

# EXCLUDING THE EXCLUDED: THE CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY IN GOVERNMENT-DRIVEN RE-CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY AND PRACTICE IN SOUTH WESTERN NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** In recent times, governments in various states in south western Nigeria had embarked on massive re-construction of strategic areas in different parts of the cities through a policy tagged urban renewal development programme. This programme has led to demolition of structures which served as the means of livelihood of majority of self-employed citizens. However, government did not consider or develop a rehabilitation or re-settlement policy for the affected citizens. The programme appears to have achieved its intended objectives at the expense of the welfare and economic interest of the people. The already excluded citizenry from the scheme of governance are being further excluded by the programme as the citizenry are alienated and excluded from participation and the decision making process concerning their lives. This study, therefore, examined the future challenges and sustainability of the urban renewal development policy after the expiration of the tenure of the governments. The study adopted the descriptive research design and the population consisted different categories of respondents ranging from affected citizens, self-employed, civil servants, teachers, market women associations in two urban cities. 800 respondents were altogether selected from these different categories through proportionate and simple random sampling techniques. Future challenges of urban renewal development programme questionnaire (FCURDPQ)  $r=84$  was the major instrument

constructed for data collection based on three objectives formulated for the study. Findings obtained showed that there was no significant difference in the opinion of respondents ( $X^2 = 3.84 < 0.1518$ ) that were strongly dissatisfied with the policy, objectives and mode of implementation of the programme that they were not involved in the policy decision and implementation. Similarly, there is significant relationship between the policy implementation and poverty as the poverty level of the people has increased since majority of the self-employed citizens have been disposed of their means of livelihood. They argued that it was contrary to poverty alleviation policy of the governments. Lastly, 79% of the respondents contended that the sustainability of the programme remains extremely low as it will become the cardinal political decision point in future electioneering campaigns. Based on these findings, this study recommended that the first parameter for determining the worth of a project or programme is its sustainability which can only be ensured through adequate and massive education of the citizens on the need of such development. Furthermore, to ensure the sustainability of the programme, the people who are the beneficiaries of development should be included and participate in decision making process in matters affecting their life. Moreover, the Government-Driven and Re-construction Policy should not be a political issue, otherwise, if another political party comes to power,

it might jettison the development policy, thereby, the sustainability is jeopardized.

**Keywords:** Excluding the excluded, challenges of sustainability, government-driven re-construction and development policy and practice, citizen participation

## INTRODUCTION

State Governments that are in the South West of Nigeria embarked on a policy of re-construction of re-construction of strategic areas in different parts of the cities with a view to making the cities develop to international standard. The policy was made to address poor environment sanitation, illegal construction of structures, poor parking spaces and traffic congestion all over the main cities in the South Western Nigeria under the incumbent political party in power. Therefore, many structures, especially shops and houses were demolished to make way for new roads and environmental beautification. The governments embark on this without adequate information to make the people prepare for the development and innovation. Moreover, governments did not develop a rehabilitation or resettlement policy for the affected citizens that constituted a part of electorate that voted them to power. The programme achieved its intension in terms of urban development and beautification but at the expenses of the welfare and economic interest of the people in welfare and economic interest of the people. In terms of citizen participation in governance, the people were excluded and they are further excluded by this programme on an important policy that touched their welfare and life being. This study, therefore, examined the challenges of sustainability posed by this policy of reconstruction and development when the present administration's tenure expires.

### Government - Driven Reconstruction and Development Policy, Sustainability and Citizen Participation

It is observed that many states and local governments are deficient in technological infrastructure or in all the good things of life: electricity supply has degenerated, pipe-borne water supply is non-existent, schools are ill-equipped while other social services have drastically degenerated with many of the hospitals now death centers rather than medical centers while many of the roads are now in deplorable condition. The number of beggars along the streets has increased drastically and its attendant general restiveness has become a serious menace to both social and economic development (Obanigwe, 1991; Maureen, 2005; Abiona and Bello, 2013). Alese (2013) stated that putting infrastructures like good roads, bridges, water, and electricity supply in

place and restoring internal security are salient for socio-economic reconstruction in Nigeria.

Anyanwu (1992) identified government intervention in development process as a main source of development. In this wise, community members may not be involved in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation, Anyanwu (1992) however, noted such programmes are hardly sustained because they lack citizen participation. Vincent (2009) stressed the importance of citizen participation in programmes of development that are meant to enhance people's development.

Projects provided solely by the government without involving the people in many communities could not be sustained because there is no commitment on the part of the people. In such an instance, there is no link between sustainability of projects provided by the government and the interest of the people because people are not involved in decision making. Members of the community should have interest in the programme that affects their welfare and participate actively in the identification of their needs, planning, execution of programmes, utilization and evaluations, (Abiona and Bello, 2013).

Dhamotharan (2009) also pointed out that in the context of integrated development, the participation of the ultimate beneficiaries of development intervention in all process of management process is essential. Patrick (2013) is also of the view that government driven intervention aimed at improving the livelihood of communities to follow the basic steps and process of community development with active and enthusiastic participation of the community members.

Government development intervention programmes aimed at improving the livelihood of communities is community development and that such measures ought to follow the basic steps and processes of community development with the active and enthusiastic participation of the community members. Also, the lack of deliberate national policy on community development hampers the community development initiatives and most often exposes community development process to the whims and caprice of the political class, (Patrick, 2013). Furthermore, Idris (2013) noted that people's participation in development has assumed the centre stage as an important condition for achieving accelerated and sustainable development. This can be globally, as central element of the people-centred development strategy. In this regard, many development practitioners and agencies have emphasized the need to secure active support and participation of the citizens involved in the development process. Olaleye (2004) argued that this development, not only brings about progressive

reduction of material deprivation and social inequalities, but also promotes the growth of human capabilities and potential.

Sustainable Community Development involves maintaining development over time. It means the ability to ensure that development that has been achieved in the community is not abandoned. At the same time, the growth and development of the community at the present and future are assured.

World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) described sustainable Development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The notion is that the needs of the present generation of people should be satisfied and the process of development should be continuous to the extent that the future generations will build on the success attained to meet their own needs. The approach embodies the notion and ideal of a development process that is equitable and socially responsive recognizing the extensive nature of poverty, deprivation and inequality between and within nations, classes and communities.

Sustainable development is vital in Nigeria and other developing nations. Akande (1998) noted that many programmes that community, government or non government organizations initiated have been abandoned or allowed to waste because no efforts have been put in place to sustain the projects. This results in colossal waste of fund that had been expended on such projects.

Essentially, most people in Nigeria believe that it is the responsibility of government to provide, maintain and sustain all infrastructures. Sustainable development needs citizen interest in the project/programme to ensure its sustainability. Members of the community should have interest in the programme that affects their welfare. Community members should participate actively in the programme that is to meet their needs. The principle implies that the people in the community should take part in identification of their needs, planning, funding and execution of programme. Thus, participation yields greater interest in sustainability. It brings about an attachment between the community member and the programme. It fosters cooperative attitude among the people to solve their problem. Abiona, (2009)

In citizen participation, programmes that are initiated and provided by government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can only be sustained if the people that are beneficiaries are involved in the planning, execution and evaluation. In other words, the people should participate in the development process; otherwise the programme will not be

sustained after the donor’s withdrawal. Participation is beyond informing the communities about intervention without input from the people who are to benefit from the programme.

Another key element in sustainability of community development project/programme is that the programme should be designed according to the felt needs of the people. The programme should be people-oriented. The community members should determine their felt needs and not the outsiders imposing a programme on them. The programme imposed, which is the assumed need, cannot be sustained because it does not satisfy the immediate need of the people, moreover, the people to benefit from the programme are not consulted. Therefore, people’s priorities should be considered first in designing a project, Oyebamiji and Adekola (2008).

Sustainable development needs a great committed political action on the part of government. This is in terms of policies and grassroots advocacy. There are needs for stability of government and enduring and stable policies. It means that policies should be continuous and not changed whenever there is a change of government.

In Nigeria and developing world generally, sustainable community development can only succeed where there is transparency and accountability in all sectors. Many programmes have been poor in quality or abandoned midway due to corruption, embezzlement of fund, nepotism and other vices (Abiona, 2009, Hassan and Oyebamiji 2012,). It means the collective interest of the people and their needs should be foremost in the minds of the leaders and politicians. Transparency and accountability will make members of the community develop psychological interest in the mobilization programme of government towards self-help projects.

The concept of self-help is paramount in sustainable community development. It is of importance to secure people’s interest in the project of development and implementation. When a programme is initiated, planned and funded by the people through self-help efforts, the people are more committed to the success and sustainability of the programme. There is a strong link between self-help and sustainability of project. People participate for the sole reason that they have seen success achieved and have become enthusiastic enough to work towards achieving it for themselves. The self-help principle ensures the sustainability of existing project and the plan for future development.

In Nigeria, however, more communities depend on government for development. In such an instance, there is no link between sustainability of projects provided by the government and the interest of the

people (Akande, 1998). Projects provided by the government in many communities could not be sustained because there is no commitment on the part of the people. It is a “government project”, not “our project”. Hence, it is allowed to rot away while the beneficiaries feel unconcerned, (Anyanwu, 1992, Patrick, 2013)

Achieving sustainability requires a lot attitudinal change and interest. This calls for raising the consciousness and awareness of all community stakeholders in the process. This entails provision of education through dissemination of information to enhance the capacity of the community members for effective sustainability of community development programmes, (Abiona& Bello, 2013).

### **Government Driven Reconstruction and Development Policy and Poverty**

Governments at both national, state local levels have put various measures in place to alleviate poverty in the land. Oyebamiji and Adekola (2008) classified the causes of poverty as political, economic such as low income and unemployment, biological such as physical and mental disabilities and health matters, natural disaster such as draught, flood and pest invasion, inadequate policy implementation and illiteracy Ogwumike (2001) and Adekola, (2013) stated that poverty in Nigeria is growing at the increase level in both urban and rural communities. One of the major causes of poverty could be traced to the policies of the governments.

All the poverty alleviation programmes put in place by governments in Nigeria are capable of tackling the problems of poverty and under-development. However, Adekola and Abanum (2011) noted that poverty is still prevalent in Nigeria rural communities as evidenced by high prevalent of disease, ignorance, illiteracy, hunger, and poor sanitation. Gbola (2012) also noted that the problems of poor housing, clothing and poor feeding are obvious in Nigeria. Gbola (2012) quoting data from the National Bureau of Statistics noted that poverty in Nigeria rose from 54.7 in 2004 to 60.9% in 2010 and 71.5% in 2011 despite the claim of increase in economic growth.

Corroborating this view, a World Bank report, (1995) cited in Ugwu, (2000) observed thus: A large number of people in Nigeria in urban area do not have enough income to meet their needs, about 21% of the urban population-85 million people were estimated to be living below the poverty line. In 1992/93, about 1 million people were classified severally poor. Their cash income is insufficient to cover minimal standards of food, water, fuel, shelter, medical care and school fees.

The reconstruction and development policy is to bring about new lease of life into the cities and also

to beautify the existing structures. Thus, the road construction would ensure free flow of traffic that will ultimately remove traffic congestion and enhance economic development of the urban cities. The governments believed that the reconstruction and development policy would reduce poverty as traffic congestion would end.

### **Government Driven Reconstruction and Development Policy and Politics of Development**

Pearce, Howard and Bronstein (2010) observed that to talk of politics in the same breath as community development would be considered improper or inappropriate but in a multi-cultural society, community development may be political. Politics is understood as pertaining to parties and ideology and of authoritative allocation of value in a society. So when there are power asymmetries which generate exclusionary logic and create uneven and unequal development, community development becomes deeply political.

Anise (1974) noted the economic, social insecurity, instability and other problems which attend leadership in African politics. He noted the economic woes, political oppression among others which came with the instability. Suberu (1990) also agreed that political instability in Nigeria further bring about disunity, tribal sentiment, insecurity and economic hardship. Abiona (2009 ) also noted lack of continuity in development process in Nigeria as new governments in power jettison the policies of previous administration and embarks on new policies and wares in the process of reconstruction.

In spite of the modest achievements by governments, much of the problems associated with the use of development agencies and the national development plan as a strategy for community development is political instability. Every succeeding government usually discredits its predecessor, changes existing policy framework and discontinues programmes and projects. This has resulted in abandonment of several community development projects. Government has at no time set the community development priorities with the consultation of the people, and there has been no single institutional and bureaucratic framework for addressing community development matters. This has resulted in increasing failure of community development programmes and projects with attendant increase in poverty. (Patrick, 2013).

Thus, the reconstruction and development policy might be a political issue and subject of campaign in the next election as opposition parties already condemned the policy that they claimed brought untold hardship and poverty to the citizenry. The problem of implementation was compounded in that there was no adequate information, education and compensation given to the citizenry.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study include the following: (a) to examine the perspective of respondents from Ibadan in Oyo state and Osogbo in Osun state on the implications of the policy on development, citizens' welfare, livelihood and poverty, (b) to find out the challenges posed by sustainability of the programme after the tenure of the present administration, and (c) to find out the extent to which the people are included or excluded in policy decision and implementation of the policy.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are answered: (a) What is the perspective of the respondents on the implications of the policy on development, citizens' welfare, livelihood and poverty? (b) What are the challenges posed by sustainability of the programme after the tenure of the present administration? (c) To what extent are the people included or excluded in the policy decision and implementation?

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive research design and the population consisted of different categories of respondents ranging from affected citizens, self employed, civil servant, teachers and market women associations. A total of 800 respondents were randomly selected from two urban cities, Ibadan in Oyo and Osogbo in Osun states. 475 respondents from Ibadan in Oyo state and 325 from Osogbo in Osun state through simple ransom sampling techniques. Oyo and Osun states were chosen for this research in that the two states have newly experienced a change in political party administering them and also the reconstruction and development policy was newly introduced. The two cities chosen are the state capitals where the re-construction and development are focused by the governments.

The main instrument for this research is a questionnaire tagged: Future Challenges of Urban Renewal Development Programme Questionnaire (FCURDPQ). The validity/reliability was  $r = .84$ . Frequencies distribution, percentages, chi-square and t-test were used to answer the research questions raised.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The personal characteristics of the respondents based on gender, age, marital status, occupation and educational background are presented in Table 1.

From Table 1, gender analysis indicated that both sex were involved in this research. 62.3% of the respondents were male while 37.7 were female. The development policy in the two states affected both

male and female as they engage in various occupation to survive in urban cities.

The age range of the respondents showed that they were adults who should be responsible members of the community. 29.4% were between 18 – 30 years, 36.4% were between 31 – 40 years 17% were 41 – 50 years, 11.5% were between 51- 60 years while 5.7% were 61 and above. In Nigeria, this range is still in active years of service and everyone is expected to be gainfully employed in order to meet up with societal challenges in their communities and families.

Most of the respondents were gainfully employed in one occupation or the other. 42.3% were into trading, 26.3% were artisans, 11.1% were civil servants, 7.0% were public servants, members of women associations were 8.8% and the unemployed were 4.5%. This indicated the governments' policy directly affected the majority of the respondents who were self employed. Others have members of their families or extended families and communities affected in the implementation of the governments' policy of re-construction.

Table 1 indicated that most of the respondents had education. Only 11.9% had no formal education. It is expected that the respondents should be aware and should have knowledge of government's development policy in view of the level of education.

On the issue of marital status, the Table 1 further revealed that about 70% were married and therefore had the responsibility of caring for their household. This implied that a great number of the respondents were directly affected by the policy as their occupation and their livelihood is threatened. Of the population, 24.5% were single, 3% were widowed, while 1.25% were divorced and 1.25% separated.

### Research Question 1

What is the perspective of the respondents on the implications of the policy on development, citizens' welfare, livelihood and poverty?

Since  $3.84 < 0.1518$ , there is no significant difference in the opinion of the two communities on the policy, objectives and mode of implementation of the programme. The respondents were strongly dissatisfied with policy implementation in that they were not involved. They argued that there is a significant relationship between Government urban development policy and poverty. The two communities believed that the government in power did not involve the people in the programme since alternative places were not made available in reconstruction that has taken place. It is argued that the people who were already poverty stricken could not sell their wares since Government Urban development policy forbid such actions outside

specified places. These views agreed with Ogwumike (2001), who stated that poverty in Nigeria is growing at the increase level in both urban and rural communities. One of the major causes could be traced to the policies of the governments. The development policies can bring out initial problems such as poverty in the community. The policy had led to demolition of structures which served as the means of livelihood of majority of self employed people without considering a rehabilitation or resettlement scheme for the affected citizens. Though, the policy has made the urban cities neat and developed, it has been at the expense of the welfare of the people and economic interest. It was firmly believed that the policy further perpetuated poverty instead of alleviating it. The findings agree with Patrick, (2013), Anyanwu, (1992), Abiona, (2009) and Dhamotharan (2009) that in the context of integrated development, the participation of the ultimate beneficiaries of development intervention in all process of management process is essential. Government driven intervention aimed at improving the livelihood of communities should follow the basic steps and process of community development with active and enthusiastic participation of the community members.

### Research Question 2

To what extent are the people included or excluded in the policy decision and implementation?

Since  $0.904 < 2.306$ , findings confirm that there is no significant difference between the opinion of the respondents in the two communities that the government-driven reconstruction and development policy and practice was not readily accepted. The respondents strongly disagree with the policy and mode of implementation because they were excluded from decision and implementation. They were not given adequate information and education on the need and important of the policy before it was implemented. Respondents agreed that the reconstruction of development was desirable in the community; however, many shops and wares were destroyed during the process of implementation without compensation by the governments. Moreover, most of the affected citizens were living below poverty level and relied on daily sales for survival. They felt further excluded in that they are not involved in the governance. The findings agree with Abiona and Bello, (2013) that members of the community should have interest in the programme that affects their welfare and participate actively in the identification of their needs, planning, execution of programmes, utilization and evaluations, (Abiona and Bello, 2013). Projects provided solely by the government without involving the people in many communities could not be sustained because there is

no commitment on the part of the people. There is no link between sustainability of projects provided by the government and the interest of the people because people are not involved in decision making.

### Research Question 3

What are the challenges posed by sustainability of the programme after the tenure of the present administration?

Table 4 indicated that 79% of the respondents believed the policy might not sustainable while 21% were of the opinion that sustainability is possible. Findings reveal that the different opinion held by the two communities is due to past political experience and what is currently happening in the country. The position taken by the respondents was influenced by the political experiences under which characterized the past civilian regimes. Some experiences under the military Government further created fear of instability in the minds of many of the respondents. They contended that if the present administration's tenure expires and it fails to win the next election, a new political power might abolish the policy and introduce a new one.

Moreover, it might be an electioneering campaign issue to gain support of the electorate that suffered under this present policy when the time of next election comes. The finding agrees with Pearce, Howard and Bronstein (2010) who observed that community development in a multi-cultural society may be political. Patrick (2013) also noted that every succeeding government usually discredits its predecessor, changes existing policy framework and discontinues programmes and projects. This leads to the problem of sustainability of programmes.

Finding further indicated that 87.2% the respondents felt the programme might not be sustained because community people were not mobilized and given necessary education on the reconstruction and development programme before the governments embarked on it. Anyanwu (1999), Olaleye (2004) Adekola (2008) and Oyebamiji (2008) supported the views of the respondents that programmes that are initiated and provided by government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can only be sustained if the people that are beneficiaries are involved in the planning, execution and evaluation.

Sustainability of the programme calls for raising the consciousness and awareness of all community stakeholders in the process. This entails provision of education through dissemination of information to enhance the capacity of the community members for effective sustainability of community development programmes, (Abiona & Bello, 2013)

**Table 1:** Frequency distribution of Respondents' Demographic characteristic

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
1	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	498	62.3
	Female	302	37.7
	Total	800	100.0
2	<b>Age</b>		
	➤ 18 – 30	235	29.4
	➤ 31- 40	291	36.4
	➤ 41 – 50	136	17.0
	➤ 51 – 60	92	11.5
	➤ 61 above	46	5.7
	Total	800	100.0
3	<b>Occupation</b>		
	Trading	338	42.3
	Artisans	210	26.3
	Civil Servants	89	11.1
	Public servants/Teachers	56	7.0
	Women Associations	71	8.8
	Unemployed	36	4.5
4	Total	800	100.00
	<b>Educational Status</b>		
	Above 1st Degree	68	8.5
	1st Degree equivalent	104	13.0
	Diploma / NCE	192	24.0
	Professional Qualification	143	17.9
	Post Primary	104	13.0
	Primary/Adult Literacy	94	11.7
	None	95	11.9
	Total	800	100.0
5	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	Married	560	70.0
	Single	196	24.5
	Widowed	24	3.0
	Divorce	10	1.25
	Separated	10	1.25
	Total	800	100.0

**Table 2:** perspective of the respondents on the implications of the policy on development, citizens' welfare, livelihood and poverty

Yes	No	Total	X <sup>2</sup>	d.f	X <sup>2</sup> value at 0.05	Remark
267.78 X <sub>1</sub> 275	207.21 200	475	0.1518	1	3.84	N.S
183.21 X <sub>2</sub> 176	141.78 149	325				

Figures written in parenthesis are the expected frequencies

**Table 3:** The respondents' perspectives on peoples' inclusion or exclusion in the policy decision and implementation

	N	X	d <sup>2</sup>	Standard error	Df	t- value obs	Evaluat critics 0.05	Remark
Oyo	475	95	13304	33.172	8	0.904	2.306	NS
Osun	325	65	8404					

**Table 4:** the challenges posed by sustainability of the programme after the tenure of the present administration

S/N	Variables	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
1.	Do you agree with this policy of reconstruction and developments?	125	15.6	675	84.0
2.	Are you given adequate information/education on the policy?	102	12.7	698	87.2
3.	Are you satisfied with mode of implementation?	95	11.9	705	88.1
4.	Are you included or excluded from decision making in the governance?	97	12.2	703	87.8
5.	Do you think the programme can be sustained after this administration?	168	21	632	79.0
6.	Is the programme according to the interest of the people?	122	15.2	678	84.8



## CONCLUSION

It was observed there are challenges of sustainability of government-driven re-construction and development policy and practice in that the citizenry who are the beneficiaries are excluded in the policy decision and implementation. The policy brought about higher level of poverty to those who lost their shops and livelihood. Thus, for the sustainability of any programme of development where people are to benefit, the citizens should participate in planning, implementation and monitoring. Moreover, development should not be a political issue if the community is to attain lofty height and for sustainability.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on these findings, this study recommended that the first parameter for determining the worth of a project or programme is its sustainability which can only be ensured through adequate and massive education of the citizens on the need of such development. Furthermore, to ensure the sustainability of the programme, the people who are the beneficiaries of development should be included and participate in decision making process in matters affecting their life. Moreover, the Government-Driven and Re-construction Policy should not be a political issue, otherwise, if another political party comes to power, it might jettison the development policy, thereby, the sustainability is jeopardized.

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