper explores the importance of education and sensitization as key components of successful development projects. It also

EDUCATION AND SENSITIZATION OF BENEFICIARY COMMUNITIES IN ACHIEVING SUCCESS FOR PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY-A CASE STUDY OF INNOVATIVE MEASURES OF DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES.

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INTRODUCTION

The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, NEEDS (2007), upheld that the 1991 census report revealed that four million youths between the ages of 12—24 years are illiterate. Education plays a key role in the social and economic development process of any country, ensures its bright future and the quality of its adolescents and young adults. Another problem fighting against the development of rural communities is the high rate of HIV/AIDS that claims the lives of so many people. The above explanation reveals that cross-sector partnership for community development has not really achieved its aims. This was also attributed to the fact that the partners sometimes failed to contribute their own quotas and to play their roles so as to achieve the target of the partnership. Inadequate sensitization and mobilization of the community members paved way for scepticism and lack of trust among the partners. Why is it that despite the concerted efforts by the cross-sector partners to provide social amenities to these communities, the communities still suffer from under-development in all ramifications. Agirreazkuenaga, (2019).

Sustainable Livelihood Assessment And Grassroots Mobilisation

According to the Center for Development Support Initiatives' (CEDSI) annual activities report of 2003, experience has shown that development planners who perceive the need of the people from their air-conditioned offices and place certain infrastructures at the disposal of the community folks have been rudely shocked to find out



highlights the challenges faced by development agencies in implementing these measures and proposes practical solutions for overcoming them. The paper concludes that education and sensitization are crucial for achieving project sustainability, and that development agencies must continue to invest in these measures to ensure the long-term impact of their projects on beneficiary communities.

Key words: education, sensitization, communities, sustainable development

that they have not really responded to the needs of the people in the long run. Such infrastructures lie waste or remain at best under-utilised, “commentaries of development”. Therefore, in an attempt to provide a lasting solution to the developmental needs of the rural people, several approaches have been introduced to address the specific developmental needs of the community. Such approaches are Participatory Rural Appraisal, Participatory Learning and Action and Sustainable Livelihood Assessment (SLA). The Sustainable Livelihood Assessment gives opportunities to the partners and donors to adopt so many scientific techniques for the purpose of collection of useful information from the community. The focus group discussion enables the partners or agents of development to discuss with all the segments and stakeholders in the community. Their needs are harmonised to become the community development plan. This process or approach will definitely x-ray what the needs of the people are, and the ones that must be addressed first. CEDSI (2007)

According to Serrat (2017), and Kogachi, and Rajib (2023), some of the tools used when carrying out Sustainable Livelihood Assessment (SLA) are as follows:

- (1) Transect Walk.
- (2) Focus Group Discussion.
- (3) Historical Profiling.
- (4) Livelihood Analysis.
- (5) Stakeholders’ Analysis.
- (6) Venn Diagram.
- (7) Administration and Questionnaire.
- (8) Observation.
- (9) Photographing.
- (10) Problem Tree.
- (11) Solution Tree.
- (12) Wealth Ranking.
- (13) Pair Wise Ranking, etc.

Transect Walk

The change agent that entered into partnership with the community must walk round the length and breathe of the community for the purpose of identifying and taking inventories of all the social infrastructures on ground. The donors will be identified, the year of its establishment will also be



determined. This exercise will make it possible to confirm whether the project is functional, non-functional, completed, uncompleted and abandoned. Omer (2017).

Livelihood Analysis

It is used to determine the sources of living of a group of people. It also x-rays the natural resources available at their domain and the group of people that has control over a particular type of occupation

Historical Profiling

This is used to determine the history of the people and also to know some of the major events that have taken place in the community. It reveals the source of their origin and the year they started the migration. This will enable specialists in community development to know what to do in order to improve the standard of living of the people. Lusinga-Machikicho and Mutanana, (2022).

Questionnaire

This is a carefully designed instrument for the collection of data in accordance with specifications. It is administered randomly among the various groups in the community. The purpose of using all the Sustainable Livelihood Assessment tools or techniques is to gather useful information about the level of development in the community and to ascertain whether there are inter- or intra-communal conflicts. All these information shall be analysed, and those factors that militate against the development of the community shall be exposed, and solutions offered. The community development plan will be developed based on the needs of the various groups in the community. Serrat (2017),

Grassroots Mobilisation

According to Ewelum and Mbara (2015) pointed out that in the process of carrying Sustainable Livelihood Assessment in a particular community, the development partners will engage in adequate sensitisation. The people must be well informed about the process that is taking place and their capacity built in preparation to the task ahead of them. Capacity building in these perspectives will take different forms such as.

- (i) Holding meetings with all the groups and the stakeholders.
- (ii) Town hall or Town square sessions.
- (iii) Capacity building.
- (iv) Training of trainers.
- (v) Peace-building campaign.

Dada *et al.*, (2021) points out that adequate mobilisation of the grassroots people should be done constantly and consistently in the initial stage. These have to be until the people get assimilated into the system; and that, the NGO or government agency will only gain acceptance when the people are properly mobilised and trained for the purpose of achieving their target.

Research Methodology

Area of the Study

The three communities in Rivers State that were used as case study for this research are Soku, Okoloma-Ndoki (Afam) and Okehi; therefore, the ethno-historical life of Rivers State will be shed



light on since they have similar geographical features, culture, social, economic and political ways of life. With a tropical climate, numerous rivers and vast arable land, Rivers State is divided into three geographical settings namely upland, riverine and the swamp areas. The people of the State have lined up to their tradition of agriculture, especially fishing and farming, commerce and industry. The people of the upland are those settled within the plane lands of the alluvial deposit of Niger Delta. They include Okoloma-Ndoki (Afam) in Oyigbo Local Government Area (LGA). Okoloma is one of the communities in Ndoki and the headquarters of the LGA which emerged to Rivers State during field survey. Okoloma community has been in existence since the creation of the world. Okoloma migrated from Opobo settling around the river side. It is one of the communities in Umuihueze I Clan in Ndoki. It comprises nine communities and having farming and fishing as their main occupations. Okoloma has a population size of twelve thousand people (12,000) people; this is based on the 2006 census figure. The community is made up of four big compounds namely: Umuotu, Umunka, Mkpokoro and Mkpakpara compounds; and each having its own leadership authority. Okoloma community has social groups which include: United Friends Club, Star Age Grade, Youth body and one women group known as Idinaotu Women Association. Okehi I is one of the communities in the study area and the headquarters of Etche LGA. Okehi has Communities I and II, although Okehi I served our purpose here. Literarily, Okehi means “male oxen”. The headquarters of Etche is located in Okehi I. These two communities have different leadership authorities. Okehi I has social groups such as: age grade, women association and youth body. The population of Okehi I Community is about thirteen thousand (13,000) people; this is based on the 2006 census figure.

The study that was carried out at Soku Community revealed that the community is a mangrove forest, an agro-ecological zone of Nigeria. Some parts of the community are sand-filled. Soku is an Ijaw Community (a Kalabari Kingdom) located in Akuku-Toru Local Government Area in Rivers State. The community has a combination of linear and nuclear settlement patterns. An average of eight to twelve people forms a family. According to legend, Soku was founded by some old settlers who were cannibals and lived in caves. Their presence was made known by one of their captors who they did not kill because she was pregnant and she out-smarted them and was able to get back to her people who now went and set fire on the mouths of the caves and all the cannibals were killed. This marked the journey towards migration to the land known as Soku, being occupied today by the present settlers. The population grew as other smaller independent communities. The present population of Soku Community is about thirty thousand (30,000) people. This is based on the 2006 census figure. Soku community has social groups such as age grade, women and youth groups.

The Research Design

The survey design was employed for this research. Survey design employs questionnaires, observation and interviews in the process of determining the perceptions and activities of the target population. The design of the study was the researcher’s plan of action for collection of data, setting the research questions or hypotheses and the questionnaires.

Population for the Study

The population for the study of were the members of the Soku, Okehi and Okoloma_Ndoki (Afam) areas of Rivers State.



Sampling Technique and Sample Size

For the purpose of achieving an accurate representative sample size for the entire population under study, random sampling was employed and fifty (50) people from each of the three communities in the study area were selected as respondents including women, youths, union workers, CDC and Chief in council. Also, two representatives each from the developmental agencies were also interviewed. A total of one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were administered to the three (3) communities in an attempt to get accurate and unbiased information from them in relation to the implementation of community development projects with cross-sector partners at the forefront.

Validity and Reliability of The Instruments

According to Taherdoost (2016), reliability as a research concept presupposes consistency, stability and dependability of data. A reliable measuring instrument will be able to give the same results if used repeatedly under the same condition. The research instrument is said to be valid when it actually measures what it was supposed to measure. The validity of this research was authenticated from the Department of Agric. Econs and Extension, University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt. The Project Supervisor also read through it, and the necessary corrections ranging from methodology, the simplicity and clarity of the questionnaires looked at. Also, he ascertained whether the questions satisfactorily measured the variables of the study. The information gathered from a combination of the above instruments enhanced the validity of the instruments as well as increased the degree of reliability of the data collected.

Data Collection Methods

There were various instruments used to gather or collect data from the respondents or target population. These included questionnaires, field notes, interviews, observation, etc. The greater part of data collected for this study was through the use of questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into two main parts. The first part dealt with questions and information relating to the personal data of the respondents, while part two contained questions relating to the topic of research. However, out of the two hundred copies of questionnaire administered, only one hundred and fifty copies were correctly filled and returned by the respondents. Both the primary and secondary data were used in the process of collating useful information regarding how cross-sector partnership contributed towards the development of these communities. The researcher engaged the key interviews in detailed discussions regarding the ongoing projects and the completed ones carried out by cross-sector partnership. Information were also gathered from textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, browsing the internet, unpublished theses, projects and papers delivered at seminars.

Methods of Data Analysis

A combination of Simple Percentages, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Mean scores were used to analyse the personal characteristics of the respondents and testing of formulated hypotheses.



Result

Table 1 shows that there are some significant differences in the measures undertaken to provide education and sensitization to the beneficiaries. Specifically, from the result, observation shows that stakeholders' analysis had the highest mean value of measures undertaken to provide education and sensitization to the beneficiaries followed by facilitation technique across the three target communities. The result is in compliance with Rural Development Council (RDC 2007).

Table 1: Measures undertaken to provide education and sensitization to the beneficiaries.

METHODS	Okehi	Soku	Okoloma-Ndoki (Afam)
	T ₁	T ₂	T ₃
Brain Storming	2.60	2.80	2.80
Facilitation Technique	2.80	3.00	2.80
Questions and Answers	2.60	2.60	2.80
Stakeholders Analysis	3.00	3.20	3.00
Total	11.00	11.60	11.40

Source: field survey 2008

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the measures used in education and sensitization of the beneficiary communities in achieving success in project sustainability among the development agencies.

ANOVA RESULT SHOWING THE DIFFERENCE IN MEASURES UNDERTAKEN TO PROVIDE EDUCATION AND SENSITIZATION TO THE BENEFICIARIES.

There is significant difference in measures undertaken in providing education and sensitization to the beneficiaries. The result is significant; therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The result shows that $F_{cal} > F_{tab}$.

Table 2: Anova result showing the difference in measures undertaken to provide education and sensitization to the beneficiaries.

Sources of Variation	Df _(Trt-1)	Sum of Square (ss)	Mean SS	F _{cal}	F _{tab}
Total	49	-9.18	0.19	-	-
Treatment	2	22.61	11.31	38.98	3.23
Error	47	-31.79	-0.29	-	-

Summary, Conclusion And Recommendations

Summary

The objective of the study was to assess the measures used in education and sensitization of the beneficiary communities in achieving success in project sustainability among the development agencies in Rivers State. The sample size used for this research was one hundred and fifty (150)



participants. For the purpose of achieving an accurate representative sample size for the entire population under study, random sampling was employed. Percentages, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Mean scores were used to analyse the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and testing of the hypothesis. The major findings proper education and sensitization of the beneficiaries to be key to the in-depth understanding of communities' roles in defining their future development, etc.

Conclusion

Capacity building was a vital measure that enhanced cohesion and peace. It made mobilisation and sensitization of the people easier and result-oriented. In addition to change the mind-set and value orientation of the people towards the actualisation of sustainable community development and peaceful co-existence among the partners, which is a prerequisite condition to achieve sustainable community development.

Recommendation

- A proper education and sensitization of the beneficiaries is key to the in-depth understanding of communities' roles in defining their future development. Stakeholder engagement that utilises methods such as brainstorming, facilitation technique and analysis for the critical mass is a key to projects' conception and exit strategy and sustainable.

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