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Governance and International Assistance for Building Human Development: A Review of UNDP Activities Programme in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: As part of the poverty reduction strategies and human developments, various levels of governments across the third world countries including Nigeria are now collaborating international organisations through some organs of the United Nations (UN) that focuses on social programmes such as United Nation Development Programme (UNDP). To determine the awareness and the extent at which these programmes have impacted on the people in Nigeria particularly Ekiti state, the study adopted survey research method where questionnaire were administered among the actors involved and the beneficiaries of the programmes from Ekiti state. The study found that, the impact of UNDP programmes on the people were not effectively felt because both the policies and projects of UNDP are not well articulated in the study area.

I. INTRODUCTION

For some years now, aid practitioners had been struggling with how to address the impact of precarious states of developing countries especially the continued developmental failure in many parts of the third world nations like sub-Saharan Africa, sub-South Asia and Latin America; where there were high level of poverty with lowest level of socio-economic development, social security and standard of living. This however has attracted the attention of World Bank groups to develop interest towards good governance and international assistance through international agencies such as UNDP. The concept of governance and international development assistance however converged broadly and centre around the idea of governance as the exercise of authority over a country's economic, political, and social affairs. Governance is defined as the way the rules are made, norms are institutionalised and actions are being structured, sustained, regulated and also held accountable (Eminue, 2005). As such, governance may take many forms, as it may be driven by different motivations with many different results generation. For instance, a government may operate democratically where citizens have a right to vote on who should govern and control public good, or by appointment to govern a small organisation with a specific aims.

The UNDP according to Brown, M.M. (2003) is the UN's global development network, an organisation advocating to help people build a better life. The UNDP was established in 1965 by the United Nations General Assembly, and became operational in January 1966. The overall mission of UNDP was designed to assist the third world countries to realise a sustainable and human development, to help them develop national capacity by giving an overriding priority to eradicating poverty and building equity.

UNDP has a major role it plays, one, it provides expert advice, training, and grant support to developing countries in order to help in achieving ranges of national and international goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) DOI. (2001). In this context, it is being regarded as the largest source of development funding and government technical assistance within the UN system. Secondly, UNDP on the other hand supports the coordination of UN activities at national level through what is called Resident Coordinator system that manages, and closely working with the national government as a development partners; and hence focused on the following core goal DOI. (2001).

- Achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty;
- Fostering democratic governance;
- Managing energy and environment for sustainable development;
- Supporting crisis prevention and recovery;
- Responding to HIV/AIDS.

How it can best respond to these focus areas are redefining from its framework on a regular interval. In any case, within the context of the priority areas, the UNDP supports projects and programmes at all levels (global, regional, national, states and local governments), in collaboration with numerous partners, providing advice, building capacity, and co-funding or funding innovative activities. Its annual Human Development Report is widely used and considered authoritative.

However, the international community and domestic citizens expect states to practice good governance, or at least to strive to improve the quality of governance in order to meet the needs of their people. This expectation involves a wide variety of governance components, including democratic elections, respect for human rights, and strong economic development. Today foreign aid with the purpose of improving governance is the most common and significant tool for promoting democracy (Thomas (2009)). According to the CBN (1999:63), the UNDP serves as a catalyst in midwifing sustainable human development. It is also involved in technical development of small and medium enterprises (SME) as part of its poverty alleviation programme in collaboration with state and local governments and various communities nationwide. The modus operandi of UNDP is to provide a counterpart funding while participating states also provide their own counterpart and cooperation in support of UNDP projects. The following are some schemes through which UNDP presently undertakes its poverty reduction programmes across Africa and including Nigeria according to Hussaini, (2014):

- (a) Short Term Advisory Resources (UNISTAR);
- (b) Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKENS);
- (c) African Project Development Facilities (APDF); and
- (d) Nigerian Project Development Facilities (NPDF)

Development aid organizations began addressing a quickly overflowing basket of interrelated and overlapping issues under the general rubric-anticorruption, institution building, governmental accountability, transparency, legal reform, public sector management, and others (Hussaini, 2014). Proponents of this argued that governance was not just one more priority in what seemed in those years a continually expanding arena of development aid enthusiasms. Rather, they held, poor governance was a central cause of underdevelopment, and remedying was a crucial key that would unlock progress across the developmental landscape.

UNDP, as being part of the extended organ of UN works as a global development network, that engages civil society organisations (CSOs) from all levels and promote the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) where it support every person in their efforts to build a better life through good governance and development programmes (UN General Assembly (1974)). CSOs do access certain UNDP funding mechanisms, including the Thematic Trust Funds, the Partnership Facility, and a Small Grants Programme. In practice, the UNDP at the national level strongly encourages governments including reluctant governments to build broad-based national ownership and to include the participation of civil society in its programmes this however promotes multi-stakeholder dialogue on key policy and development objectives such as the MDGs, an approach also evident in global and regional level programmes.

UN General Assembly resolution 3251 (XXIX) 1974; created a Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (SU/TCDC) within the UNDP (UN General Assembly, 1974). The strategic aim of the Special Unit is to make developing countries effective partners with all other actors in achieving the Millennium Development Goals even at the incidence of extreme poverty by UNDP (2004a).

Meanwhile, the 2006 United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) report states that in reality most of the states in Nigeria especially the peculiarity of some region makes them suffer from administrative neglect, crumbling social infrastructure and services, high unemployment rate, social deprivation, abject poverty, filth, squalor and endemic conflict. This has led governance and international assistance taken a positive shape. Both DFID and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have carried out governance programs with state governments to sustained local communities in which several such authorities are favored as aid recipients; UNDP programme has therefore been acknowledged as a significant contributor to achieving the specific Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target (Akena J.E (2016)). The programme had supported Nigerian government in their efforts to achieve sustainable human development, the advancement of women, the regeneration of the environment, the creation of sustainable livelihoods to help people build a better life, achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty, Fostering democratic governance, managing energy and environment for sustainable development, Supporting crisis prevention and recovery and responding to HIV/AIDS (Molokwu N (2010)).

II. THE PROBLEM

The tasks of all societies remain how to create a system of governance that supports and sustains human development especially for the deprived and peripheral. And the quest for a clearly and articulated concept of governance to achieve this has however still inadequate (UNDP 1997a: 2)

It has been known in Nigeria today that every government embarks on one form of poverty reduction strategy or the other. However, what has remained unanswered is the extent to which these programmes have impacted on the poor; the target population. Recent studies on the subject poverty and its reduction agencies as well as programmes indicate that considerable gap exists between the target objective alleviating or eradicating poverty and achievement. It seems that the efforts of various governments are ineffective and therefore not much has been done to actualise the benefits. For poverty reduction agencies, their results do not seem to justify the huge financial allocations to them Kwachukwu (2008). Poor people's perceptions of formal poverty reduction institutions are largely that of ineffectiveness and irrelevance in their lives as government poverty reduction activities contribute little in their struggles to survive and rarely help them to escape poverty. More disturbing is the fact that despite the colossal amount of resources committed to those programmes, the poverty situation aggravates, and more people fall into the poverty region instead of escaping. It has earlier been pointed out that the alarming rate of poverty in Nigeria has not come into being as a result of non-challant attitude and non-recognition of the problem at hand Ndukwe C. (2015). It has also not come by as a result of lack of response to the yearning of the poor people to be emancipated from their rather deplorable and frustrating state of near-despair. The fact is that no Nigerian Government, be it military or civilian, has come without introducing and leaving behind one form of poverty alleviation or reduction programme meant to reduce the level of poverty, give hope and succour to the poor and, or move towards some sort of wealth creation. Strategies, policies and plans have been articulated; programmes and projects have been formulated and executed over the years. For instance, at independence in 1960, poverty eradication efforts in Nigeria centered on education, while Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), the Green Revolution, War Against Indiscipline (WAI), Peoples Bank, Community Banks, Directorate of Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI), Nigerian Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), Better Life for Rural Women, Family Support Programme (FSP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Mass Transit Programme (MTP), Guinea Worm Eradicating Programme (GWEP) and Petroleum (Special) Trust Fund (PTF), Sure-P existed in the past and presently N-Power by Buhari Administration.; Most of it with the intervention of international organisation like UNDP.

The role of these ideas has not achieved its objectives and most of the literatures were predominantly only focused on their features. In dealing with the issue of good governance, this paper has attempted to discuss the differences of conceptualisations flourishing in the good governance agenda. This work focused on empirical evaluating the progress of the UNDP programme and planning for its optimization in Ekiti and Osun State.

Research Objectives

This work was conducted to:

1. find out how Nigerian government partners with UNDP in promoting good governance, resource control and local development in Nigeria
2. examine the impacts of UNDP programmes on the people in Ekiti.
3. find out the challenges been faced by the state governments to access international donors for international assistance

III. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

The demands by the third world countries for international assistance to assist in growth that is critical in bringing about transformations of the lives of both men and women, especially among the poor, mostly from the disadvantage local area. The growing importance of local governance is to capture human development that could enhanced service delivery and standard of living Odikamnoru (2014). UNDP, UNICEF, and other international donor organisations have through this focus areas of assisted local governance through poverty reduction, improving on environment and energy, provision of water and sanitation, providing logistics for crisis prevention and recovery and, supporting and creation of establish entitlements (UNICEF, W.H.O. 2010). This were being made especially for the poor and the marginalized local areas through enhanced system of democratic participation and representation; and however, using this to improve public provision of goods and services for local communities. UNDP operates with a broad conception of improved good governance to include civil societies and the private sectors. Good governance is a major agenda in UNDP thus, playing a leading roles especially in the promotion of good governance. Moreover, the rest of the UN system is adopting UNDP's drives for good governance resulting from the prominent roles UNDP has play in development policy debates (Weiss 2000: 804).

However, with UNDP's programmes this research work offers solutions to the lingering problem of poverty and poor development in Nigeria and give a clear concept of the system of governance that supports and sustains human development especially for the deprived and peripheral. It is as well, improve on the already existing knowledge about the availability, the accessibility and the role of foreign assistance to the developing countries of the world.

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected through survey and documentary study across Ekiti State. In survey technique, the researcher visited the project sites of the UNDP in Ekiti state and questionnaire were administered to collect information from the actors involved and the beneficiaries of the programmes. Secondly, the documentary study involved the data collection using relevant records on the programmes, the reports and relevant and related documents. This was facilitated through access to official documents and periodic reports, the internet, newspapers, magazines, seminar papers, and conference papers.

Population

The population for the study were comprises of the beneficiary communities in Ekiti State, the benefiting local government area, Ekiti State Ministry of urban and regional planning and other public office involved in the implementation of UNDP programme in Ekiti State. One hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were administered among the actors involved and the beneficiaries of the programmes across the study area.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

Arising from the responses gotten through the questionnaire administered across the study area, the essential information derived is interpreted and discussed as follows

- A. Partnership of Ekiti State government with UNDP in promoting good governance, resource control and local development across Ekiti state.

| S/N | Description | Frequency | % |
|-----|--|-----------|------|
| 1 | Through Private Public partnership | 5 | 3.3 |
| 2 | Through the Government Agencies | 10 | 6.6 |
| 3 | Through Non-Governmental Organizations | 5 | 3.3 |
| 4 | Through International Organizations | 10 | 6.6 |
| 5 | Through Civil Society | 02 | 1.3 |
| 6 | Through Philanthropist | 6 | 4 |
| 7 | Not Visible | 140 | 93.3 |

From the table above, it was inferred that the respondent who took part in the question had negative assessment about the way Ekiti state government partner with UNDP in promoting good governance, resource control and local development in Nigeria, specifically, 140 or 93.3% respondent out of all indicated that the programme is not viable nor visible. The Civil Society are not even aware of the UNDP Development programmes nor what their activities are and what they do to promote good governance, since there is no awareness from the government there cannot be participation neither can people benefit from the programme. Collaboration and implementation that should be through government agencies, Non-governmental Organisations, Philanthropist are not taking any active part in the UNDP programme to enhance growth and development particularly at the local level and so their effect is not felt in the society. The summary is as follows:

1. That the Private Public Partnership with UNDP in promoting good governance is not visible and as such, not realistic
2. That there has not been awareness from the government, collaborations and implementation that should come from the government has not taken any active part.
3. That the International Organisation are not monitoring the effectiveness of UNDP programme in Nigeria society, the effect is felt.
4. That the Non-governmental organisations and the Philanthropist are indifferent to the issue of UNDP in enhancing good governance.
5. That a large number of people responded to the invisibility and unawareness of the programme in the society.

B. The impact of UNDP programme on the targeted population in Ekiti State to alleviate poverty

| S/N | Description | Frequency | % |
|-----|---|-----------|------|
| 1 | The programme is not spread across Ekiti State | 140 | 93.3 |
| 2 | No grant made available to students through the programme | 145 | 96.6 |
| 3 | the programme does not have provision for women especially to access soft loan | 145 | 96.6 |
| 4 | The programme has not reduced poverty since their collaboration with Ekiti State government | 148 | 98.6 |
| 5 | Majority of the members of communities have not benefitted from UNDP programme in Ekiti State | 145 | 96.6 |
| 6 | UNDP has adequately helped in development of Ekiti State to alleviate poverty | 148 | 98.6 |
| 7 | There is no adequate awareness of UNDP in Ekiti State | 140 | 93.3 |
| 8 | The supposed UNDP programme has not fostered development in Ekiti state | 145 | 96.6 |

UNDP is basically designed to improve the quality and standard of living of the people in the state, but, sequel to the information provided through the table above, it was well established that the impact of UNDP has not been felt at every quarter. 93% of the respondent said the programme is not known in the state, 96% of the women denied ever been empowered by UNDP, In summary, the government failed to create adequate awareness of the programme therefore the purpose was defeated since it has not foster any meaningful development in the state. The summary is as follows:

1. That the programme is not all over Ekiti State and the impact is never felt in the growth and development of the state.
2. That scholarship was never given to student neither were the women been empowered to alleviate poverty.
3. That there has never been any noticeable effect of the programme in reducing the level of poverty in the society.
4. That many people responded not to have benefitted from UNDP programme. So, the programme has never lessen nor ease the rate of poverty in the state.
5. That there is no awareness of the programme in the state and therefore, has never in any way foster development.

C. The challenges faced by governments and individuals in assessing international donors for assistance

| S/N | Description | Frequency | % |
|-----|--|-----------|------|
| 1 | Inadequate information for the people | 148 | 98.6 |
| 2 | unaware of the plight or quest of the state for development by the UNDP | 145 | 96.6 |
| 3 | Inefficiency of the government in educating the indigenous people | 145 | 96.6 |
| 4 | Lack of accessibility of the Donors | 148 | 98.6 |
| 5 | Inability of the government of the state to reach out to the International Donors? | 145 | 96.6 |

From the above information provided in the above table, many of the respondent talked about lack of adequate information on the programme, they are not aware of the International Donors who are willing to support the state to enhance development, Donors are not accessible, the state itself did not make their plight or quest for development known to the International Donors, hence, there is no sensitivity from them on the need to promote good governance and local development in the state. The summary is as follows;

1. That there has not been adequate information on the programme. In view of this, International donors could not be assessed for assistance.
2. That the UNDP Organisers are not aware of the plight or quest of the state for assistance in order to promote development.
3. That the indigenous people who actually need empowerment to solve the problem of poverty are not adequately educated on the programme.
4. That the State government is not doing anything to reach out to the International Donors for assistance

V. CONCLUSIONS

The contribution of major donors and international organisations now including governance programs to their portfolios through the international assistance are more becoming policy towards supporting governance in developing countries to alleviate the earth of the third world countries, including Nigeria; this has however assisted most of the developing countries with low level of socio economic development using international agencies such as UNDP. This concept is being used to assist the government of the concerned countries to improve their economic, political, and social affairs. UNDP has been acknowledged as a significant contributor to achieving millennium developmental goals (MDG) through the flowing of the good governance. Despite the significant roles played by UNDP in socio-economic development across the developing countries, much has not been felt in Nigeria especially in Ekiti state. The impact of UNDP programmes on the people were not effectively felt because the policies, projects and programmes are not adequately channel, informed and articulated.

In sum, the definition of international supporting organization and its core mission has to well understand by the people, from this, people would be able to access the programme and a sustainable development can be adequately guaranteed.

Furthermore, we need to know more about the relationship between the international organizations, the national and the states governments in the multilateral development system so to be able to identify the opportunities programmes of the aiding donors towards local governance and project execution.

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