

# Utilization Of Local Government Funds Through Participatory Development In Some Selected Local Government Areas (Lgas) Of Kogi State

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**Abstract-** *The study examines the need for the efficient allocation of local government funds through participatory development in order to ensure the judicious use of their resources. It also examines the rural people's needs as perceived by them and also their needs as perceived by the local governments. This study is necessitated by the fact that the local government resources are not adequate to provide the needed services and the need therefore to ensure that the resources at their disposal are used efficiently. The primary data for the study were obtained directly from the selected local government areas and the communities while existing literature and their finances provided the source of secondary data. Rank correlation was used to test the degree of correlation between the local governments' perception of the communities' problems and the communities' perception of their problems. It was revealed that the people in the rural communities have the ability to articulate their needs. It was also revealed that in almost all the communities, the people's perceptions of their problems is quite different from the way their problems were perceived by the local governments. This led therefore to the non efficient use of local government resources as they were not used to meet the people's needs as expected. It is therefore suggested that the local governments should consult with the communities and carry them along when planning for them. It is also recommended that, the local government officials should consider the communities first in their developmental programmes and not see their own interests as matters of primary concern.*

**Key Words-** *Development, Participation; Local Government; Infrastructural facilities; Public fund; well being.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background Of The Study

The plight of the rural dwellers is very pathetic and agonizing. This is because, majority of them live in abject poverty. This assertion assumes a high degree of inequality in the quality of life enjoyed by the rural and urban dwellers. The dimension of the rural inequality is wide ranging from income differential to the quality of food in the diet, housing, clothing and access to services such as education, health, postal communication, transportation, recreation and leisure. The situation has led to a polarized society with detrimental consequences.

Nigeria, like most developing countries faces a situation where her rural populations are very poor; with very low income so much so that many of them are incapable of buying manufactured goods peddled before them daily. They are neither properly fed nor adequately clothed. Many rural communities are isolated due to the barriers of bad transportation and have very little access to the basic necessities of life.

What has happened therefore is that we have witnessed an unprecedented move to the urban areas, which stand out as "islands" of wealth, affluence and success at least in the view of rural dwellers. This migration has resulted in

massive urban problems for various governments in the country.

What to do with the rural problem hangs like an albatross around the neck of most developing countries and governments. It is very tempting to assert that the growing urban problems due to rural urban migration and the threat it poses to various power groups rather than any major humanitarian concern for them are the causes of the present stampede to develop the rural areas. This agrees with the view of Idama (1999) that even if it is from a purely selfish point of view, the welfare of the rural dwellers must be improved i.e improved condition of living in the rural areas could diminish rural urban migration thereby decongesting the cities and minimizing demand on most city infrastructure.

### 1.2 Statement Of Research Problem

The people living in the rural areas have been described in very many derogatory terms- yet, it is not their own making. They have been described as Nigerian's neglected rural majority (Daramola et al 1962), the other Nigeria with poverty linked characteristics (Ijere 1981). Nigerian's rural sector is predominantly inhabited by small holder farmers who produced over 70% of the food consumed in the country. Due to the disparity in the infrastructural

facilities, there has been an increase in the rate of migration especially the youths from rural to urban centre-with the attendant consequences –shortage in the adequacy of infrastructural facilities

Nigerian’s government in view of the foregoing intensified its developmental efforts through various agencies such as DFRRRI, Better Life For Rural Women, Agricultural Development Programme, e.t.c to improve their living standard as well as reverse migration to the urban areas. However, the programmes adopted do not seem to be yielding the desired results both in absolute or relative terms.

The government at various times has defined its developmental aims and policies with little reference to the people whose lives will be affected. The wastage component of this approach is incalculable, as lots of money and efforts are expended on plans that may not meet the yearnings of particular societies. Therefore, to build a basic need bundle from which a proper planning policy and strategy can be built, a participatory approach is advocated, whereby people being planned for help the government in defining the present quality of life in the rural areas as the ruralites see it and then, jointly build a standard which will benefit the people.

The rural dwellers have over time built a way of life and are in the best position to say whether they are satisfied with it or not. Rural people are capable of adequately articulating all issues which affect their lives and this will in turn help planners to get a proper perspective and planning policy. There must therefore be community participation. The need to include the people has long been identified. According to Okoroji and Arua (1992), rural development strategies should be built on the traditions, values and strength of the society taking into account their social, economic, political and cultural organizations, indigenous skills, aspirations and animate their energy to the full. This is because according to them, the rural people are ready to analyse the root causes of their problems and are willing to device planning strategies for dealing with the problems. They are able to use their own motivations and resources if rightly guided.

Community participation and involvement is not only one of the very elements for the appropriate implementation of community based projects but it is also an essential prerequisite to project design and planning in order to ensure community ownership, mobilization and full commitment towards the realization of project objective.

By actively and systematically seeking to improve participation in the various stages of a project, then the outcomes are usually more likely to suit local circumstances to ensure community ownership and increase project suitability in this era of scarce resources. **THE COMMUNITIES MUST AGAIN, AS A MATTER OF NECESSITY BE INVOLVED.** Community members in this approach are not only referred to as project beneficiaries, but rather as primary actors of their own development.

Kogi state was created in August, 1991 as a result of long neglect and marginalization in Benue and Kwara states. At inception in 1991, Kogi was an impoverished state as a result of long neglect – and despite efforts by past administrations to reverse the trend, there is only marginal visible improvements in the living standard of the people.

Poverty incidence (relative measures per capital) was 87.3 in 1996 and 61.53 in 2004; poverty indicator (relative poverty line) was 19.13 (core poor), 42.40 (moderately poor) and 38.47 (non poor) in 2004; the percentage distribution of household of dwelling showed that 58.40% live in single rooms and 41.60% live in duplex and others and with regards to the source of light, 69.2% use kerosene, 29.1% use electricity and 1.7% others. Percentage distribution of household by source of fuel for cooking shows that 85.6% use firewood, 13.7% use kerosene and 0.7% use moderate means. 59% of the people live in mud houses, 37.33% live in houses built with cement, while others account for 3.67% (KOSEEDS 2004, National Bureau of Statistics 2007).

The people of the state are poor. In order to bring development closer to the grassroot, local government areas were created. Kogi state has a total of 21 LGAs. It is the closest level of government to the people. In the last five years, there has been a high level of instability in the tenure of local government chairmen – some lasting for as short as eight months. In 2009, the Kogi state House of Assembly passed a resolution that the tenure of local governments be reduced to two years. The chairmen went to court and won the case late 2009. This has brought serious developmental challenges in the sense that every elected/appointed chairman comes (in most cases) with his own unarticulated ideas of the people needs. This has led to serious mismatch of the people’s needs and services provided and the wastage of scarce government resources (time and money). This is because, there are no articulated Community Development Plans (CDPs) which can be followed and adhered to. Since planning at the local government level is rather new, the local governments need some guidance before they can come up with a well articulated plan that would cater for the needs of the entire local government area. There is need to establish a body known as Local Economic Advisory Committee (LEAC) – charged with the responsibility of drawing up a comprehensive development programme for their respective areas which will be forwarded to state governments for incorporation into their development plans. Armed with this, and given their own close knowledge of their respective areas, the LEAC should be able to produce a development plan for the area within a short time. The resulting document should provide the state government with valuable information about development possibilities in local areas as seen by the communities themselves. This is the crux of the research work. In other words, the absence of articulated community development plans produced through participatory approach and the need for them has necessitated this research work. It is therefore an attempt

to build a bridge between people's expectations and government's desire for them.

### 1.3 Objectives Of The Research Work

The objectives of the research work include:-

1. To examine how judiciously local government funds are used to meet the people's expectations.
2. Identification of community needs and their ranking in order of seriousness by the communities in a participatory manner.
3. To provide a working tool for the local governments, state government, development agencies and partners.
4. To highlight the importance of participatory approach to development in our communities.

### 1.4 Hypothesis

A hypothesis was formulated and tested

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference between community perception of their developmental needs and local government perception of those needs

H<sub>1</sub>: There is difference between community perception of their developmental needs and local government perception of those needs.

### 1.5 Significance Of The Study

The rural areas have been neglected over a long period of time despite several efforts and attempts at developing them. The development of the rural area is therefore a matter of utmost concern to everybody-government, students, residents, development partners etc. The concern arose not only to stem rural-urban migration but also to reduce the threat posed to various power groups.

There is therefore the need for articulated plans and policies to facilitate the development of the rural areas and this is why this research will serve that purpose.

The research work will be of immense use to various governments-federal, state and local governments in their developmental efforts at the local government level.

Development partners will also find the work useful as it will assure them of the judicious use of whatever development assistance they give.

Local governments will find it useful as it will provide the necessary roadmap for development and provide the opportunity for participatory development.

To the rural dwellers, it will serve the purpose of showing that they have the ability to articulate their needs and would be seen as partners in progress and not only as beneficiaries of government projects.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

No central government can successfully conduct any meaningful administration only through the capital city based civil servants without decentralizing some of its activities in order to eliminate delays often experienced at the headquarters. This implies that there is need for a form of government to reach out to the people at the grassroots level.

The local government system is the closest form of government to the grassroots and therefore a properly

organized local government system under which the people of a particular area could be involved in running their affairs is considered more acceptable. This is because the impact of the local government is felt more at the grassroots than a centralized form of government where government officials, who may not have the requisite knowledge of the local environment, are in control.

Local government have been described in various forms by various authorities, observers, commentators and people who has need to define it at various times. While some describe it as grassroot administration, some call it grassroot management, yet, others see it as the cornerstone that was sometimes rejected but has eventually become the main and inevitable pillar of the society. Some also see it as the building or the base of any development in a nation state. The United Nations office for Public Administration conceptualizes a local government as a political subdivision of a nation or state which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs, including power to impose taxes or to exert labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected (Obi, 2005). Awa (1976) sees it as a political authority set up by a nation or state subordinate to a central authority for the purpose of rendering delegated services. According to Orewa (1991), it is the government of a relatively small geographical area by a corporate body which functions within the framework of the laws of a central or state government. The guidelines on the 1976 local government administration defined a local government as government at local level exercised through representative councils, established by law to exercise powers within defined areas.....and has substantial and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services.....and to ensure ..... that the local initiative and response to local needs and conditions are maximized. One thing is clear from all these definitions-local governments, the world over aims at satisfying the needs and aspirations of the local populace in a given state. The 1979 constitution in the fourth schedule outlined in broad terms the functions of the local government in the country. These functions include making recommendations to the state planning commission or similar body, the economic development of the state as it affects, in particular the economic circumstances of the local government area authority, collection of rates, radio and television licenses, establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, and homes for destitutes or infirm; licensing of bicycles, trucks, canoes, wheelbarrows and carts; establishment, maintenance and regulation of markets, motor parks, and public conveniences, construction and maintenance of roads, streets, drains and other public highways; parks, open spaces and such other public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly. Others are naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses, provision and maintenance of public conveniences and refuse disposal; registration of all births, deaths and marriages, etc.



The principal aims and functions of local government seen differently can be said to be; to make appropriate services and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiatives by developing or delegating them to local representative bodies; to facilitate the exercise of democratic self government close to the local people of our society, and to encourage initiative and leadership potentials; to mobilize human and material resources through the involvement of members of the public in their local development; to provide a two way channel of communication between communities and the government. What makes local governments necessary is the expanse of territory covered by the nation – state where the nation – state is large, it may be difficult to govern every nook and corner of it from the capital city .in that case, devices known as local government are used to satisfy the needs of the people in the localities or the bourgeois i.e. may be said to be an ideological question. “But when we realize that the ultimate test of the efficacy of the political structure is its ability to liberate people from poverty, ignorance and squalor etc then we can tell what the objectives of local government ought to be.

Sources of local government revenue: under the new local government system, each local government council is expected to have two principal categories of revenue: recurrent revenue and capital revenue. Recurrent revenue is in turn divided into:

1. general revenue which consists of community tax , general rates (property or tenement rate and capitation rates) licenses, fees , rents ,investment revenue and government(federal and state) general allocations to local government.
2. Revenue relating to specific services- which includes specific departmental revenue, government grants, contributions from other local government, and special rates.
3. Revenue of commercial services – which includes all revenue arising from commercial services and other business ventures.

Capital revenue refers to all revenue related directly to capital development projects. it includes government grants in aid of capital expenditure on specified projects, loans raised to clef ray the cost of specific capital projects , contributions from other local governments in respect of capital projects and, other capital revenue arising directly from new capital development projects; for example , receipts in respect of the sale existing displayed capital assets.

About 70% of Nigerians live in the rural areas who from their small hold farms produce food to feed the entire population. Not only that, they provide raw materials for the industries and employment for a greater population of the country. Yet, these areas are not developed. While the basic infrastructures are found in the towns and cities, they are rare in the rural areas. Many villages are cut off especially during the raining season due to bad roads. Potable water is scarce, electricity is just reaching all the local government headquarters, there are very few food

storage facilities resulting in the loss of billion of naira yearly from food wastage, processing mills are also few. In spite of the fact that land acquisition is easy and cheap in the rural areas, very few industries are cited there.

Past National Development Plans have been concentrated in the urban areas to the detriment of a vast majority of the population who resides in the rural areas (Olatunbosun 1975, Adefolalu 1977). However, in the third National Development Programme (1975 – 80), the Federal Government acknowledged the need for rural development through the provision of basic amenities such as health centres, pipe-borne water, feeder roads and electricity – which will then help to narrow the disparities in living standard between the urban and rural population.

The catalogue of rural development strategies since independence are impressively lengthy – ranging from farm settlements, community and nucleus plantations, agricultural development corporations, commodity marketing board, the land use decrees, the national accelerated food production project, operation feed the nation, agricultural development project, river basin development authorities, etc (Eni, 1977, Seniyi, 1998, Olaseni, 2004). In the view of Idama (1999), in order to improve the welfare of the rural dwellers and alleviate their poverty, there must be the availability of tractors, citing of agro-based industries and the provision of agricultural input. In his opinion, there’s no need for their participation or consultation with them. Phillips (1992) says the quality of life of the people in the rural areas can be raised through an improved and a more efficient mode of production, raising the quality of nutrition, housing, health, education as well as creating opportunities for employment and human development.

All these efforts failed however because the communities were not involved or carried along in the planning of the programmes / projects. According to Seniyi (1998), it is pertinent to state that most of the plans underplayed the importance of the participatory input of the beneficiaries. In other words, most of the people that wrote or spoke on the strategies for the development of the rural development wrote from the point of infrastructural inadequacies, lack of agricultural input, integrated rural development e t c. Most of them did not consider the participatory approach, beneficiary participation or rather the involvement of the people that needs the facilities. This is the gap that this paper intends to fill.

Community participation in community development activity is as old as man itself. This is because, individually and collectively, men have to work to make life better for themselves – Olukotun (2008). Community participation is one of the key ingredients of an empowered community. Participation is the heart that pumps the community’s life blood (its citizens) into the community’s business. More impetus was added to this participatory development when it was discovered that many large scale government projects, from schooling to health, to credit, to irrigation systems were performing poorly.

Community participation can therefore be said to be a partnership which is built upon the basis of dialogue among the various actors during which the agenda is jointly set and local views and indigenous knowledge are deliberately sought and respected. Arguments for participatory development as advocated by (Chambers, 1997) have led to the inclusion of participation as a crucial means of allowing the poor to have control over decision. All these also agree with the view of the United Nations (1956) which sees community participation in development as a process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with that of the government authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the people.

Participating communities share common characteristics and they include;

- (i) Many people are involved – not only the elites
- (ii) All the groups are involved and responsibilities are divided so that special talents and interests of contributing organizations are engaged.
- (iii) Activities are conducted openly – citizens are well informed about the community's work and their opportunities for personal involvement.
- (iv) In participating communities, there is no such thing as bad idea. All ideas are treated with respect and welcomed as a source of inspiration with potential value for the whole community.
- (v) Participating communities makes no distinctions among various groups and types of personalities who offer themselves to community involvement. All persons are actively involved all persons are actively welcomed regardless of colour, age, religion, level of education etc.
- (vi) Participating communities operate with an open mind. They are not controlled by any single organization, group or philosophy and their leadership is used to facilitate discussion of a diversity of viewpoints rather than to push its own agenda.

Nigeria is principally an agricultural country with most of the population living in the rural areas. Any plan made should be made bearing the people living in the rural areas in mind. Since most of the people live in the rural areas, planning must take account of agricultural development as many of the people are engaged in agric as well as rural incomes and employment. The necessity for retaining most of the labour force in the rural areas and the importance of agricultural prosperity points to Nigeria's urgent need for improving rural living through an increase in income levels resulting from increased agriculture and agricultural related outputs.

The local government, being quite close to the people has the responsibility to ensure that every local community is encouraged and assisted to examine the broad goals that have been established for the nation in the context of their environment and to translate some of them into local programmes and projects.

Community participation is not an idle principle. Communities that have chosen to follow it according to Reid (2000) find that not only do they derive more satisfaction from the joy that comes from open community involvement, but they also achieve more results, more rapidly and with greater benefit to the community as a whole.

The Community Education Programme (CEP) was introduced by the Department For International Development (DFID) to cater for poor quality of education/ gender inequality in five Nigerian states. The key elements of the initiative were awareness raising and mobilization. Infact, community mobilizers persuaded local leaders to encourage parents to send their children to school and husbands to allow their wives to attend adult classes. They also held public gatherings, house to house calls and even enlisted town criers to spread the word. Most members of the communities were involved in some ways with the project, so there was a strong sense of community ownership. Activities were adapted to include everyone – adult classes for women were organized at night so that all women, including those in purdah could participate. Infact, at the final review workshop, most of the women said they experienced increased confidence, skills and abilities following their involvement in the project activities. According to Igboemeka, (2003), if communities are engaged from the outset and inclusive, participatory approaches are used, progress in school enrolment, retention and learning achievement of both boys and girls can be achieved in a short space of time at a relatively modest cost.

In December 2002, the Indian government issued the 86<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Indian constitution which made free and compulsory education a fundamental human right for children between six and fourteen. However many children who should be in school were grazing cattle, collecting firewood and helping out at home –Das (2003). According to the report, for every child who went to school, there were thirty who did not. The Indian government decided to approach the problem in a way that will carry the people along. It was then discovered that rather than trying to take every child to school, the school was brought to the children in their friendly environment. With this, enrolment increased, people send their children to school willingly, many of them are now literate, numerate and they exude confidence.

Most communities (once they are involved in project initiation, design and implementation) will see to its actualization, maintenance and sustenance. If however, they are not consulted and involved, the success of such a project is doubtful.

According to the New Nigeria (1987), if a community or group has a genuine need for a health centre and work towards its establishment, such a facility will be protected and maintained by members because it is their sweat. Local institutions are the key to sustainability. When local groups are actively involved in project design and implementation, they take on ownership and are more

likely to continue the project when donor funding ends, compared with externally imposed projects (Ford, 1993). Its worth noting that the selection and preparation of projects for possible inclusion into the local government development programmes is a rather difficult and complex task. This is so, because of the dilemma of choice which in the context of the country's development position today has become more profound because of the relatively low development base from which most local government areas are starting. There will continue to be a considerable gap between the needs of these areas and the resources to satisfy them – and that is why the people must be consulted.

The benefits of community participation according to Mansuri and Rao (2004) includes the fact that

- (i) It will lead to better designed project,
- (ii) Better targeted benefits,
- (iii) It is more cost effective,
- (iv) It will let to more equitable distribution of project benefits,
- (v) It improves the match between what a community needs and what it obtains. This is because; the project will be more consistent with the preference of the target group.

Participation of the people at the local people in the process of formulating basic decisions on issues which affect their lives was strongly emphasized (even) by the by the federal government when the idea of the new local government system was considered. In the guidelines for local government reforms,

“It was stressed that the reforms were intended to entrust political responsibility to where it is most crucial and most beneficial, that is to the people. the government hopes that this reforms would further enshrine the principles of participatory democracy and of political responsibility to every Nigerian” .

The new local government system should not merely be machinery for routinely carrying out federal and state government policies and decisions. Rather, local government should do precisely what the word government implies, namely, formulating, as well as implementing policies by local people for, and in the interest of the locality.

It is also to promote the participation of the local people in all activities directed at improving the lot of the people especially people living in the rural area. Genuine development cannot occur without the people's support and active participation in taking basic decisions about the nature, direction and spread of the development effort. it is the local people that should determine the development priorities of their own locality in the light of their own needs and taking into consideration the available resources.

In his own contribution, Okafor (2005) says the current emphasis on communities participating in the project that affects them include the fact that World Bank evaluation of projects i.e. (Malawi water supply project and other agricultural projects) indicated that those projects that have

community participation have succeeded and were rated satisfactory. Absence of adequate community involvement in most social services programmes in Nigeria communities, the indigenes of the communities are sidelined by the so called experts from either the state or local government. This incidence of not involving community members in most cases results in projects not inline with the interest of the people it is meant for.

In conclusion, the potential gains from community driven projects include the fact that it has the explicit objective of reversing power relations in a manner that creates voice for the people, allow them to have more control over development assistance and this is expected to make the allocation of development funds more responsive to their needs, improve the targeting of poverty programs, make government more responsive, improve the delivery of public goods and services, and strengthen the capabilities of the citizenry to undertake self initiated development activities.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The major source of data is the primary source. Data were collected using the questionnaire method and where necessary, questions were asked for clarification and completeness. Secondary data were also gathered to complement the primary data analysis. They were sourced from published materials on local government.

#### 3.1 Research Design

Three local government areas were chosen in the state for thoroughness and for generalisation. One local government each was chosen in Kogi West, Kogi East and Kogi Central. In all the cases, at least 90% of all the villages were covered to make for easy generalisation and completeness.

The communities in each local government were visited and asked to rank their needs in order of priority. Where it is a small village, the need identification and ranking were done by the entire village. Where it is a big community however, respected, knowledgeable and people with vast knowledge about the communities were chosen by the communities from each clan, compound, etc to identify and rank the needs on behalf of the communities.

After this was done, the local government secretariats were also visited to see their own side of what they felt the communities needed and in what order of importance (rank). The chairmen delegated two local government officials to attend to the request. It should be pointed out at this point that neither of the parties was privy to the fact that the opinion of the other party was being sought.

#### 3.2 Methods Of Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using both the quantitative and qualitative methods. Tables and charts were also used in presenting the data.

Spearman's coefficient of rank correlation is adopted for the data analysis. This is because the data collected involved ranking of priorities by both the communities and the local governments. The rank difference correlation is



simply a method of expressing the degree of relationship between two sets of ranks. In other words, ranking is often applied where people or companies are asked to express preferences or to put a series of items into an order. It can also be used to show the popularity ranking of products among different groups or from year to year.

Once the data is obtained, one can then go ahead and calculate a rank correlation coefficient between the two sets of data and in doing so, one is trying to answer the question -are there similarities in the rankings of the products / ranking by the people or is there association between the ranking?

The steps are listed below:

Step 1: Arrange the pairs of ranks for each community in the columns 1 and 2.

Step 2: Find the difference in ranks (D) by subtracting the ranks in column 2 from column 1 (to make column 3).

Step 3: Square each difference in rank and obtain the square of the difference  $D^2$  (column 4).

Step 4: Sum the squared difference in column four to obtain  $\Sigma D^2$ .

Step 5: Then apply the formular

$$r_{h_o} = 1 - \frac{6\Sigma D^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where  $\Sigma$  is sum

$D^2$  – Difference in rank (squared)

n – Number in the group

rho- degree of correlation

#### 4. DATA PRESENTATION

The following needs were obtained from the communities and the local government in their order of importance i.e. the most important need was ranked 1<sup>st</sup> while the least was ranked 8th, since eight parameters were used.

TABLE 1: Ranking of Community Needs by the Community and the Local Government in Local Government Area (A)

| Needs<br>Comm | Youth Empowerment |     | Health Centre<br>SS of Drugs |     | Construction<br>of Classroom |     | Need more<br>Science<br>Teachers +<br>Lab. Equip. |     | Farm Input +<br>Agric. Equip. |     | Soft Loan |     | Regular SS of<br>Light |     | Regular SS of<br>Water /<br>Borehole |     |
|---------------|-------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|---|-----|-------------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|
|               | Comm              | LGA | Comm                         | LGA | Comm                         | LGA | Comm  | LGA | Comm                          | LGA | Comm      | LGA | Comm                   | LGA | Comm                                 | LGA |
| 1             | 1                 | 7   | 6                            | 2   | 8                            | 1   | 3   | 4   | 7                             | 3   | 2         | 6   | 5                      | 8   | 4                                    | 5   |
| 2             | 2                 | 6   | 4                            | 2   | 7                            | 1   | 5   | 5   | 3                             | 7   | 1         | 8   | 6                      | 4   | 8                                    | 3   |
| 3             | 1                 | 5   | 6                            | 3   | 7                            | 2   | 8   | 7   | 3                             | 8   | 2         | 6   | 4                      | 1   | 5                                    | 4   |
| 4             | 3                 | 6   | 1                            | 8   | 6                            | 3   | 4   | 5   | 5                             | 4   | 2         | 7   | 7                      | 2   | 8                                    | 1   |
| 5             | 3                 | 8   | 2                            | 7   | 4                            | 1   | 7   | 2   | 1                             | 6   | 5         | 4   | 8                      | 3   | 6                                    | 5   |
| 6             | 1                 | 6   | 2                            | 7   | 3                            | 8   | 8   | 5   | 7                             | 1   | 5         | 3   | 4                      | 4   | 6                                    | 2   |
| 7             | 3                 | 7   | 7                            | 2   | 6                            | 1   | 8   | 6   | 1                             | 8   | 4         | 3   | 5                      | 4   | 2                                    | 5   |
| 8             | 1                 | 8   | 2                            | 7   | 3                            | 6   | 7   | 3   | 6                             | 4   | 4         | 5   | 8                      | 1   | 5                                    | 2   |

Source: field survey 2010

**LEGEND:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Youth empowerment</li> <li>2. Construction of health centre and supply of drugs and medical personnel</li> <li>3. Construction of classrooms</li> <li>4. Recruitment of science teachers and supply of laboratory equipment</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Availability of farm input and agricultural equipment</li> <li>6. Availability of loan at low interest rate</li> <li>7. Regular supply of electricity and replacement of transformers</li> <li>8. Regular supply of water and repair of non-functioning boreholes</li> </ol> |
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TABLE 2: Ranking of Community Needs by the Communities and the Local Government in Local Government Area (B)

| Needs<br>Comm | Youth Empowerment |     | Health Centre<br>SS of Drugs |     | Construction<br>of Classroom |     | Need more<br>Science<br>Teachers +<br>Lab. Equip. |     | Farm Input +<br>Agric. Equip. |     | Soft Loan |     | Regular SS of<br>Light |     | Regular SS of<br>Water /<br>Borehole |     |
|---------------|-------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|---|-----|-------------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|
|               | Comm              | LGA | Comm                         | LGA | Comm                         | LGA | Comm  | LGA | Comm                          | LGA | Comm      | LGA | Comm                   | LGA | Comm                                 | LGA |
| 1             | 1                 | 7   | 6                            | 4   | 8                            | 1   | 4   | 5   | 3                             | 6   | 2         | 8   | 5                      | 3   | 7                                    | 2   |
| 2             | 1                 | 8   | 7                            | 2   | 6                            | 1   | 3   | 7   | 2                             | 6   | 4         | 5   | 8                      | 3   | 5                                    | 4   |
| 3             | 2                 | 5   | 5                            | 7   | 3                            | 1   | 7   | 4   | 4                             | 3   | 1         | 8   | 6                      | 2   | 8                                    | 6   |

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 3 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| 5 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 1 |
| 6 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| 7 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 |

Source: field survey 2010

**LEGEND:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Youth empowerment</li> <li>2. Construction of health centre and supply of drugs and medical personnel</li> <li>3. Construction of classrooms</li> <li>4. Recruitment of science teachers and supply of laboratory equipment</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Availability of farm input and agricultural equipment</li> <li>6. Availability of loan at low interest rate</li> <li>7. Regular supply of electricity and replacement of transformers</li> <li>8. Regular supply of water and repair of non-functioning boreholes</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

TABLE 3: Ranking of community needs by the communities and the local Government in local Government Area (C)

|   | Youth Empowerment |     | Construction of health centres & supply of medical personnel |     | Construction of classroom |     | Recruitment of science teacher & supply of laboratory equipment |     | Availability of farm input & agricultural equipment |     | Availability of loan at low interest |     | Regular supply of electricity & replacement of transformers |     | Regular supply of water & replacement of non functioning boreholes |     |
|---|-------------------|-----|--|-----|---------------------------|-----|---|-----|---|-----|--------------------------------------|-----|---|-----|--|-----|
|   | Comm.             | LGA | Comm.  | LGA | Comm.                     | LGA | Comm.   | LGA | Comm.   | LGA | Comm.                                | LGA | Comm.   | LGA | Comm.  | LGA |
| 1 | 1                 | 6   | 4  | 7   | 2                         | 5   | 3   | 8   | 6   | 1   | 5                                    | 3   | 7   | 2   | 8  | 4   |
| 2 | 7                 | 2   | 8  | 5   | 4                         | 6   | 5   | 1   | 1   | 8   | 2                                    | 4   | 6   | 3   | 3  | 7   |
| 3 | 8                 | 6   | 6  | 7   | 7                         | 2   | 5   | 3   | 4   | 8   | 3                                    | 5   | 1   | 4   | 2  | 1   |
| 4 | 2                 | 8   | 4  | 6   | 3                         | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 1   | 5                                    | 4   | 7   | 3   | 1  | 2   |
| 5 | 6                 | 3   | 2  | 4   | 5                         | 2   | 4   | 8   | 3   | 7   | 1                                    | 6   | 8   | 1   | 7  | 5   |
| 6 | 3                 | 7   | 1  | 3   | 6                         | 1   | 7   | 6   | 5   | 8   | 4                                    | 5   | 2   | 4   | 8  | 2   |
| 7 | 4                 | 1   | 3  | 2   | 1                         | 8   | 2   | 5   | 7   | 3   | 5                                    | 7   | 6   | 6   | 8  | 4   |
| 8 | 1                 | 5   | 7  | 1   | 4                         | 3   | 8   | 2   | 2   | 4   | 6                                    | 8   | 3   | 7   | 5  | 6   |

Source: field survey 2010

**LEGEND:**

1. Youth empowerment
2. Construction of health centre and supply of drugs and medical personnel
3. Construction of classrooms
4. Recruitment of science teachers and supply of laboratory equipment
5. Availability of farm input and agricultural equipment
6. Availability of loan at low interest rate
7. Regular supply of electricity and replacement of transformers
8. Regular supply of water and repair of non-functioning boreholes

**4.1 Data Analysis**

Tables 1, 2 and 3 shows the ranking of community needs by the various communities and the three local governments. As earlier mentioned, rank correlation is used for data analysis.

The analysis of the ranking by the communities of their various needs and that of the local governments are shown below including the correlation between the various rankings.

**4.2 Summary Of Findings**

TABLE 4: CORRELATION RESULTS.

| Communities | Mopamuro LGA | Ogori Magongo LGA | Bassa LGA |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1           | -0.714       | -0.714            | -0.642    |
| 2           | -0.786       | -0.881            | -0.571    |
| 3           | -0.214       | -0.143            | 0.239     |
| 4           | -1           | -0.550            | -0.333    |
| 5           | -0.619       | -0.595            | -0.571    |
| 6           | -0.667       | -0.738            | -0.142    |
| 7           | -0.548       | -0.857            | -0.238    |
| 8           | -0.928       | -0.952            | -0.357    |

Source: Compiled from tables 1,2 and 3.



The following were the findings from the data analysis:

- (i) In all the communities in Local Government Area (A), there is negative correlation between people's needs and what the local government is providing for them.
- (ii) In all the communities in Local Government Area (B), there is negative correlation between people's needs and what the local government is providing for them.
- (iii) Also in Local Government Area (C), there is negative correlation between people's needs and what the local government is providing for them except in one community. In this local government also, the degree of negative correlation is lesser.
- (iv) In all the local governments, the degree of negative correlation is very high or almost perfect negative correlation in most of the communities.
- (v) It was found out that while the communities were mostly interested in general empowerment (youth empowerment, soft loan), the local governments were mostly interested in what they can award contract for i.e. construction of classrooms, health center and supply of transformers e.t.c.
- (vi) Conclusively, we can say there is difference between community perception of their development needs and local government perception of such needs.

#### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

From the data analysis, we have seen that in almost all the cases, there were negative correlations between people's needs and what the local government is providing for them because the people were not consulted by the local government before the provision of services for them. In other words, there is a mismatch between peoples' expectations from the local government and what the local governments are providing for them.

The local government system is the closest form of government to the grassroots and therefore, a properly organized local government system under which the people of a particular area could be involved in running their affairs is considered more acceptable. In other words, the local government system is one of the numerous forms of decentralization adopted by the Nigerian government and this ordinarily should enable the welfare of the people at the local level to be adequately catered for, and also provides opportunities for local officials to attend to the numerous problems confronting the local communities (Olukotun (2007).

Among the reasons for the creation of local government areas include, according to Oyeneye et al (1988) the following:

- i. Participatory democracy
- ii. Bringing government closer to the people
- iii. Equitable social economic development
- iv. Choice of leadership
- v. Familiarity

- vi. To serve as link between the people and the government etc.

In his forward to the 1976 local government reform guideline, the late Major-Gen. Shehu Yar'adua argued that "the reform of the local government system is aimed at the involvement of the rural people in decision making on developmental efforts which affect them. It also includes the contribution of their resources to development activities as well as the assurance that the rural people will benefit from interventions intended to help them, and ensure rural development and transformation. This is however, not the case as the people are not involved in the development activities that concerns them and therefore they do not benefit but rather the benefits goes to the local government officials.

The report of the political bureau (1987) also observed that "local government is widely acknowledged as a vital instrument for rural transformation and for the delivery of social services to the people". This is no longer the case as our local government areas are yearning for development. People at the grassroot are only able to understand and recognize local governments because they are able to feel its presence and impact on their day to day activities. However, they are not feeling the impact because they are not part of the developmental process.

For any local government to serve as a viable instrument for community development such local government system should possess the following essential requirements; there should be an appropriate strategy for the mobilization and participation of the people in the process of community development and there should be frictional cooperation between the local government and the people.

According to ogunna – even as far back as 1980 the new local government system was designed by its founding fathers to serve as a veritable tool or instrument for urban and community development. The founding fathers made a number of innovations aimed at strengthening the local government system in Nigeria. But in spite of these innovations, the system is unresponsive, unproductive, ineffective and is incapable of generating rural development as a result of ; lack of fractional cooperation between the council and the people and in particular with the indigenous institutions and organizations of local communities ; poor planning and lack of devotion and community interest among the councilors.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

It has been seen clearly and statistically proved that the rural communities are not consulted in the development process that concerns them. In most cases, rural communities just wake up and see contractors mobilizing to site in their communities – when they should be part of the process. There is therefore a divergence of approach to rural development between the governed and the local government – leading to misapplication and non-judicious use of local government funds.

We can therefore conclude that the local governments under examination did not judiciously use the funds allocated to them for development as expected by the people, yet, local governments were created to bring development closer to the people – having realized the fact that no central government can successfully conduct any meaningful administration only through the capital city based civil servants without necessarily decentralizing some of its activities in order to eliminate delays often experienced at the state headquarters.

### 5.1 Recommendations

Local governments should therefore carry the rural communities along in their developmental process. They should be consulted and their input sought – since the programmes are meant for them.

The aim of community developers should be to promote the improvement of the living standard of the people with the involvement of the people and not to provide socio-economic facilities for the people. The community is the starting point and their leaders, the chief partners.

Partnership is needed at all stages of development with the rural communities. This is because, members of the communities take actions within their capacity, apply their own strengths and invest their own resources. Community participation generates a sense of ownership, builds capacity and helps to ensure sustainability.

The local government areas should consult the people and work in tandem with what they want. If this is done, it will ensure that programmes are truly relevant to the needs of the communities and it will also empower the people.

Local government areas should also work through the councilors or where they want fairness, work through consultants in identifying community needs and produce this as the community development plans which can be handed over to successive / incoming administrations.

This will ensure even, participatory development and sustainable projects. It will also ensure that local government funds are judiciously used to meet the yearnings and aspirations of the people.

It will guarantee a better working relationship between the local governments and the rural communities since they will now see the LGA's as partners in progress.

It will reduce financial wastage and will ensure that allocation of funds for developmental purposes is more responsive to the needs of the rural communities.

The research work will also provide a database through which poverty reducing / eradication agencies and development partners can work in assisting rural communities.

Finally, it is expected that there will be better management of the financial resources of the local government areas.

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