

## Assessment of Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency and Rural Development in Nasarawa State, Nigeria

By

**Dr. Odone, Dauda Yusuf**

Department of Public Administration

Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Tel: +2347061682691 & +2348058945485, Email: [Odoney@gmail.com](mailto:Odoney@gmail.com)

&

**Dr. Comfort Ayine Adokwe**

Department of Public Administration

Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Tel: +2348035810883, Email: [amaachonobed@gmail.com](mailto:amaachonobed@gmail.com)

### Abstract

This study investigated the impact of Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency on Rural Development of some selected communities in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research method and relied on both primary and secondary sources of data. The main instrument for collecting primary data was the survey questionnaire which was completed by documentary sources. The method of data analysis employed was the simple conversion of frequencies to percentages and presented in a tabular form. The data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 while the hypotheses were testing using Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) at 0.05 level of significant. The findings of the study showed that there is a strong significant relationship between observed responses on how the initiative of the projects came about and observed responses on whether they are the needed projects. This implies that Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has performed significantly well in terms of rural development in the State. It was also revealed that most projects failed due to lack of funds and poor execution. The study recommends that successful rural development project requires co-ordination of the activities of several independent sectors and groups for effective performance. Nasarawa State Government is therefore encouraged to utilize this project to make its presence felt at the grass roots through prompt release of its counterpart contribution and finances in order to ensure sustainability of the agency programmes.

**Key Words:** Agency, Community, Development, Rural Development and Social Development

### Introduction

Rural development has witnessed increasing attention globally, especially over the past three to four decades. The renewed global interest in the development of rural people and their environment was reached with the setting of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the year 2000 with the set goals, basically rural development goals. The challenges of inadequate provision in social services and rural development raised the World attention especially in the developing countries. Rural development is about organizing human and natural resources in such a way that will provide solutions to the persistent problems of poverty, disease, illiteracy, unemployment, poor infrastructure, environmental degradation in rural areas and deprivation of the rural folks. Since the last three to four decades, there has been in developing countries, a continuous and desperate search for the solutions to development problems of rural areas. "The solutions so far

proffered have remained practically elusive and unrealistic” (Abass, 1993; p.2). They did not relate to tackling specific rural development programme in advancing rural development in the country.

Rural development has been seen as a strategy to overall development in both advanced and developing countries of the world. In Nigeria, rural development synergies had been highlighted in relevant literatures. Tenuche and Ogwo, in Omale (2005) are of the opinion that the institutional framework for the implementation of rural development as structured in Nigeria empowers the bureaucracy to design and control resources for rural development and deploys the resources to its perceived area of need. Olatunbosun, in Akpomuvie (2010), observes that Nigeria’s neglect of rural majority, is a by-product of both pre-colonial and post-colonial government not only for neglecting the majority who live in rural areas but also for “milking them dry” for the benefits of the few urban minority.

In July 2011, National Population Commission puts a projection of Nigerian citizens at 170,123,740 million, with 53.1% in rural areas. In Nasarawa State, for instance, 1,152,907.8 million, representing 53.2% of the population reside in the rural areas, while 1,014,212.2 million representing 46.8% reside in the semi-urban areas. Ezeani, in Odoney (2010; p.4) observed that “although most Nigerians reside in the rural areas the facilities that make life worth living are concentrated in the urban areas.” This situation is brought about by the attitude of policy makers to this significant segment of the population who work on the land and interact directly with and control all Nigerian natural resources and other minerals (Musa, 2010).

Attempts at curbing problems of poverty, disease, illiteracy, unemployment, poor infrastructure, environmental degradation and deprivation of the rural folks that confront the rural areas prompted the creation of various rural development strategies or policies by various governments or administrations in Nigeria. Among these policies and programmes are: The Directorate for Food Roads and Rural infrastructure (DFRRI), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Green Revolution (GR), Better Life for Rural Women (BLRW), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE) etc. All these programmes and policies had their objectives geared towards alleviating the sufferings of the rural dwellers but have not achieved their goals. Donor organizations, nations and international organizations development theorists have over the years been searching for strategies that would not only accelerate growth but also spread the benefits of development to the rural areas.

It is on this ground that the World Bank, in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria, evolved the Community and Social Development Project (CSDP) with Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) to harmonize World Bank-funded Community Driven Development (CDD) projects in the country. The harmonization process informed the merger of Community-Based Poverty Reduction Project (CPRP) and Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Project (LEEMP), to ensure that resources are effectively and efficiently driven by the need to empower rural areas by giving them more resources and the authority to use them flexibly, efficiently and cost effectively by channelling funds directly to rural areas, improve target and achieve more results on the ground, avoid

overlap, mainstream Community Driven-Development approach structure to effectively target social and environmental infrastructure at the rural areas, as well as improve local government area responsibility to service delivery to their rural communities.

The philosophy behind rural development in Nigeria is to enlist and inspire the rural people in the determination of their desired change in goals and the implementation of projects that will bring about their desires (i.e. those facilities that will serve their felt needs). This led to the design of development programmes in line with development priorities of government and other development partners, particularly as it relates to poverty reduction, infrastructural building and employment creation in Nigeria (Guideline on CSDP, 2011). Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency was established by Law No. 78 in 2009, with a mandate to implement the World Bank Assisted Community and Social Development Project (CSDP). The implementation is with an overall goal to improve access to service for human and Rural Development and to take the role of facilitating community-driven development in the rural areas. The project requires the involvement and participation of the rural dwellers in any of the activities about their development. The search for service delivery mechanisms that are demand-driven, covering multiple sectors and depending on specific rural community-determined needs, therefore, became increasingly necessary. It is in the light of forgoing that this study assesses the impact of the Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency (NSCSDA) in rural development in Nasarawa State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The development strategies and efforts in Nigeria have over the years been more urban based. This resulted to relative neglect of the rural areas as evidenced in the apparent dearth of basic facilities in the rural areas (Abah, 2010). Indeed, as Okoli and Onah (2002) observe, the rural areas in Nigeria are characterized by inadequacies of human needs as reflected in the near absence of some basic infrastructure with its attendant features of deprivation of basic amenities. The situation is even worse as many rural areas are left with limited access to road, education, electricity, good telecommunication, transportation, good water supply, standard market and health centres, improved housing and other essential amenities that would help in sustaining the rural masses.

Few policies and programs initiated and implemented by government over the years have resulted in no meaningful enhancement of the rural areas in Nigeria (Ezeah, 2005). These efforts had, among others, included the creation of the local government and other agencies (such mentioned in the introduction) to serve as an agent for rural development. In spite of the fact that the rural areas have been the focus of these policies and the laudable objectives to alleviate their sufferings, the rural areas are still experiencing difficulties associated with development. There is rural backwardness: poor transportation and health care delivery; non-existing or decaying infrastructural facilities. Policies and programmes have made little or no influence on rural development. It is against the foregoing that this study undertook an assessment of the role of NSCSDA in rural development in Nasarawa State. In doing this, it seeks to answer the following questions: to what extent has the NSCSDA fulfilled its rural development mandate? What has it done differently from previous rural development policies and programs? How can it be re-positioned for a better and efficient rural development delivery?

To further guide this study, the following hypotheses were formulated, thus;

- i. Ho: Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has not performed in rural development in Nasarawa State.
- ii. Hi: The Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has faced challenges in the execution of its projects in the rural areas.

### **Development: A Conceptual Discourse**

Development is a household concept in both the developed and developing countries. It is, however, conceptualized variously by different people. Some take it to mean change while some sees it as an advancement, improvement or progress. To others yet, development entails modernization or westernization (Ele, 2006). For instance, development, in the view of Porters (1975), entails transformation, advancement to a better and desired state. Similarly, Okoli and Onah (2002) assert that development involves progression, movement and advancement towards something better. They emphasized further that the movement should be on both the material and non-material aspects of life. In essence, development goes beyond economic and social indicators to include the improvement of human resources and positive change in their behaviour. In any case, the prevailing conception of development connotes essentially enhancement in the well-being of people (Okoye, 2000). Therefore, development conceived in human term is the maximum satisfaction of basic human needs of adequate and descent food, water, electricity, shelter, education, modern social and infrastructural facilities. Indeed, basic to any development process is man's desire to a better life and better environment (Oyovbaire and Odagunja, 1992).

So development is perhaps one social phenomenon that is desired and craved for by every society, group or community. Development generally is concerned with the enhancement of individuals' ability to shape their lives. According to Stiglitz (1999), development can be regarded as a transformation of society, a movement from traditional ways of thinking and traditional methods of production to more modern ways. Umebali (2006), sees the changes to be multi-dimensional involving changes in structures, attitude and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth; the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty. He asserts that development involves economic growth component, equality or social justice components, and socio-economic transformational components which are all on a self-sustaining basis. In other words, development must improve all aspects of peoples' lives. This follows Todaro's (1977) multi-faceted definition of development.

Therefore, development is based on qualitative indicators and not just quantitative and monetary measures. It is used as a criterion for cultural, social, political, and ecological values as well as social cost and long term effects are combined. This implies that development must be seen as actually and temporally relative, needing to be appropriate to society. This means also that development approach was created as an alternative to the practice of central authorities in designing interventions which deal with sectors of social economic life in isolation from each other and or which assume that socio-economic problems can be solved by standard measures, regardless of location or culture.

### **The Concept of Rural Development**

Deriving from our understanding of what development is, rural development is then that part of development that seeks to enhance the quality of life in the rural areas by providing basic infrastructural facilities. There are no universally accepted approaches to rural development. It is a choice influenced by time and culture. Any critical discussion of these issues must begin with the acknowledgement that, as yet, we have no comprehensive definition of rural development (Ezeah, 2005). Therefore, the term “rural development” connotes overall development to improve the quality of life of the rural people. In essence, this means a comprehensive and multidimensional concept, and encompasses the development of socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities and above all, human resources in rural areas.

As a phenomenon, rural development is the end result of interactions among various physical, technological, economic, social, cultural and institutional factors. Indeed, the basic objective of rural development is reduction in poverty and improvement of the quality of life of the rural people. Bello-Imam (1998), in this vein, defined rural development as spatially sectional but determined and conscious attempt to focus on the general upliftment of the living conditions of men in the rural areas. So, rural development in Nigeria entails the process of making life more satisfying and fulfilling to the millions of Nigerians who live in the rural areas.

Harris (1982; p.8), citing the World Bank on Rural development, sees it as “a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people – the rural people.” He identified four major factors, namely: increased concerns about the persistent and deepening rural poverty; changing views on the meaning of the concept of development; emergence of a more diversified rural economy in which rural non-farm enterprises play an increasing important role; and increase recognition of the importance of reducing the non-income dimensions of poverty to achieve sustainable improvements in the socio-economic well-being of the poor.

Olayide, et al (1981), in their views, opined that rural development is a process whereby concerted efforts are made in order to create significant increase in rural resources productivity with the central objective of enhancing rural income and creating employment opportunity in rural communities for rural dwellers to remain in the rural area. It is also an integrated approach to food production, provision of physical, social and institutional infrastructure with an ultimate goal of bringing about good healthcare delivery system, affordable and quality education, improved and sustainable agriculture etc.

Mabogunje, in Olumodeji (1990: p.21), clarified rural development as being:

*concerned with the improvement of the living standards of the low-income populations living in rural areas on a self-sustaining basis, through transforming the socio-spatial structures of its productive activities. It should be distinguished from Agricultural development which it entails and transcends, for that is concerned with one aspect of the productive live.*

This definition shows how embracing it is and that it agrees with the encompassing nature of the rural area as it engulf every sphere that may bring to the success of rural

development.

As it is today, rural development need should be given priority attention. Several reasons for such urgency include high and unacceptable poor access to social and economic infrastructure and services such as access to safe drinking water supply and sanitation, higher rate of health indicator such as infant mortality rate, prevalence of malnutrition and disease, and lower enrolment of children in school. In the words of Papadopoulou et al, (2012) “rural development tends to shift from the competitiveness of agriculture and forestry, to improvement of the quality of life and diversification into a wider rural economy, emphasizing policies’ environmental performances”. Rural development does not mean only agricultural development; rather, it involves the transformation of the social economic structures, institutions, relationships and processes in rural areas. Rural development should be conceived as a balanced social and economic development with emphasis on the equitable distribution as well as the creation of benefits (Ngangra in Kamal, 2005).

Based on the foregoing, it is obvious that scholars tilt the concept of rural development toward their area of specialization and perhaps, interest hence the assertion that the concept lacks a unified definition. However, these views emphasize the central point that rural development is about promoting the welfare, productivity and the social well-being of rural communities, about the scope and quality of participation of rural people in that process, about the structure, organization, operations and interactions and facilities which make this possible. The foregoing entails that development can be meaningfully achieved when the population becomes agents of their own development. The development requirement of the rural areas should, therefore, be multi-dimensional. To avoid ineffective floundering among the myriad definitions, rural development shall be defined as a process leading to sustainable improvement in the quality of life of rural people.

### **The Concept of Community Development**

Community Development is a strategy for rural development and the philosophical pivot, on which community development hinges, is the fact that the people are likely willing to participate in the planning and implementation of projects because they (people) are object and subject of development efforts. In Nasarawa state, the service approach to community development calls for the active participation and initiative of the rural people. Community development is designed at utilizing the rural people to develop themselves through self-initiative and motivation, with least assistance from government. This is aimed at rural development through self-help projects, health and nutritional enhancement projects and other similar projects. Akpomovie (2010) describes community development to include all strategies, interventions or coordinated actions at the community level aimed at bringing about socio-economic development. It is concerned with the total community life and needs. As asserted in William (1976), community development entails that the people themselves exert their own efforts along-side those of government authorities to improve their economic, social and cultural conditions. This involves community members in the planning and implementation of programmes for their own development.

*Community development connotes the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of government authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of the communities,*

*to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress (United Nations 1956).*

The above definition presents critical aspects of community development in which Odonye (2014) identified them as community effort and self-help effort.

**Community Effort:** The community effort involves the promotion of a better living for the people of an area with the intention of aligning it with any better conditions which the area may have. It connotes the gradual movement of becoming more advance and stronger on what the area intends to achieve over a particular time. A number of perspectives in Community effort have evolved over the years, geared towards the actualization of community development. These include Community Development Association (CDA) that initiate, mobilize resources and execute community projects.

**Self-help:** Is a voluntary and self-managed group of people belonging to similar socio-economic characteristics, who come together to initiate ideas that will promote sustainable development. Self-help is emphasized not only as a goal to be achieved in and of it, but also as a strategy for the accomplishment of broader development objectives. Self-help embodies two interrelated features: (1) it is expected to produce improvements of people's living conditions, facilities, and/or services and (2) it emphasizes that the process by which these improvements are achieved is essential to development of the rural community. Thus a self-help approach not only emphasizes what a rural area achieves, but more importantly, how it achieves it.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The social development theory as postulated by Vygotsky (1968) was adopted as a framework of analysis for this study. The evolution of social development theory by Vygotsky has received many contributions by most scholars. For example, Jacobs and Cleveland (1999) popularised the theory in order to serve as a framework needed for societal development. The Social development theory focuses on two interrelated aspects; learning and application. That society discovers better ways to fulfil its aspirations and it develops organizational mechanisms to express that knowledge to achieve its social and economic goals. The process of discovery expands human consciousness. The process of application enhances social organization.

This theory has as its basic assumptions that the society develops in response to the contact and interaction between human beings and their material, social and intellectual environment. The pressure of physical and social conditions, the mysteries of physical nature and complexities of human behaviour prompt humanity to experiment, create and innovate. The experience resulting from these contacts leads to learning on three different levels of existence. At the physical level, it enhances control over physiological needs. At the social level, it enhances capacity for effective interaction between people at greater and greater speeds and distances. At the mental level, it enhances knowledge.

In applying this theory to Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency, it would be observed that the Agency is an organisational mechanism for the fulfilment of the learning process that takes place simultaneously on all the planes of the rural communities, the rural people have natural progression from physical experience to mental

understanding. Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has no direct means to give conscious expression to rural areas. That essential role is played by rural-individuals who are inspired to express and achieve what the collective rural areas aspire and is prepared for. Where the aspiration and action of the rural-individuals do not reflect the will of the collective rural area, it is ignored or rejected by the Agency. Where it gives expression to deeply felt collective needs, it is systematically endorsed and supported.

This theory generates a framework around which all knowledge of the factors, instruments, conditions and processes of rural development can be integrated. Rather than singling out a specific set of determinants or giving primacy to a limited set of instruments, it reveals the nature of the relationships and processes that govern the interaction of all these elements generate developmental results. Rather than generate a linear formula, it makes it possible to view the phenomenon of rural development from multiple perspectives that are integrated and unified ways of knowing the whole, instead of the divided and separate ways of viewing the parts. It also provides a framework for understanding the relationships between the knowledge generated by the Agency with in-depth understanding on the interactions between rural areas with other bodies (organisations) for its development. The conceptual knowledge becomes most powerful when it is organized into a system.

The advantage of this theory is its potential to conceive as a people (rural dwellers) making choices and behaving on the basis of their reactions to their needs and environment. This theory lays emphasis upon identification of the decision centres through which information is passed within a society. This orientation permits the design of the future through an informed understanding of the dynamics that govern the Agency. This implies that people in the rural areas take responsibility for the creation of their own future in co-interdependence with their social (which is the interaction between them and Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency) and physical environment (which are the felt-needs they want to solve). The disadvantage is that this theory believes that if the rural areas cannot shape their future on the one hand through the power of understanding the characteristics and requirements of the environment, it will be left in a doom without aspirations and expectations.

### **Methodology**

In this study, survey research design was adopted. The population of the study was derived from the entire people of the Nasarawa State with the current population of 1,869,377 million (Census, 2006). Randomized systematic-stratified sampling technique was applied in the selection of sample size of 540 respondents. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilised. The main instrument for collecting primary data was the survey questionnaire which was complemented by documentary sources such as journals, researches and other official documents from Nasarawa State Community Social Development Agency office. The study employed simple descriptive statistical tools such as simple conversion of frequencies to percentages and presented in a tabular form. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17. The hypotheses were tested using Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) at 0.05 level of significant.



## Results and Discussions

This section focuses on the presentation and analysis of data collected from the survey field. Since our sample size was 540 as such, 540 copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents of the study areas out of which 524 were dully filled and returned while 16 were not returned. The total questionnaire returned represents 97% of the total copies of questionnaires administered. The table below gives details of questionnaire distributed and returned.

**Table 1:** Questionnaire Distributed and Returned

Senatorial Zones	Local Govt. Areas	Rural Areas	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Returned	Not Returned
Northern Zone	Akwanga	Ningo	30	29	1
		Risha	30	30	0
		Mochu	30	27	3
	Wamba	Jidda	30	30	0
		Kwarra	30	29	1
		Wude	30	30	0
Southern Zone	Awe	Azara	30	28	2
		Abuni	30	30	0
		Awe	30	30	0
	Obi	Agwatashi	30	28	2
		Obi	30	29	1
		Agaza	30	30	0
Western Zone	Kokona	Dari	30	28	2
		Kama-Madaki	30	29	1
		Garaku	30	30	0
	Toto	Shafa-Abakpa	30	30	0
		Umaisha	30	29	1
		Yelwa	30	28	2
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>540</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: Field Work, 2022

The rest of the analysis and interpretation of data collected were based on 92% (i.e 524) copies of questionnaire retrieved.

**Table 2:** List of Projects Executed by NSCSDA in the Selected Research Areas of Nasarawa State

Senatorial Zones	Local Govt. Areas	Project s/Areas	Educatio n	Health	Water	Road	Electricity	Others
NORTHERN ZONE	AKWANGA	Ningo		A Clinic	5 boreholes			
		Risha		A Clinic	3 boreholes			SkillAcq. centre
		Mochu	Sch. Furniture		2 boreholes		electricity	
	WAMBA	Jidda					Brdg & Rd rehabilitation	
		Kwarra				2 boreholes	Road rehabilitation	
		Wude				4 boreholes		
SOUTHERN	AWE	Azara	A block of		2 boreholes		Skill Acquisition centre	

<b>ZONE</b>			3 classes/Lab equipments					
		<b>Abuni</b>	Sch. furniture		1 borehole		electricity	
		<b>Awe</b>			2 boreholes	Const. of bye pass road		
		<b>OBI</b>	<b>Agwatahi</b>	10 beds space ward/fencing of the Clinic		3 boreholes		
			<b>Obi</b>			4 boreholes		A town hall
			<b>Agaza</b>	2 blocks of 5 classes with office furnished		3 boreholes		
<b>WESTERN ZONE</b>	<b>KOKONA</b>	<b>Dari</b>	Rehabilitation of 2 blocks of 5 classes/ a lodge.					
		<b>Garaku</b>	2 blocks of 4 classes with office & toilet		4 boreholes			
		<b>Kama-madaki</b>		A clinic	4 boreholes		electricity	
	<b>TOTO</b>	<b>Shafa-Abakpa</b>	Built a Lab/Library					40 unit of mkt. Stores
		<b>Yelwa</b>			2 boreholes			Mkt. stores/town hall
		<b>Umaisha</b>					Const. of Bridge/ Drainage	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 above shows projects carried out by Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency in the sample rural areas of the study respectively. These Rural areas receive support from the agency on meeting the ten percent (10%) resource contributions, (contributions which may be in cash, kind, material or any combination). These are demand-driven projects that are eligible and were assisted under NSCSDP.

The table shows that of the 73 projects undertaken in the sampled 18 rural areas of the study, 6 were roads and bridges projects; 12 were educational projects; 2 were civic centre projects; 2 were market store projects; 41 water projects; 5 were health projects, 2 were skill acquisition projects and 3 were electricity projects. The tables also show that in the study area, development projects are dominated by projects such as water supply projects followed by education, road, health, electricity, market, civic centre and skill acquisition projects. The projects reflected the felt needs of the people, hence the emphasis on them. The pattern that emerges from these is that, in terms of number, the communities' preferences are reflected on the projects they embarked upon. For proper comprehension, we found it most appropriate to present the data in tabular form indicating responses in percentages. The responses have been tabulated, analyzed and interpreted as follows:

**Table 3:** Projects executed by Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Skill acquisition centres	36	6.8
School furniture and class rooms	83	15.8
Clinics/maternity	64	12.2
Rural electrification	48	9.2
Roads, Drainages& Bridges	42	8.0
Water (boreholes)	237	45.2
Markets stores	14	7.6
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

Table 3 above showing the various projects by Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency known and identified by the respondents. This shows that among the facilities executed by NSCSDA in all the rural areas that were selected for this research study, hand pump/motorize boreholes are most widely found in all the rural areas, while school furniture and classroom, clinics/maternity were next in terms of numbers.

**Table 4:** Manner in which Projects were Initiated

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
By the rural area	239	45.6
By the NSCSDA	83	15.8
Both rural and NSCSDA	114	21.8
By Government	61	11.6
I do not know	27	5.2
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

The results in table 4 above showed the percentages on how the initiative of the projects comes about. Rural areas have 45.6%, NSCSDA has 15.8%, both rural areas and NSCSDA has 21.8%, Government has 11.6%, while those that claimed not to have known have 5.2%. It therefore means that the initiative of most of the projects came from the rural areas which showed that projects are mostly the sole-decision of the rural people with NSCSDA as facilitator, without the influence of the Government.

**Table 5:** Perception of Respondents on the need for Intervention by the NSCSDA

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	382	72.9
No	85	16.2
Not sure	57	10.9
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

Table 5 above shows that 72.9 percent of the respondents are of the believed that they need the intervention of NSCSDA in their areas and 16.2 percent said No while 10.9 percent said they are not sure. This means that the rural areas need the intervention of NSCSDA in their communities.

**Table 6:** Perception of Respondents on NSCSDA Projects as viable tool for Rural Development

Responses	Respondents	Percent
Yes	461	88.0
Not sure	63	12.0
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

The result in Table 6 above shows that 88.0% of respondents strongly agreed that Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Projects is a viable tool for rural development whereas 12% of the respondents are not sure of it. This shows that NSCSDA has great influence on rural development.

**Table 7:** Perception of Respondents on Projects Sustainability

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	429	81.9
No	32	6.1
Not sure.	63	12.0
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

Table 7 above shows that 81.9% of respondents are of the view that the projects are sustainable, 12.0% of the respondents are not certain of the sustainable of the projects, while 6.1% strongly disagreed that the projects are sustainable.

**Table 8:** Perception of Respondents on Degree of Access to Social Services

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Disagree	3	.6
Agree	153	29.2
Strongly agree	368	70.2
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

The result in the above table shows that 70.2% of the respondents strongly agreed to the fact that the projects have provided them with social services due to its proximity in their community while 29.2% agreed and 0.6% disagreed respectively.

**Table 9:** Perception of Respondents on influence of Project on the Development of Rural Areas

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
-----------	-------------	----------------

Strongly agree	287	54.8
Agree	195	37.2
Neutral	27	5.2
Disagree	15	2.8
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

From Table 9, it is evident that 54.8% strongly agreed and 37.2% agreed that the projects have influence the development of many communities due to the quality of work and social services provided. There are no responses to the others options, and as such, there is no need to bring them to the table.

**Table 10:** Responses on efficiency of projects been executed with the cooperation of community and the Agency

Responses	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Disagree	30	5.7
Agree	205	39.1
Strongly agree	289	55.2
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

Table 10 above shows 55.2% strongly agreed that the projects executed in their communities are well efficient. 39.1 equally agreed while 5.7 disagreed that the projects where quite efficient in terms of execution.

**Table 11:** Perception of Respondents on the Demand-Driven approach used in carrying out the projects

Responses	Respondents	Percent
Strongly disagree	29	5.5
Agree	71	13.6
Strongly agree	424	80.9
Total	524	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2022

Table 11 above shows that 80.9%, strongly agreed, 13.6% agreed while 5.5% strongly disagree. This shows that the approaches used in carrying out the project are relevant to the success or failure of the project in the rural communities. There are no responses to the other options.

The table below shows the results of the test of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) debiting the results of Chi-Square used to aid the analysis. It also shows degree of freedom of each of the questions raised in the questionnaire. This compares the observed count in each table cell to the count which would be expected under the assumption of no association between the row and column classifications as degree of freedom.

**Table 12:** Chi-Square Test Statistics

Questions	Chi-Square	Degree of Freedom	Level Sig.
Do you know about Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency?	176.087 <sup>a</sup>	2	.005
Which of the Projects by Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency do you know?	254.695 <sup>a</sup>	2	.003
How does the initiative of the project come about?	267.279 <sup>b</sup>	4	.008
Is it the needed project?	625.538 <sup>c</sup>	2	.000
Do the rural areas need the intervention by the Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency in their communities?	343.103 <sup>c</sup>	2	.001
Has any rural development attempts been made on any of this sectors by any organisation or the rural area, specify?	129.111 <sup>b</sup>	5	.008
Is Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency a viable tool for rural development?	330.260 <sup>a</sup>	2	.002
Are the projects sustainable?	516.840 <sup>b</sup>	2	.000
Who maintains the completed projects?	516.534 <sup>c</sup>	3	.001
How well are the projects maintained?	143.275 <sup>c</sup>	3	.006
The projects have provided a degree of access to social service due to its proximity	52.588 <sup>b</sup>	4	.005
The projects has influence the development of the community with the quality of work and service provided	378.427 <sup>a</sup>	4	.003
The projects is faced with the problem of inadequate functioning or completely non-functioning	112.687 <sup>b</sup>	4	.002
How efficient are projects been executed with the cooperation of community and the Agency.	231.553 <sup>c</sup>	4	.000
The approach used in carrying out the project is relevant to the success or failure of the project in the community.	513.622 <sup>c</sup>	4	.001
Projects are bedevilled in execution by lack of counterpart-fund by both the Government and the rural areas	80.985 <sup>b</sup>	4	.008
Poor management by the Community Project Management Community (CPMC) has delay in the execution of projects	159.679 <sup>a</sup>	4	.006
Conflicting issues on the choice of project in the rural areas delays execution.	472.992 <sup>b</sup>	4	.002

Nonchalant attitude by the rural communities in complementing the efforts of NSCSDA in carrying out projects	244.172 <sup>c</sup>	4	.005
There is political priority on project in consistent with NSCSDA development goals	447.187 <sup>c</sup>	4	.000

Source: Field Work, 2022

**Decision Rule:**

The test statistics table above shows that the activities of the Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency have positive performance influence on rural development in Nasarawa State. This is because the results shown are below Probability Value (0.05), if the significant value is below 0.05 which is the Probability Value, reject null hypothesis (Ho) and accept alternative hypothesis (Hi), if the significant value is above 0.05 (P-Value), accept null hypothesis (Ho) and reject alternative hypothesis (Hi). Therefore, we accept alternative hypothesis which states that Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has faced challenges in the execution of its projects in the rural areas.

Table 12 of test statistics above shows that the factors militating against the success of NSCSDA in carrying out projects in the rural areas are significant because they are below Probability Value (0.05) except in factor like (Question 5)“Has any development attempts been made on any of this sectors by any organisation or the rural area, specify”. The projects are bedevilled in execution by lack of counterpart-fund by both the Government and the rural areas, poor management by the Community Project Management Committee (CPMC) has delayed the execution of projects and nonchalant attitude by the rural communities in complementing the efforts of NSCSDA in carrying out projects, these are not significant because they are above Probability Value (0.05). If the significant value is below 0.05 which is the Probability Value, reject null hypothesis and accept alternate hypothesis, but if the significant value is above 0.05 (P- Value) accept null hypothesis and reject alternate hypothesis.

This result means that the Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has challenges in the execution of its projects in the rural areas as regards factors militating against the success of NSCSDA in carrying out projects in the rural areas. Projects are bedevilled in execution by lack of counterpart-fund by both the Government and the rural areas, poor management by the Community Project Management Committee (CPMC) has delayed the execution of project and nonchalant attitude by the rural communities in complementing the efforts of NSCSDA in carrying out projects are some of the challenges in the execution of its projects in the rural area. Based on the results of the analysis, the probability values (p-value) for most items were less than  $\alpha > 0.05$ .

**Discussion of Findings**

After the analysis and interpretation of data collected, the following were revealed. From the research findings, there is a relationship between “observed responses on how the initiative of the projects came about and observed responses on whether they are the needed projects”. The first finding of this study with p-value to most questions from 1 to 12 sought to find out whether

or not Nasarawa State Community and Social Development Agency has performed in rural development in the State. Based on the result of the analysis, the probability values (p-value) for most of the items were less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The result showed that most respondents agreed with many of the questions in this section, which implies that NSCSDA has performed in rural development in the State. This is because most of the responses transit from the former to the later. In some of the oral interview, it was revealed that in most rural areas that the initiative of the projects executed by NSCSDA are gotten from the Community Development Plans and the NSCSDA implementation has contributed tremendously to rural development in Nasarawa State. In view of this, according to Briddle (1990), meaningful structural change cannot occur in the rural areas unless there is willingness among the people to embrace and welcome change.

It was also revealed that the rural areas are aware of the projects as they participated more in the projects planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation. It was further revealed that an overwhelming majority of the rural dwellers were satisfied with their level of involvement, degree of participation in projects processes, the efficiency of the process followed in projects execution and the degree of access to services being provided by the projects. Most of the rural dwellers advocated that there is the need for timely disbursement of funds to the communities with approved Community Development Plans to encourage or sustain community confidence in the projects and increase access to social services by every section of the communities. Some level of dissatisfaction was observed in the level of cooperation between, rural community and project management committee, level of transparency, quality of work done on projects and the adequacy of resources provided for project execution.

The results further showed that most of the rural areas needed the intervention projects by the NSCSDA. Most of the responses showed that most of the rural areas have tried many means but failed due to lack of funds and poor execution. Most respondents are of the believe that except an external body (agency) comes to their help, they may still remain in vicious circle of underdevelopment. Again, it was revealed that the demand-driven (Bottom-up) approach used in carrying out the projects is relevant to the success of the projects executed in rural areas. This, the respondents are of the perception that if the approach used in executing the projects do not involve the beneficiaries, it might not have solved the felt-need of the rural beneficiaries, as such, the project might have been based on assumption of the felt-need of the rural areas. It was revealed that the projects have provided some degrees of access to social services to the rural areas where these projects are found.

The projects have influenced the development of the rural areas with the quality of work and services provided which made most of the rural areas now viable. This finding is in agreement with what Fakayode, et al (2008) observed, that since rural infrastructure is one of the several subsets of activities that are essential elements for rural transformation and development, the existence of poor quality or inadequate infrastructure will inevitably have a negative performance on rural development. The provisions of adequate and effective infrastructure underpin rural development. Moreover, the provision of basic rural infrastructure is the prerequisite for rural development especially in Nasarawa State to stimulate economic growth and rural viability. It was revealed that the projects executed by NSCSDA has performed satisfactorily in rural development in Nasarawa State because most of the rural areas are aware of the projects as they participated more in the project planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation. The study further revealed that an overwhelming majority of the rural dwellers were satisfied with the level of their involvement, degree of participation in projects processes, the



efficiency of the process followed in projects execution and the degree of access to services being provided by the projects. If the approach used in executing the projects has not involved the beneficiaries, it might not have solved the felt-need of the rural beneficiaries; as such projects would have been based on assumption of the felt-need of the rural areas.

The result of the second hypothesis shows that the respondents rated all the questions items from 13 to 20 as significantly satisfactory. However, it was revealed that inadequate counterpart-funding from the State and Local Government as well as the inability of some of the rural areas to provide beneficiary contribution on timely basis constitutes serious challenges to the implementation of projects by NSCSDA. The result further revealed that conflicting issues over choice of projects affect the performance of rural development projects. This is due to the perceived intentions of the few individuals who think their decision should have been recognised. They are sometimes seen as the “elite” in the rural areas. The findings further revealed that there is no problem with the methods used in carrying out projects because the process is a community driven development (CDD) which is demand driven which makes the methods suitable, effective and positively impacting on rural development.

The study also revealed some level of dissatisfaction in the level of cooperation between community and project management committee, level of transparency, and quality of work done on community projects. This confirms the position of Okpala (1980) that rural communities have different perceptions from that of the government as to what constitutes their development and as such they do not share government’s enthusiasm for rural development. The rural communities undertake projects that they think are more relevant to their felt needs and aspirations. It is clear from the study that development projects will of course, vary with the requirements and priorities of the community involved. The study also agrees with Akintola (2007), which found fault with top-down development approach, the trickle-down theory and the tendency of the government to impose development projects on rural areas. They have argued in favour of a bottom-up approach which is demand driven whereby projects, programs and priorities are shaped by the rural communities themselves.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that NSCSDA project performance in Nasarawa State is achieving the desired results and satisfying development objectives. As the rural areas become advance, there is a gradual increase in the awareness of the rural people that yesterday’s methods of development become less appropriate in solving contemporary felt-needs of the rural areas. The understanding of NSCSDA that development results from complex, multi-faceted interactions among a set of intricately connected physical, economic and social phenomena has given it a boost in rural development.

Conversely, it is hard to find fault with the idea that effective approach to promoting rural development must mirror the process by which development takes place. Many of rural areas in the study areas have significant presence of projects (facilities) by NSCSDA and these have enhanced economic activities. The projects reflected the felt needs of the people. The pattern that emerges from these is that, in terms of number, the rural area preferences are reflected on the projects they embarked upon. In essence, the majority of infrastructural facilities availability does translate to accessibility or utility, to achieve genuine rural development; rural infrastructural provision in the study area needs

an excellent institutional framework. In spite of these enormous contributions of the NSCSDA to rural development, facility provision and development is facing some problems in the study areas. Among the problems identified are poor management by the Community Project Management Committee (CPMC) and nonchalant attitude of rural people towards facilities brought about delay in the execution of projects by the rural communities in complementing the efforts of NSCSDA, inadequate counterpart-funding from the State and Local Government as well as the inability of some of the rural areas to provide beneficiary contribution on timely basis constitutes serious challenges to the implementation of projects by NSCSDA. Though it cannot be categorically stated that this Agency has performed excellently, it is on record that they have been able to mobilize human and material resources to accomplish some modicum of successes in rural development in Nasarawa State.

### **Recommendations**

Arising from the findings of this study, the following recommendations are therefore necessary for implementation.

**(i) Co-ordination and Performance:** successful rural development project requires co-ordination of the activities of several independent sectors and groups. Yet, actually achieving this coordination is often very difficult. Consequently, how projects fit into the felt-needs depends on the kinds of linkages between sectors that are required, and the methods used to facilitate coordination within a given institutional framework. While it is generally felt that greater coordination would promote performance, it is clear how best to implement these concepts in rural development project setting. Similarly, with respect to decentralization, it is necessary to determine how it can occur in rural development projects and what methods have been or could be used to measure the extent of decentralization efforts. Although, the major actors in project identification design, implementation, and evaluation have differing purpose or agenda which may not place the highest priority on achieving project goals. It is important to determine how incentive system might be used to modify the behaviour of these actors and make it more conducive to project success.

**(ii) Counterpart-funding:** Quite often shortages occur in the complementation of host rural areas committee assigned during NSCSDA project implementation to work with short and long-term expatriate and technical assistance teams. As a result, projects proceed more slowly than originally planned and the expatriate teams may take on far more implementation responsibilities than projected, at the expense of their capacity-building roles. The State Government is therefore encouraged to utilize these projects to make its presence felt at the grass roots through prompt release of its counterpart contribution to the project, with the number of pending projects on ground which are as the result of the non-payment of counterpart-funding especially by the state government, it brought to a halt of intended development the rural areas aspire for and the strike by the staff of the Agency on the non-payment of their salaries. The issue of counterpart funding should be fully met before the completion of the first phase of the project. However, assuring a full complement of host counterparts may mean diverting skilled manpower from other jobs where they are also desperately needed. This may also mean the use of direct-labour by the rural dwellers where needed.

## References

- Abass, M. I. (1993). The Challenge of Rural Development Strategies in a Deregulated Economy: Public Lecture Delivered at Shiroro Hotel, Minna, 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1993.
- Akintola, S.R. (2007), Rural Roads and Settlements Linkage: An Analysis of Socio-economic Interactions in Rural Area of Ife Region, Osun State, Nigeria. *Research for Development* 17(1&2): 1–25. Nigeria Institute of Socio-Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan.
- Olatunbosun, N.S. and Akpomuvie, O. B. (2010). Rural Development in Nigeria: A Review of Pre- and Post-independence Practice. *Journal of Sociological Research*, Vol. 3, No. 2. Uyo.
- Akpomuvie, O. B. (2010). *Self-Help as a Strategy for Rural Development in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Flash Publishers.
- Bello-Imam, B. (1998). Rural Development in Nigeria: A Theoretical. Analysis. *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 36 Feb.
- Bridle, J. (1990). *The Community Development Process*. New York: Holt Richard.
- Ele, C. (2006) *Evangelization through Rural Development*. Nsukka: Great AP Publishers Ltd.
- Ezeah, P. (2005) *Rural Sociology and Rural Development with Focus on Nigeria*. Enugu: John Jacob Classic Publishers.
- Ezeani, E.O. (2006). *Fundamentals of Public Administration*. Enugu: Zik-Chuks Publishers.
- Fakayode, S.B., Rahji, M. A., Oni, O.A and Adeyemi, M.O (2008). An Assessment of Food Security Situations of Farm Households in Nigeria: A USDA Approach. *The Social Science Journal* 3.
- Harris, J. (1982). *General Introduction to Rural Development: Theories of Peasant Economy and Agrarian Change*. London: Hutchinson University Library.
- Jacobs, A. and Cleaveland, W. O. (1999). *Strategies for Promoting Integrated Rural Development in Nigeria: Theory and Practice*. Badagry: Matram.
- Kamal, B.S. (2005). *Element of Rural Sociology*. Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press.
- Mabogunje, I.A. (1990). The Underlying Factors of Rural Development; Patterns in the Nsukka Region of South-eastern Nigeria. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, Vol. 2. [www.jred.ca](http://www.jred.ca) Retrieved on February 22, 2013.
- Musa, J. J. (2010). Nigeria's Rural Economic Development Strategy: Community Driven Development Approach. *AU J. T.* 13(4) 233-241.
- Ndangra, S. B. (2005). *Rural Development Administration* in Kamal, B. (eds) *Essentials of Public Administration*. Abuja: Digisoft Printers.
- Obah, K. C. (2010), *Rural Development Trends in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects*. Enugu: Centad Press
- Okpala, B. C. (1980). Analysis and Critical Review of Rural Development Efforts in Nigeria, 1960-2010. *Studies in Sociology of Science*, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 48-56. <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sss/article/view/j.sss>. Retrieved on March 22, 2022.
- Odneye, D.Y. (2010). *Community Development as an Instrument for Rural Development in Obi Local Government: An Unpublished M.Sc Thesis*, Submitted to the Post-graduate School, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.
- Olayide, I. (1981). *Rural development in Nigeria: concept, approaches, challenges and*

- [prospect.http://socyberty.com/issues/rural-development-in-Nigeria-concept-approaches-challenges-and-prospcct/](http://socyberty.com/issues/rural-development-in-Nigeria-concept-approaches-challenges-and-prospcct/). Retrieved on March 22, 2022.
- Okoli, D. U. and Onah, E.E. (2002). The Case of Aba and its Region, South East Nigeria. Working Paper 4, Rural-Urban Interact and Livelihood Series, Institute for Environment and Development, Human Settlement Programme, London.
- Okoli, F. and Onah, F. (2002) *Public Administration in Nigeria: Nature, Principles and Application*. Enugu: John Jacobs Publishers Ltd.
- Okoye, C. (2000) “Democracy–Development Rhetoric in Nigeria: A Critical Discourse”. *African Political Science Review*. Vol. 7 No 7.
- Oyovbaire, L. and Odagunje, O. (1992). Rural Infrastructure Development in Nigeria: Between 1960 and 1970 Problem and challenges”. *Journal of Social Science*, Vol. 11 No 2.
- Omale, I. (2005). Dynamic Model for Rural Development in Africa. *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 5.
- Olumodeji, E.O. (1990). Enhancing Rural Development Reforms Through Social Development Policy in Nigeria. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol.1, No1. Jos.
- Odonye, D. Y. (2014). The Role of Non-Governmental Organisation in Community Development: Focus on Nasarawa State. *Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 11, No 4.
- Oyorbaire, S. and Olagunju, T. (1992) *Foundations of New Nigeria. The IBB Era*. Ibadan: Precision Press.
- Papadopoulou, E., (2012). Participatory Evaluation of Rural Development Programmes: A Quantitative Approach in the Case of Modernisation of Agricultural Holding in Greece. *Journal of Regional Science Inquiry*, Vol. IV No 1.
- Porters, S. (1975). *Community Participation in Development Projects: The World Bank Experience in Reading in Community Participation*. Washington D.C.: World Bank.
- Stiglitz, J. (1999). Participation and Development: Perspectives from the Comprehensive Development paradigm. *Review of Development Economics* Vol. 6(2).
- Tenuche, M. and Ogwo, B. (2005). *Obstacle to Community Development and How to Combat Them* in Omale, I. and Ebiloma, E. (eds) *Principles and Practice of Community Development in Nigeria*. Aboki publishers: Makurdi.
- Todaro, P.M. (1977), *Economics for Developing World*. London: Longmans Group Limited.
- Umebali, B. W. (2006), “Local Government as a Third Tier of Government” <http://socyberty.com/issues/rural-development-in-Nigeria-concept-approaches-challenges-and-prospcct/>. Retrieved on March 22, 2022.
- United Nations Organization (1956). Twentieth Report of the Administrative Committee on coordination to the Economic and Social Council, 24<sup>th</sup> Session, Annex III, document E/2931, Oct 18.
- Vyotsky, T. V. (1968). Rural Development: From the Practice and Policies towards Theory. *Journal of Sociologia Ruralis*; Vol. 40.
- William, G. (1976). *State and Society in Nigeria*. Idanre: Afrografika Publishers.

#### **Brief bio-data of the authors:**

**Dr. Odonye, Dauda Yusuf** is a lecturer in the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Administration, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria. Odonye is an experienced young

scholar who has published widely in both local and international reputable and peer-reviewed journals. His area of research focus is local government and development studies.

**Dr. Comfort Ayine Adokwe** is currently a lecturer in the Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Administration, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria. Comfort is a successful entrepreneur, management consultant and researcher who has published widely in both local and international reputable journals. Her area of specialization is public financial management and administrative behavior.