Impediments to Sustainable Development in the Materially Backward Economy of Uyo Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The impediments of sustainable development in the materially backward economy have been investigated using rural communities in Uyo local government area, Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The study hypothesized that lack of community participation in development projects, inaccessibility to information resource, non availability and accessibility to credit facility and poor programme implementation posed constraints to sustainable development in materially backward economies. It was a survey research which drew data from a 40- item questionnaire supplemented by focus group discussion (FGD). Data analyses revealed that in materially backward economies, sustainable development is hampered by the top-bottom development approach, failure or rural dwellers to access vital information, lack of access to credit services and poor programme implementation. Development projects/policies/programmes designed to transform rural areas will continue to remain unsustainable if these impediments are not factored into the development process.

Keywords: Impediments, sustainable, materially backward, development.

Introduction

Sustainable development in materially backward economy emphasizes creation of sustainable improvements in the quality of life of the people through increases in real income per capita, improvement in literacy, health and enhancement in quality of natural environmental resources. It implies socio-economic development of rural areas which does not decrease over time. It is rural development that is enduring. It describes a process in which natural resource base of rural areas is not allowed to deteriorate. The emphasis is on the hitherto unappreciated role of rural environmental quality and environmental inputs in the process of raising real income and the quality of life. The materially backward economy is the rural environment (Jhingan, 2006).

So far, rural development efforts in materially backward societies in Sub-Saharan Africa has not manifested in improved productivity, increased employment and income in basic life needs such as shelter, food, job opportunity, health services, education, improved attitude like political behaviour. Rural areas in Sub-Saharan Africa are poor or materially backward. This underdeveloped condition in rural economies manifests in high incidence of poverty, ignorance or disease; misdistribution of income, administrative incompetence and social disorganization (Keenleyside, 2009) in Jhingan (2006). These areas or societies are underequipped with capital in relation to their population and natural resources. The materially backward environments are poverty ridden as reflected in low GNP per capita. People live in extremely unsanitary conditions and a predominant of thatched houses. More than 1,200 million people in materially backward economies do not have safe drinking water and more than 1,400 million have no sanitary waste disposal (Okogwu, 1995). Of every ten children born, only...
five survive to the age of 40 years. The reasons are poor nutrition, unsafe water, poor sanitation, uninformed parents and lack of immunization. Services like education and health hardly flourish.

In materially backward communities of Sub-Saharan Africa, two third or more of the people live in rural areas and their main occupation is agriculture. A noticeable phenomenon is that natural resources are underdeveloped in the sense that they are either unutilized or underutilized or misutilized. There is a high population growth potential in these rural areas and a shorter life expectancy and the density of agricultural population is very high in relation to the area of cultivated land (Jhingan, 2006). Underemployment or disguised or concealed unemployment is a notable feature, in addition to low labour efficiency, factor immobility, limited specialization in occupation and in trade, economic ignorance, values and social structure that minimize the incentive for economic change. In these areas entrepreneurship is inhibited by the social system which denies opportunities for creative faculties. The force of custom, rigidity of status and the distrust of new ideas and of the exercise of intellectual curiosity, combine to create an atmosphere inimical to experiment and innovation (ILO, 2008).

The issue of materially backward economies has posed serious concern to development sociologists, development consultants, policy designers and other stakeholders in rural development. In Nigeria, efforts to transform materially backward economies have been in form of government programmes such as Operation Feed the nation (OFN), River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBDA), National Green Revolution (NGR), Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) etc (Ebong, 1991). Others have been in the form “First Ladies” empowerment programmes such as Better Life for Rural Women(BLRW), Family Economic Advancement Programme(FEAP), etc at the national level. In Akwa Ibom State programmes such as Family Life Enhancement Initiatives(FLEI), Women Agro-Entrepreneurship Development programme(WAEDP), Child Development Trust(CDT), Nka Uforo Iban(NUI) etc Udofia(2001). These programmes/policies have had the intrinsic expectation of transforming and modernizing materially backward areas by setting them on the paths of sustainable development. Regrettably, these various programmes and policies so far have failed to induce sustainable rural development. Contrary to the objectives of these development policies, rural Nigeria has continued to be impoverished and underdeveloped. The inhabitants still lack infrastructural facilities, properly developed means of transport and communications, cheap and regular power supply, availability of sufficient raw materials; degraded environment where schools are grossly inadequate and not properly funded; diseases are not contended; vast majority still rely on streams and rivers for their daily water supply and roads are deplorable and dilapidated (Aluas, 2003).

The World Bank (2003) observed that the per capita income in rural areas is below $280. Economic and social activities that are power dependent are incapacitated. The continuous presence of low saving and low investing economy with absence of basic social infrastructure have all conspired to render sustainable rural development unattainable in materially backward area. Despite laudable development policies, the rural dwellers are not empowered for sustainable livelihood programmes such as access to rural information services, availability of credit programmes to facilitate income generating activities. Equally; it is observed that rural development programmes are designed and implemented without popular participation by benefiting communities and poor implementation of policies all serve as constraints to sustainable rural development in materially backward societies especially rural communities in Southern Cross River State of Nigeria.

Thus, the questions that necessary come to mind here are:

1. To what extent is sustainable development in materially backward economy related to lack of community participation in development projects and inaccessibility to rural information resource?
2. How is sustainable development in materially backward economy related to non-accessibility to credit programme and poor project implementation?

Research hypotheses

1. Lack of community participation in development projects has no significant relationship with sustainable development in materially backward economy.
2. Inaccessibility to rural information services does not significantly relate to sustainable development in materially backward economy.
3. Lack of access to credit facility has no significant relationship with sustainable development in materially backward economy.
4. Poor project implementation does not significantly relate to sustainable rural development.

**Review of relate literature**

Sustainable development declared the Brundtland Commission is “the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987). Sustainable development in materially backward economy aims at the creation of sustainable improvements in the quality of life for all people in rural areas as the principal goal of development policy. Sustainable rural development has many objectives. Besides increasing economic growth and meeting basic needs of rural dwellers, the aim of lifting living standards includes a number of more specific goals such as bettering people’s health and education opportunities, giving everyone the chance in the rural area to participate in public life, helping to ensure a clean environment, promoting intergenerational equity. Thus meeting the needs of the present generation is essential in order to sustain the needs of future generations in rural areas (Daly, 1995).

Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) (1987) stated that development in materially backward communities is concerned with raising the quality of life of low-income population and living in rural areas on a self sustaining basis through transformation of the rural mode of production. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) (1974) viewed sustainable rural development as a process by which a set of technical, social, cultural and institutional measures are implemented with and for the inhabitants of rural areas with the aim of improving their socio economic conditions in order to achieve harmony and balance both at the regional and national levels. The Regional Planning and Economic Development in Africa held in Ibadan, Nigeria conceived development in materially backward areas as the outcome of a series of qualitative and quantitative changes occurring among a given rural population and whose converging effects indicate, in time, a rise in the standard of living and favourable changes in the way of life of the people concerned (Ekong, 2003).

Mbithi and Dufere (1996) asserted that the objectives of enhancing development in materially backward areas include 1) integrating into society those people who have been bypassed by past and current development activities (i.e. spreading the benefits of development more equitably throughout the society. 2) integrating the various development efforts into a comprehensive system. 3) Integrating the goals of development (i.e. increased incomes, participation in governance and decision making, welfare and employment such that they are not discrete and mutually exclusive. 4) the maximum mobilization of domestic human and material resources for self reliance; 5) the gradual narrowing of the gap between rural and urban areas in the provision of social amenities and infrastructures and the elimination of the patron-client relationship between the two.

Idobe (1989) identified some reasons why increased attention to the plight of materially backward areas is powerful and widely accepted. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of the people find their livelihoods in these areas; it is in these rural areas that most of the poorer and most disadvantaged people are found. The essence of sustainable rural development is that of enhancing the capacities of materially backward communities. This should manifest in increases in the living standards of people and greater self actualization. It relates to execution of projects that have obvious local significance and that can be initiated and carried out by local people. Sustainable rural development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the rural environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present but also generations to come. There is a consensus that sustainability is the capacity for the continuance into the future (Pearce 1997). In materially backward societies, the sustainability concept recognizes that life is a complex bundle of values, objectives and activities, with ethical, environmental, economic and social dimensions. The pertinent questions are: for the materially backward environment, why have the various programmes and policies put in place by governments to engender human welfare and human economy not been sustained? For the rural economy what are factors militating against the sustainability of wealth creation?
Implements to sustainable rural development in materially backward economy:

i) Lack of community participation in project design and implementation

Ndem (1991) argued that the provision of infrastructures may not be regarded as the definitive answer to the problem of rural development; the man and women for whom these amenities are provided should be actively involved in the overall plans of rural development if it is to realize its aim. The rural dwellers are not to be dictated to as if in a platoon on exercise. Ndem stressed that effective participation of these people is crucial because any new move to development involves some measure of modernization: a crucial challenge to the age long values of the people; something they had held dear and which had been their bastion in accommodating innovations and alien onslaughts in their social systems. Ekpo (1991) reported that rural development is perceived as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of the rural people who are mostly poor. Generally, attempt at rural transformation have emanated from national policies. It was hoped that the creation of states would facilitates the development of rural Nigeria. Despite all attempts, rural Nigeria is characterized by underdevelopment and poverty. The non participation of local community dwellers is seen by Ekpo as a strong inhibitor of meaningful sustainable rural development. Ebong (1991) stated that the underdevelopment of rural Nigeria is attributed to the non involvement of the beneficiaries in rural development decision and implementation.

The bottom-top approach ensures environmentally sound, economically productive and socially just communities. It is captured in the concept of participatory development (Nkpoyen 2008). Key objective is the incorporation of local knowledge into project decisions. When potential beneficiaries also make key project decisions, participation becomes self initiated action- which has come to be known as the exercise of voice and choice or empowerment. Professionals and stakeholders from communities must plan for themselves and seek solution to common challenges. Rural people perception of development projects in the past were at variance with the preferences of policy designers. Thus projects lacked sustainability (Agboole, 2001).

ii) Inaccessibility to rural information services

The rapid advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) have stimulated far reaching effects on the formulation and implementation of rural initiatives. Camble (1994) stressed that our information services are still elitist, serving only 20% of the educated, information deprivation. Okeh (2002) reported that the quality of rural dwellers can be highly improved by effective provision of relevant information to communities. Anam (2011) stated that information is raw material for development for both urban and rural dwellers. Prosperity, progress and development of any rural area depend upon several things to acquire, produce, access and use pertinent information. Access to information is a key resource for local people in maintaining active and independent lives. It is critical to letting people know government programmes, their roles and sources of support and benefits to be derived from such programmes and further overcome social exclusion which often bewail rural dwellers. (Sosibo, 1999). The challenge of sustainable rural development cannot be achieved without the development of an effective information base in the rural communities. This is because 75 to 80 per cent of the people in developing countries live in the rural areas and they need positive, relevant and prompt attention in their daily activities (Anam 2011). Promoting rural transformation is the basis for economic development and information is an important ingredient in the development process. People in rural areas whether literate or not need access to any kind of information which will help them to become capable and productive in social, economic and political obligations, to become better informed citizens generally. Information therefore becomes a matter of policy, a basic resource for sustainable rural development if durable structures are to be provided for effective access and utilization, which entails information capturing, coordination, processing and dissemination.

Harande (2006) reported that the information received by the rural dwellers is either not reliable or distorted in the process of transmission. This unhealthy situation constitutes a major impediment, which keeps the rural communities in Nigeria and other developing countries far away from development indicators. Harande observed that no true and meaningful rural projects in rural
communities can be executed without the fundamental conditions of the establishment of a literate and numerate rural society, and a system for continuous provision of exchange of ideas, thought and knowledge on which the rural society can feed and use with a suitable modifications to construct. Information is needed in such areas like water supply, electricity supply, environmental sanitation, refuse disposal, road maintenance and drought. Information is required to help develop individual’s interests to appreciate areas of need, draw government attention, support and complement ongoing efforts to alleviate the problems.

Issa (1998) observed that the rural populace suffers from acute low productivity, social and economic retrogression due mainly to ignorance which is also a direct consequence of either inadequate or total lack of information provision to them. Access to information and advice is a key resource for local people in maintaining active and independent lives. Access to information is also critical to letting people know their entitlements or welfare benefits and sources of support to overcome social exclusion. Bell (1994) reported that access to information determines the success or failure of rural development programme. Information is the life blood of any rural community and vital to the activities of both government and non-governmental organizations. Bell further stressed that because 15 to 80 per cent of people in developing countries live in the rural areas they need positive, relevant and prompt attention in their daily activities. Without access to information services, sustainable rural development in materially backward communities is a mirage.

iii) Lack of access to credit facilities

The inaccessibility or non availability of credit facility robs rural dwellers of opportunities for self-reliance, employment and engagement in economically productive activities (Aslam 2001 and Hussan 2003). Buthe (2000) and Rutherford (2002) asserted that micro finance institutions in rural areas play a key role in rural economic transformation. These institutions also help create deeper and more widespread financial markets in communities and have succeeded in reaching the poorest of the poor by devising innovative strategies. Rutherford (2002) observed that micro credit programmes are also effective mechanisms through which to disseminate valuable information on ways to improve the health, legal rights, sanitation and other relevant concerns of the poor in the community thereby enhancing development.

IFAD (2001) states that a major constraint to sustainable rural development in Sub-Saran Africa is the non accessibility to credit programmes. The lack of credit scheme implies that rural people are unable to meet their basic needs effectively and as such cannot experience improved socio economic condition in their communities. United Nation Economic and Social Council (2007) documented that, it is generally difficult for the rural dweller to get access to credit and this poses a serious impediment to rural development. Micro credit has proved to be an exceptionally effective tool for poverty alleviation and rural development. It helps the people to lift themselves out of poverty through their own efforts and industry provided they are given access to capital. It enables household to improve their economic condition (Mondros and Wilson, 2005).

Poor project / policy implementation

Ibrahim (2002) observed that the effectiveness of the government poverty alleviation programmes as development programmes was hampered by inadequate funding and lack of supervision. These accounted for the poor implementations of these programmes. Many rural development programmes suffer a lot of setback due to undue incursion of political sentiments (Aminu, 2000). Abdul (2002) lamented that those appointed to man the affairs of development programmes have studiously neglected the task of transforming our rural areas for the better by providing effective service delivery and have shamelessly concentrated on projects that have been consistently been starved of funds, thus using government funds to improve their own fortunes, that of their families and concubines.

Ake (2004) reported that between 1999 and now, the much talked about provision of power, water etc in all local government areas in Anambra state has been more of paying lip service than getting down to work for its implementation. The figures of money released for this many agencies to use in effecting the change process is staggering yet the target recipients have not benefitted. Aminu
(2000) argued that Nigeria’s fight against underdevelopment has been a paradox. This is due to the fact that implementers of our development policies and programmes are not technically sound or lack the pedigree to implement. Our development programmes and policies have failed to meet the expectations of rural dwellers due to poor implementations occasioned by partisan consideration, corruption or other malpractices which have militated against the success of these programmes and policies.

Obasi (1999) argued that poor project coordination and implementation has been responsible for the unsustainable rural development. Poor coordination of project implementation manifests itself too in the maintenance of women’s effective participation in development projects. Some projects are embarked upon without effective planning by rural leaders and without its suitability to community earmarked. Worst still, the people themselves are hardly consulted by the government before projects are designed, allocated and implemented; a situation that makes such projects vulnerable to neglect and abandonment. Omola (1996) stressed that the timing of most projects is wrong particularly when it has to battle with natural phenomenon like rainfall, landslide and erosion. Omola decried the weak institutional arrangement put in place to direct most rural development projects. He noted that a situation where an agency embarks on a project that is similar to that offered by the villagers is unacceptable.

**Theoretical framework**

Leibenstein’s (1957) cited in Jhingan (2006) critical minimum effort theory explains the conditions in which underdevelopment will thrive. Underdevelopment is a resultant effect of the income depressing forces overwhelming income raising forces. The process of development depends on the outcome of the struggle between forces that promote and those that inhibit it. Development inhibiting factors include corruption, war, inflation, disease, poverty, top-bottom approach and lack of commitment to development policy implementation. Development could be promoted by availability of credit institutions, accessibility to information services and large market for the growth of economies of scale.

The dialectical conflict theory of Ralph Dahrendorf (1958) is also relevant here. The theory views conflict as resulting from the relationship existing between those who occupy authority positions and those who are subordinate to those in authority. The theory maintained that the interest of those who belong to the two groups could overlap and generate conflicting situation. The materially backward economy is sustained on this relationship of conflict. The conflict of interest implies that those in authority who are charged with implementing rural development projects must strive to protect their interest to the detriment of those who are to benefit from them. Sometimes, project implementers gain considerably through mismanagement of funds, deliberate non involvement of potential beneficiaries in projects design and execution etc. thus, overlapping interests stifled sustainable rural development process.

**Methodology**

Survey research design was adopted for the study. Data were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. It also included the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The population of the study consisted of all inhabitants of Uyo local government area being 436, 606 (NPC, 2006). All adult citizens residing in this area and comprising those gainfully employed, self employed, students, farmers, entrepreneurs etc.

The 11 political wards represented the 11 strata of the study. 5 strata were selected through simple random sampling. Purposive sampling techniques were used to select five communities (one community per stratum) because the researcher is familiar with most of these communities and for convenience. The five (5) communities were also chosen because of their rural nature. The researcher deliberately avoided the headquarters of the local government area. The five (5) communities constituted the five (5) clusters. Cluster 1 (Ufot community), cluster 2 (Mbiabong Etoi community), cluster 3 (Atan Offot community), cluster 4 (Effiat Offot community) and cluster 5 (Ibiaku Offot community). To draw the actual respondents for the study, hat and draw sampling procedure of simple random sampling was adopted. The researcher approached the village head and secretary and informed them of the mission. The community members were summoned through the town crier to appear in the
community hall where the researcher addressed them. Using the Yaro Yamene’s formula for sampling size, the researcher was able to select 60 respondents from each of the five (5) communities. This amounted to 300 respondents.

The researcher also carried out Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sessions in each community with 10 discussants per community. The total number of discussants was 50. Therefore the total sample size was 350 respondents who participated in the study. The instrument of the study was a 40-item questionnaire and FGD guide. The procedure for the validity and reliability of instruments were duly carried out. Data analysis were done hypothesis – by- hypothesis testing each one at 0.05 level of significance.

### Analysis and discussion

**Respondents’ demography**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex: Male</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>41.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age: 18-22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-28</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29-33</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-38</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-43</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 and above</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>39.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil servants</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self employed</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey 2012
The following could be observed from the demographic data. More females (58.6%) were involved in the study perhaps because the men are employed in civil service work in the state capital. The largest age bracket of respondents in the study was between 34-38 (21.6%). More secondary school students (55.6%) were involved in the study probably because they were at home during the study. More married women participated probably because of their traditional role so they are more at home. The table indicates that the largest group of respondents were farmers (44.3%).

**Table 2**
Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient analysis (r) of the relationship between lack of community participation in development project and sustainable development in materially backward economy (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>∑x</th>
<th>∑y</th>
<th>∑x²</th>
<th>∑y²</th>
<th>∑xy</th>
<th>r-cal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of community Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation (X)</td>
<td>1520</td>
<td>11460</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable dev in Mat. Backward eco (Y)</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>8970</td>
<td>9980</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at .05, df=298, crit.r =0.196

**Table 3**
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis (r) of the relationship between inaccessibility to information services and sustainable development in materially backward economy (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>∑x</th>
<th>∑y</th>
<th>∑x²</th>
<th>∑y²</th>
<th>∑xy</th>
<th>r-cal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inaccessibility to Information services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information services (X)</td>
<td>1480</td>
<td>11240</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable dev in Mat. Backward eco. (Y)</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>8970</td>
<td>9750</td>
<td>0.853</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at 0.05, df = 298, Crit. r= 0.196

**Table 4**
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis (r) of the relationship between lack of access to credit facilities and sustainable development in materially backward economy (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>∑x</th>
<th>∑y</th>
<th>∑x²</th>
<th>∑y²</th>
<th>∑xy</th>
<th>r-cal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to Credit facility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>1435</td>
<td>10980</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable dev in Mat. Back. Econ. (Y)</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>8970</td>
<td>9150</td>
<td>0.794</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at 0.05, df = 298, Crit. r = 0.196
Table 5
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient analysis (r) of the relationship between poor project implementation and sustainable development in materially backward economy (N=300)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>( \sum x )</th>
<th>( \sum x^2 )</th>
<th>( \sum y )</th>
<th>( \sum y^2 )</th>
<th>( \sum xy )</th>
<th>( r )-cal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor project implementation (X)</td>
<td>1871</td>
<td>12651</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable dev. in Mat. Back. economy (Y)</td>
<td>1299</td>
<td>8970</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10135</td>
<td>0.523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correlation is significant at .05, df = 298, Crit- \( r \) = 0.196

From table 2, the significant value of \( r \) (0.961) indicates that a positive relationship exists between lack of community participation in development project and sustainable development in materially backward economy Uyo local government area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. These findings support Ndem (1991) who argued that the provision of infrastructures may not be regarded as the definitive answer to the problem of rural development. The man and women for whom these amenities are provided should be actively involved in the overall plans of rural development if it is to realize its aim. Effective participation for these people is crucial because any development involves some measure of modernization; a crucial challenge to the age long values of the people, something they had held dear which had been their bastion in accommodating innovations and aliens onslaught on their social system. The findings support Ebong (1991) that the materially backward state of rural Nigeria is attributed the non-involvement of the beneficiaries in rural development programme decision making and implementation. He argued that it is therefore not surprising that since 1960 the talk on rural development has yielded no meaningful results. Lack of community participation implies that programmes designed for rural transformation end up making government policy makers and their foreign experts very rich.

Table 3, indicated that the significant \( r \)-value of 0.853 which implies that inaccessibility to information resource significantly relates to sustainable development of materially backward economy of Uyo local government area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The findings are consistent with Bell (1994) who stated that access to information determines the success or failure of rural development programme. Information is the life blood of any sustainable development programme and vital to the activities of both government and non-governmental organizations. The findings also support Alegebeleye and Aina (1995) that any nation that neglects the development and empowerment of the rural community should not expect any meaningful development. Development programme can only be sustained if rural dwellers have access to relevant and diverse information for their activities. Efforts must be made for non-literate rural dwellers to have access to knowledge and information. Okiyi (2003) findings have been supported too. Okiyi reported that people in rural areas whether literate or not should have access to any kind of information which will help them to become capable and productive in their social and political obligations and to become better informed rural dwellers.

Table 4 indicates the significant \( r \)-value of 0.791 which implies that lack of access to credit facility significantly relates to sustainable development of materially backward economy of Uyo local government area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The findings support Baiges (2005) that through micro credit programme, rural women have become empowered to participate in decisions and to make choices that best serve their needs and result in increased recognition of women’s productive role in rural development. In communities where micro credit facilities are not available and accessible development possibilities are less. IFAD (2001) stressed that a major constraint to sustainable rural development in developing countries is the non-accessibility to credit programmes. This lack of credit scheme implies that rural people are unable to meet their basic needs effectively and as such cannot experience improved socio economic conditions in their communities.
Table 5 indicates the significant r-value of 0.523 implying that poor project implementation significantly relates to sustainable development of materially backward economy of Uyo local government area of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The findings indicate that the higher the level of indifference towards policy execution, the lower the chances of sustainable rural development. The findings agree with Madugbike (2001) that not only has the failure to ensure the successful implementation of the various programmes and policies made the incidence of poverty to loom large, the phenomenon has continued to spread even deeper. The findings have been confirmed by Fajingbesi (2001) who maintained that our development programmes and policies have failed to meet the expectations of rural dwellers due to poor implementations occasioned by partisan consideration, corruption or other malpractices. Nwosu (2003) explained that one major feature of rural development programmes is that they are planned from above. The development model adopted in addressing rural development challenges has been the engineering model which involves planning from above through to the implementation stage. Also the implementers of the policies and programmes are corrupt not technically sound and lack the pedigree to implement.

**Recommendations for sustainable rural development**

1. Popular participation of communities should be promoted by development policy designers.
2. Government at the grassroots should see information dissemination as a matter of policy and priority; as a basic resource for rural development if durable structures are to be provided for sustainable rural development.
3. Members of rural communities should have access to credit facilities through the formation of viable cooperative societies.
4. Rural development programmes should not be left in the hands of inexperienced people and implementation should be based on adequate planning.

**Conclusion**

There is need to adopt the bottom top approach as a panacea to sustainable rural development in materially backward economies of Sub-Saharan Africa. If the impediments identified in this study particularly non participatory approach, inaccessibility to credit resource, lack of information resource and poor project/policy implementation are not deliberately and practically addressed, sustainable development of materially backward economies will continue to be a mirage and the dividends of development policies will continue to elude rural dwellers.

**References**


