



CITIZENS' PERCEPTION OF PROJECT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AFFAIRS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, OGUN STATE

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Abstract

Project planning and implementation is aimed at poverty eradication. The critical for assessing a country's development towards the wellbeing of the citizenry. Since independence, the Nigerian government has initiated quite a number of capital projects primarily

Keywords:
Awareness, Empowerment, Project Planning, Project Implementation, Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

INTRODUCTION

Development projects are of critical importance to African nations because they accommodate most of the poorest countries of the world. These countries are poor due to low mobilization of resources, poor political leadership, internecine wars and ethnic strife, natural disasters, foreign debt, corruption, illiteracy amongst several others (Elumilade, Asaolu and Areti, 2006). In order to fulfil the objectives of these projects at the local, state and national levels, project planning and implementation is crucial. Well planned and executed projects constitute an important development strategy that contributes immensely to the general task of the

abandonment especially successive governments at various levels are largely responsible for the recurrent failure of capital projects. Using the projects of the Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development from 2007-2012 as case study, this study investigated the impact of projects executed by the Ministry on intended users (women and children); specifically determine the perception of the planning, implementation and effectiveness of the various projects of its operational departments: Women Empowerment, Child Development, Social Welfare and Rehabilitation among citizens of Ogun state. Adopting mixed methods of survey, interview and observation, multistage random sampling technique, three Senatorial Districts, and Local Government Areas were selected. 250 copies of the questionnaire were distributed among citizens in each of the six LGA's in Ogun state, while unstructured interview was used to gather data from the relevant personnel at the Ministry (Heads of three Area Offices out of the six Social Welfare Area offices), while direct observations helped ascertain the conditions under which the services were rendered. The study found that the level of awareness of the programmes to be barely average; majority of the respondents did not participate in most of the applied programmes. Also, the majority of the respondents' perceived the programmes to be inadequate in meeting the needs of the citizenry. The ministry therefore needs to create awareness of its programmes in the state through publicity and lectures especially at the grassroots level. More women need to be empowered in the rural areas as this will help alleviate poverty in the state.

Overall development of nations. Project planning in Nigeria has existed before the country's independence of 1960. Some of these projects which were aimed at alleviating poverty include Better Life for Rural Women, Family Support

Program (FSP) and the Family Economic Advancement Programme, Child Care Trust, National Poverty Eradication Programme, the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS), Local Empowerment and Environmental Management Programme (LEEMP), the New Partnerships for Africa's Development (NEPAD), among others (Ajadi, Adebisi and Alabi, 2010; Uchegbu, 2011).

A couple of notable projects have been established in Nigeria, many of which did not survive their initiators. For instance the Better Life for Rural Women established in 1986 by late Mariam Babangida to stimulate and motivate rural women towards achieving better living standards; educating women on simple hygienic family planning, the importance of childcare and the increased literacy rate; and inculcating the spirit of self-development particularly in the field of education, business, the art and agriculture collapsed as soon as the promoter ceased to be the first lady despite the 418 multi-purpose women education centres established all over the country, and the 7,635 farmers' cooperative societies set up across the country (Nigerian Women in Development, 2002; Uga, Adeyemi and Fajingbesi, 2003; Uchegbu, 2011). Like many other development projects in the developing countries, they have been characterized by weak implementation and low impact on the ground.

Many of these development projects had failed to put the people first resulting in deepened poverty and inequality (Baker, 2000; Manjengwa, 2007; Nwachukwu, Ibeawuchi and Okoli, 2010). During Babangida's regime, more than ₦100 billion was wasted on projects that did not measure up to expectations. These Projects include Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), People's Bank of Nigeria, Better Life for Rural Women Programmes, and two failed democratic transition experiments. The Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) meant to alleviate Nigerians' poverty failed woefully (Okonwa, 2002). The interim report on the activities of PTF prepared by Dr Haroun Adamu, Senior Special Assistant to President Obasanjo and Interim Chairman PTF, showed that ₦135 billion out of ₦146 billion was squandered through over invoicing, over supplies of expired materials, wrong project priorities, settling perceived trouble spots, and blatant thievery (Okonwa, 2002; Elumilade et al, 2006).

Capital projects are not properly executed or sometimes uncompleted or abandoned due to wrong choice of project site, embarking on projects without need analysis, lack of social analysis of a project, project imposition, improper financial analysis, under bidding of projects, and lack of technical analysis (Hanachor, 2012). The Presidential Projects Assessment Committee set up on March 11, 2011 submitted a report to President Goodluck Jonathan indicating 'a whopping =N=7 trillion worth of uncompleted capital projects'. Even successive governments since the return to civilian rule have failed to achieve budget targets. For instance in 2009, Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) spent only 44.46 per cent of the budget funds approved and released to them in the third quarter (ProMaCon National Project Conference Communique, 2010; Babayeju, 2011).

The government of Nigeria, in its bid to better the lives of its citizens, have made so many policies and programmes. These policies and programmes have failed due to neglect of the target group and corruption in government (Egwemi, 2012). That is why about 105 million Nigerians constituting 70 per cent of the population are still living below poverty line and Nigeria ranks 156 out of 187 countries surveyed in the Human Development Index (HDI) (Microfinance Africa, 2011; Yishau, 2011). The huge investments of capital in the power sector for instance have gone down the drain due to high levels of corruption. This has made it difficult for small and medium enterprises which would have contributed to poverty reduction through job creation to thrive. Unemployment is on the rise especially amongst the youth. According to Salami, Nigeria has one of the highest rates of youth unemployment in Sub – Saharan Africa (Salami, 2011). Housing is not different as the target population have failed to benefit from the various schemes. Citizens still lack access to safe drinking water as many of the bore holes provided by the government are not adequately maintained while most government hospitals lack reasonable facilities to enable them function effectively.

Despite the huge resources earmarked for universal education, Nigeria is still one of the world's most illiterate countries. According to the Country Comparism Index of Literacy Level by country in 2012, Nigeria ranked 161 out of 184 countries with 66 percent literacy rate (Olupohunda, 2012). In the pursuit of sustainable economic growth, a high literacy rate is crucial.

It is obvious that the majority of Nigerians are yet to benefit from the abundant resources and support from donor agencies.

Poverty, unemployment, hunger and diseases have been pervasive despite the huge human and natural resources that Nigeria is endowed with. The investments of the government, especially in the social sector on issues pertaining to health, education, power, water, and sanitation are unproductive due mainly to corruption. It is believed that once corruption is tamed, the country will begin to have good roads, standard schools, regular supply of electricity, security of life and property, adequate health facilities, pipe borne water, and good leadership, industry and employment. Until this is done, a large percentage of Nigerian citizens will continue to live in abject poverty (Global Call to Action against Poverty/MDGs Nigeria, 2008; Ebikefe, 2012).

The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development Ogun State established in June 2003 is not left out as it is also involved in planning and implementation of projects that deal with gender equality which benefits mostly women and children as they constitute the most vulnerable groups in the society. However, in spite of these efforts, women still have limited access to the projects of the ministry and men still dominate key sectors of the economy. The study focused on the projects of the Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development from 2007-2012. It identified projects/programmes that have been formulated and implemented by the ministry specifically geared towards addressing the issue of development in the state; ascertained the impact of projects executed by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development on intended users and beneficiaries particularly women and children; and determined the perception of the citizens about the effectiveness of the various projects of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Ogun State. The study sought to examine the projects of the operational departments (Women Empowerment, Child Development, Social Welfare and Rehabilitation) of the Ministry to see how citizens of Ogun State perceive its planning and implementation. The study is structured into eight sections: introduction, methodology, programmes offered by the ministry, programmes respondents participated in, respondents' motivation for participation in the offered programme, respondents' perception of activities of the understudied ministry, data analysis and discussion of

findings, project planning and implementation by the ministry, and conclusion.

Methodology

The research adopted a mixed method design as it combined survey (questionnaire administration), interview and observation. The population of study is made up of all the government ministries in Ogun State, Nigeria. There are eighteen ministries in Ogun State, made up of the Ministry of Justice; Agriculture; Budget and Planning; Commerce and Industry; Community Development and Cooperatives; Culture and Tourism; Education, Science and Technology; Environment; Finance; Forestry; Health; Information and Strategy; Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Special Duties; Women Affairs and Social Development; Works and Infrastructure; and Youth and Sports (Ogun State Government, 2012). The state which is located in the South West according to the 2006 census has a population of 3,751,140 spread across twenty local government areas. Men constitute 49.7% (1,864,907) while women constitute 50.3% (1,886,233) of the population (*Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette*, 2009).

The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development was purposively selected from 18 others. The ratio of the sample size is 1:18 ministries, while the sample design is non-probability. This is a non-probability sampling as equal opportunity was not accorded to the other elements of the population. The choice was informed by the recent claim that gender equality is a strategy for poverty reduction, improving the health and living standard of the people, as well as enhancing efficiency in public investment. According to Yishau (2011), "global development will be stalled unless countries such as Nigeria make bold moves to battle inequality and environmental threats". Many projects geared towards equality are domiciled in the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. In fact, part of the vision of this Ministry is to build a society that is devoid of gender discrimination, and will guarantee equal access to political, social and economic wealth creation opportunities. The Ministry also makes an effort to protect children and integrate the physically challenged into the activities of the country. The way children are catered for will determine how the future will be.

The study adopted a multistage random sampling technique as it involved Ogun State, the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in the Ogun State, the three Senatorial Districts, and Local Government Areas in the State. While the questionnaire was administered in order to ascertain the views of the citizens in Ogun State on the implementation of these projects by the Ministry, unstructured interview was used to get information from the following: Heads of Department at the Ministry, Heads of three Area Offices out of the six Social Welfare Area offices; Direct observations helped ascertain the conditions under which the services were rendered. 250 copies of the questionnaire were administered in each of the understudied six local government areas selected from Ogun State. This summed up to 1500 (100.0%). 1306 (87.1%) copies of the questionnaire were retrieved out of which 1281 (98.9%) were valid (85.4%).

Table 1: The Population of Selected Local Governments with Sample Size(s)

S/N	Senatorial District	Local Government	Population			Selected LG	Sample Size
			Male	Female	Total		
1	Ogun Central	Abeokuta-South	119,977	130,318	250,295	*	250
2		Abeokuta-North	96,463	102,330	198,793		
3		Ifo	269,206	269,964	539,170	*	250
4		Itori/Ewekoro	28,212	26,881	55,093		
5		Obafemi Owode	118,574	116,497	235,071		
6		Odeda	55,200	54,322	109,522		
7	Ogun East	Ikenne	60,607	58,510	119,117		
8		Remo North	29,893	29,859	59,752		
9		Ijebu North	141,074	139,446	280,520		
10		Ijebu North East	34,581	34,219	68,800		
11		Ijebu Ode	76,466	80,695	157,161	*	250
12		Ogun Waterside	37,412	36,810	74,222		
13		Sagamu	126,855	129,030	255,885	*	250
14		Odogbolu	63,838	61,819	125,657		

15		Ijebu East	56,981	52,340	109,321		
16	Ogun West	Yewa North (Egbado North)	89,880	93,964	183,844	*	250
17		Yewa South (Egbado South)	81,666	86,670	168,336		
18		Ipokia	74,649	75,738	150,387		
19		Imeko Afon	41,850	41,102	82,952		
20		Ado-Odo Ota	261,523	265,719	527,242	*	250
Total		20	1,864,907	1,886,233	3,728,098	6	1,500

Source: *Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette*, 2009; Field Survey, 2012.

For the opinions of the general populace on the activities of the ministry, six Local Governments in the state were randomly selected. Two Local Governments were selected from the Ogun Central Senatorial District, two from Ogun West Senatorial District, and two from Ogun East Senatorial District. A sample size of 250 from each Local Government was purposively selected. The choice was informed by the inability to cover the entire state. The data was presented in tables using simple frequencies, percentages and mean. There was content analysis of the various reports collected from the four operational departments for the period 2007-2012.

Programmes Offered by the Understudied Ministry

Table 2: Respondents' Indication on Programmes Offered by the Ministry

Programme	Abeokuta South	Ifo	Ijebu Ode	Ado/Ota	Sagamu	Yewa North	Total	
							Offer	Not offer
1. Children parliament	48 (67.6%)	63 (47.7%)	9 (20.5%)	15 (40.5%)	9 (40.9%)	4 (21.1%)	148 (45.5%)	177 (54.5%)
2. Commemoration of yearly Children day	114 (90.5%)	110 (80.3%)	63 (74.1%)	67 (81.7%)	38 (84.4%)	19 (67.9%)	411 (81.7%)	92 (18.3%)
3. Women development training centre	85 (83.3%)	69 (61.6%)	35 (59.3%)	24 (50.0%)	31 (75.6%)	12 (57.1%)	256 (66.8%)	127 (33.2%)
4. Business development fund for women	71 (87.7%)	61 (52.6%)	29 (50.9%)	14 (26.4%)	21 (63.6%)	10 (55.6%)	206 (57.5%)	152 (42.5%)
5. Women fund for economic empowerment	74 (77.9%)	50 (47.2%)	43 (72.9%)	11 (23.9%)	14 (56.0%)	6 (46.2%)	198 (57.6%)	146 (42.4%)

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6.Sensitization of women in politics	111 (94.1%)	75 (63.0%)	70 (79.5%)	32 (56.1%)	21 (63.6%)	21 (75.0%)	330 (74.5%)	113 (25.5%)
7.Gender mainstreaming	105 (85.4%)	56 (50.5%)	38 (64.4%)	28 (56.0%)	8 (42.1%)	15 (62.5%)	250 (64.8%)	136 (35.2%)
8.Sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children	105 (85.4%)	56 (50.5%)	38 (64.4%)	28 (56.0%)	8 (42.1%)	15 (62.5%)	250 (64.8%)	136 (35.2%)
9.Juvenile welfare	100 (92.6%)	56 (43.8%)	36 (53.7%)	21 (36.2%)	13 (54.2%)	8 (44.4%)	234 (58.1%)	169 (41.9%)
10.Adult welfare-matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage guidance/counselling	85 (83.3%)	48 (44.4%)	40 (52.6%)	23 (47.9%)	26 (65.0%)	5 (26.3%)	227 (57.8%)	166 (42.2%)
11.Relief and rehabilitation services	111 (94.1%)	46 (44.7%)	30 (54.5%)	17 (32.1%)	18 (62.1%)	19 (54.3%)	241 (61.3%)	152 (38.7%)
12.Rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, destitute	100 (84.0%)	62 (55.9%)	28 (49.1%)	41 (60.3%)	26 (61.9%)	21 (56.8%)	278 (64.1%)	156 (35.9%)
13.Guidance and after care supervision of challenged persons	97 (91.5%)	34 (34.0%)	24 (53.3%)	14 (28.6%)	20 (47.6%)	14 (36.8%)	203 (53.4%)	177 (46.6%)
14.Training for the blind, ex-prisoner, deportees,	81 (80.2%)	39 (37.1%)	9 (23.7%)	18 (34.6%)	15 (42.9%)	9 (26.5%)	171 (46.8%)	194 (53.2%)

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repatriates, destitute, etc								
15. Implementation of relevant laws/acts that affect women and children through collaboration with relevant stakeholders	84 (90.3%)	34 (32.7%)	20 (46.5%)	15 (34.1%)	5 (22.7%)	7 (29.2%)	165 (50.0%)	165 (50.0%)
16. Care and protection of Orphan and Vulnerable children	113 (85.6%)	80 (66.7%)	70 (76.1%)	53 (75.7%)	23 (53.5%)	19 (51.4%)	358 (72.5%)	136 (27.5%)

Source: Field Survey, 2012

According to Table 2, all the tested 16 programmes indicated on the table were offered by Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare between 2007 and 2012 but at various degrees as already indicated in the preceding segment. These programmes included or were related to the following: Children parliament; commemoration of yearly children’s day; women development training centres; business development fund for women; women fund for economic empowerment; sensitization of women in politics; gender mainstreaming; sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children; juvenile welfare; adult welfare, matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage, guidance and counselling; relief and rehabilitation services; rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, and the destitute; guidance and aftercare supervision of challenged persons; training for the blind, ex-prisoners, deportees, repatriates, the destitute, etc.; implementation of relevant laws/acts, that affect women and children through collaboration with relevant stakeholders; and care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children.

Although Table 2 shows that at the specific local government areas the popularity of the programmes vary greatly, it is clear that in general, the most popular and therefore most offered programmes (on the average

measure) include commemoration of yearly children's day (411; 81.7%), sensitization of women in politics (330; 74.5%), and care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children (358; 72.5%). These are followed by women development training centres (256; 66.8%), gender mainstreaming (250; 64.8%), and sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination against women and children (250; 64.8%). Also in this category are rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, and the destitute (278; 64.1%), relief and rehabilitation services (241; 61.3%), and juvenile welfare (234; 58.1%). Furthermore, the said list of mostly offered programmes also include adult welfare, matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage guidance/counselling (227; 57.8%), women fund for economic empowerment (198; 57.6%), and business development fund for women (206; 57.5%).

Finally, the list of mostly offered programmes included guidance and aftercare supervision of challenged persons (203; 53.4%) and implementation of relevant laws/acts that affect women and children through collaboration with relevant stakeholders (165; 50.0%). At a less than average mark measure, the least offered programmes, according to the indications on Table 2, include training for the blind, ex-prisoners, deportees, repatriates, the destitute, etc. (171; 46.8%) and children parliament (148; 45.5%). This is because there is no training centre for the blind in the state and there exists a rehabilitation centre that is only temporary. The only available centre for the blind is the Federal Farm Craft Centre for the blind located in Lagos State. Some of the destitute that are not reunited with their families end up in the streets.

The implication of these findings is that these programmes were offered by the ministry but their popularity varied greatly. This implies that people can only access programmes they are aware exist and which others have benefited from.

Programmes Respondents Participated In

The extent to which the respondents participated in the programmes varied from one local government to the other, but the collective outcome was considered to measure the state level of participation in the understudied programmes. According to the response rates, two programmes that respondents widely participated in were

commemoration of yearly children's day (650; 57.0%) and care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children (559; 51.7%). Only very few, that is, less than 40 per cent of the total respondents, in each case, indicated that they participated in the other programmes. Majority of the respondents did not participate in most of the applied or offered programmes.

On whether their aims for participating in the programmes were achieved, two hundred and sixty-one (77.2%) of the respondents that participated in the commemoration of yearly children's day organized by the ministry claimed that their aims were achieved, while 200 (75.5%), 164 (71.9%), 163 (70.3%), and 175 (70.0%) claimed respectively the same for care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children; rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, and the destitute; juvenile welfare; and sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children. It was also observed that more than half (>50.0%) of the total respondents, in each case of the programme examined, were able to achieve their aims for participating in the programme, except for children's parliament which ranked below average (102; 49.0%). Therefore, the sum total from which the percentage was derived is not from 1281 respondents but from the total of those respondents who indicated that they benefited from the programmes or activities carried out by the ministry across 5 years. The totals were calculated per programme and not on a collective basis.

Majority of the respondents encountered problems in accessing the following programmes offered by the understudied Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare: Women fund for economic empowerment (64.0%) and business development fund for women (62.0%) programmes. On an average scale, the respondents encountered problems with accessing children's parliament (50.0%) and guidance and aftercare supervision of challenged persons (50.0%). Not up to half (50.0%) of the respondents encountered problems in accessing the following programmes: adult welfare, matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage guidance/counselling (49.0%), sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children (48.0%), training for the blind, ex-prisoners, deportees, repatriates, the destitute, etc. (46.0%), and

sensitization of women in politics (45.0%). While the programmes that the respondents accessed with least difficulty included: Gender mainstreaming (44.0%), rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, the destitute, etc. (43.0%), and women development training centres (41.0%). Others were juvenile welfare (41.0%), implementation of relevant laws/acts that affect women and children through collaboration with stakeholders (40.0%), and relief and rehabilitation services (38.0%). The last in this group were care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children (32.0%) and commemoration of yearly children’s day (25.0%).

The implication of this is that the aims of these programmes were not achieved as many respondents indicated that they did not participate in most of the programmes offered by the ministry. The ministry needs to create awareness of its programmes and as much as possible remove barriers that hinder people from benefiting from these programmes.

Respondents’ Motivation for Participation in the Offered Programmes

Table 3: Respondents motivations for participation in the ministry’s programmes or projects

Motivating factor	Frequency	%
Awareness/advertisement	997	77.8
Better life/improved standard of living	1250	97.6
Knowledge seeking and learning to gain experience for future use	700	54.6
Political empowerment for women	727	56.8
To support the less privileged	675	52.7
To protect women and children’s rights	1170	91.3
To aid women empowerment	1125	87.8
No motive, just interested	600	46.8

Source: Field Survey 2012

N = 1281

Table 3 above indicates respondents’ motivation for participating in the programmes or projects offered by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare in Ogun State between 2007 and 2012. Of the respondents, 997 (77.8%) indicated that it was the extent of awareness campaigns or publicity on the programmes that led them to participate in them. 1250 (97.6%) respondents indicated that their quest for better life or improved standard of living was the motivating factor that led them to participate in

the programmes. According to some other respondents, the factors that motivated them to participate in the programmes or projects were: the need for knowledge seeking and learning to gain experience for future use (700; 54.6%), need for political empowerment for women (727; 56.8), and the need to support the less privileged people of their communities (675; 52.7%). The last two factors that motivated the respondents to participate in the understudied programmes were: to help protect women and children's rights (1170; 91.3%) and to aid women empowerment in their communities (1125; 87.8). Some 600 (46.8%) respondents were not motivated by any factor except that they just felt like participating in the programmes or projects.

This does not mean that the respondents are jobless. Even though some sought political and economic empowerment, others participated because they wanted to educate others on their rights as well as assist and empower others.

Respondents' Perception of Activities of the Understudied Ministry

Of the 1193 (93.1%) respondents that attended to the statement on the awareness of the Ministry for Women Affairs in Ogun State, 898 (75.3%) respondents indicated that they were aware of the presence of the understudied ministry in Ogun State while 17.8% were not aware of the Ministry. 6.9% of the respondents were indifferent.

93.5 per cent (1198) of the respondents gave attention to the issue of how active the understudied ministry had been. Out of this percentage, 53 per cent (635) respondents indicated that the ministry had been the most active ministry in the state. 40.5% indicated that the ministry was not the most active ministry in the state while 6.5% were indifferent.

92.7 per cent (1187) respondents attended to the item on awareness of the ministry in the communities where they resided as at the time of the study. Out of these respondents, only 47.2 per cent (560) respondents indicated that there was a high level awareness of the ministry in their communities. 45.5 percent of the respondents indicated that the level of awareness of the ministry was not high while 7.3 per cent of the respondents were indifferent.

On whether developmental programmes have been organized by the Ministry within respondents' communities, 92.4 per cent (1183) respondents responded to this statement. 50.8 per cent (601) of these

respondents indicated that developmental programmes have been organised in their communities by the understudied ministry. 41.6 percent indicated that developmental programmes have not been organized in their communities while 7.6 per cent of the respondents were indifferent.

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

Projects formulated and implemented by the Ministry specifically to address the issue of gender equality and access to development

The following programmes by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Ogun State, addressed gender equality; Women empowerment programmes, Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), National Gender Policy, Gender Mainstreaming and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs). These programmes focused more on women since they constitute the highest percentage of the poor and vulnerable and are predominantly in the informal sector of the economy (Akinsile, 2007; British Council Nigeria, 2012). This means that the majority of them cannot make meaningful contributions to the development of their homes, community and country. Most times, women are involved in decision making processes due to the low percentage of women in key sectors of the economy.

Programmes aimed at empowering women have been established in order to empower women politically, socially, educationally, and economically. To empower women politically, workshops on women in politics and sensitization meetings were conducted in the three Senatorial Districts in 2008. In 2010, a total of one hundred and eight members of the women-in-politics drawn from the twenty Local Governments in the State were coordinated by the Ministry. Vocational skill training was also provided for the women on leadership, protocol and security.

Despite these efforts, women are still under-represented in the state. Women occupy only 27.8 percent of all ministerial positions in the State. At the Local Government Level, just one (5 percent) Local Government Chairman (Sagamu) is a woman. Even though the Head of Service and the Chief Justice of the State are women, women in the State still have less voice, less power, and less control over resources as has been identified by Katz and Chamorrow, 2003 and Reed, Raj, Miller and Silverman, 2010. This also supports the claim by the British Council Nigeria, 2012 that women occupy fewer than 30 percent of all posts in the public sector.

In addition, women are economically empowered. Through the Empowerment Centre women selected from some Local Government in the State were taught tie and dye, sewing knitting and catering. About one

hundred and seventy eight youths are currently undergoing training at the centre. The Ministry coordinates the activities of market women in the State and conducts enlightenment programmes for them on their rights and access to the Micro-Credit facilities that would boost their trade. Micro-Credit amounting to one hundred million was released to 3,850 women in the state particularly those in the rural areas to help improve their lives and ultimately reduce poverty to the barest minimum (Sowumi, 2012; Balogun, 2012). Even though effort has been made to empower women economically, micro-credit facilities are the least popular programmes (48.4%) and majority of the respondents encountered problems accessing these facilities.

Gender equality entails that persons with disabilities be integrated into every sector of the economy. This implies that persons with disabilities need to be rehabilitated and economically and politically empowered. Unfortunately, not very much has been done in this area. Although a temporary rehabilitation centre has been built by the state and treatment provided for lunatics and destitute at the +Neuro Psychiatric Hospital in Abeokuta, destitute are still seen wandering the streets.

On empowerment for persons with disabilities, as at May 2012, only 43 out of the 107 applicants were given employment. Vocational skill development has been extended to the less privileged and physically challenged in the state and ex-trainees of the Federal Farm Craft Centre for the blind were empowered with the sum of four hundred thousand naira. Training for the blind, ex-prisoners, deportees and destitutes was one of the least popular programmes in the State (48.8%).

National Gender Policy was introduced to ensure that women like their male counterparts contribute to development by ensuring the society is devoid of discrimination, citizens enjoy their fundamental human rights and that health, social economic and political wellbeing of all citizens are guaranteed in order to achieve equitable rapid economic growth. The policy is in support of CEDAW and the African Protocol on the Right of Women in Africa.

In line with this policy, the Ministry established Gender Desk Offices in every Ministry in the State. This is to ensure that equal treatment is given to men and women on matters pertaining to employment, benefits and development. This exercise has been faced with some challenges such as poor perception and trivialization of gender issues by policy makers and the general public, inadequate funding, low awareness of the public on the contents of the National Gender Policy, and the increasing number of

women. These challenges have also been identified by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2012.

On health matters, the Ministry organised awareness campaigns on cancer, especially breast cancer and cervical cancer. In conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, the State Ministry held training workshops on the reduction of maternal and child mortality. The Ministry sensitized the public on the dangers associated with Female Genital Mutilation.

Although CEDAW is yet to be domesticated in the State, the Ministry has held several campaigns against gender based violence. However, despite the campaigns against Gender based violence carried out by the Ministry, evidence from the Social Welfare Centres attest to the fact gender based violence still abounds in the State.

Impact of projects executed by the Ministry on intended users and beneficiaries

The effects that the programmes or projects had on the end users are evident on the respondents' indication that the understudied ministry had contributed to the economic empowerment of women in their communities (633; 53.4%), reduced discrimination of women in their communities (635; 54.3%) by acquainting the women with their rights and helping to fight for them, and had contributed to the mobilization of women for political participation, especially during the 2011 elections (678; 57.1%). Although most of the problems the ministry tried to solve are still in abundance in the various locales, the improvements caused in the lives of the respondents and in the lives of people in their various locales could be considered to be positive effects. Discussion with some of the beneficiaries revealed that the programmes helped them get their bearings as it enabled them to stand on their feet, take good care of their children and fit in better into the larger society.

Citizens' perception of the effectiveness of the projects of the Ministry

TABLE 4 Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Major Variables in this Study among Respondents

Variables	N	Maximum point scale	Mean score	SEM (std error of mean)
Awareness (Knowledge)	1118	16	8.9776	0.1429
Perception level	977	25	11.7400	0.1978
Average score of rank *With 1 representing most beneficial and 5 representing least beneficial	517	1-5*	3.0999	0.0466

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Based on the table 4 above, citizens' perception of the usefulness of the various projects implemented by the understudied ministry shows a mean of 11.7400 at a standard error margin of 0.1978 on a 25 point scale. The implication of this is that the level of perception of the relevance of the projects among the respondents is moderately low. This collective measure overrules any singular or localised indication that may put the description at a better level when looking at the matter from a state level point of view. According to the figures displayed in Table 5 below, all the programmes were beneficial to some people at some point, when the ministry is perceived as being the most active ministry in the state, but on a general note, these programmes were perceived as not adequately meeting the needs of the people. The implication is that more efforts need to be put in place by the ministry to ensure that its programmes are more people oriented and based on the peoples' needs in line with their indications at the consultation grounds. Surveys that sample opinions about implemented and proposed programmes need to be in constant use to improve citizens' perception of the programmes and the ministries that create them.

Table 1.5: Participants Ranking (from 1-most beneficial to 5-least beneficial) on Ministry Programmes that were most Beneficial to Them

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1. Children parliament	222 (17.3%)	129 (10%)	103 (8%)	76 (5.9%)	209 (16.3%)	739 (57.5%)
2. Commemoration of yearly Children day	301(23.4%)	244(19%)	108 (8.4%)	75 (5.8%)	131 (10.2%)	859 (66.8%)
3. Women development training centre	185 (14.4%)	139 (10.8%)	146 (11.4%)	109 (8.5%)	176 (13.7%)	755 (58.8%)
4. Business development fund for women	150 (11.7%)	142 (11.1%)	117 (9.1)	130 (10.1%)	201 (15.6%)	740 (57.6)
5. Women fund for economic empowerment	152 (11.8%)	152 (11.8%)	140 (10.9%)	91 (7.1%)	204 (15.9%)	739 (57.5%)
6. Sensitization of women in politics	135 (10.5%)	137 (10.7%)	169 (13.2%)	145 (11.3%)	195 (15.2%)	781 (60.8%)
7. Gender mainstreaming	144 (11.2%)	155 (12.1%)	152 (11.8%)	140 (10.9%)	170 (13.2%)	761 (59.2%)

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8. Sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children	175 (13.6%)	171 (13.3%)	147 (11.4%)	82 (6.4%)	166 (12.9)	741 (57.7%)
9. Juvenile welfare	159 (12.4%)	99 (7.7%)	100(7.8%)	166 (12.9%)	220 (17.1%)	744 (57.9%)
10. Adult welfare-matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage guidance/counselling	140 (10.9%)	136 (10.6%)	124 (9.6%)	139 (10.8%)	221 (17.2%)	760 (59.1%)
11. Relief and rehabilitation services	172 (13.4%)	191 (14.9%)	130 (10.1%)	104 (8.1%)	146 (11.4%)	743 (57.8%)
12. Rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, destitute	159 (12.4%)	185 (14.4%)	108 (8.4%)	66 (5.1%)	144 (11.2%)	662 (51.5%)
13. Guidance and after care supervision of challenged persons	(15.5%)	(10.5%)	(9.4%)	(7.4%)	(13.5%)	(56.3%)
14. Training for the blind, ex-prisoner, deportees, repatriates, destitute, etc	155 (12.1%)	139 (10.8%)	112(8.7%)	87 (6.8%)	207 (16.1%)	700 (54.5%)
15. Implementation of relevant laws/acts that affect women and children through collaboration with relevant stakeholders	142 (11.1%)	106 (8.2%)	109 (8.5%)	133 (10.4%)	257 (20%)	747 (58.1%)
16. Care and protection of Orphan and Vulnerable children	217 (16.9%)	157 (12.2%)	137 (10.7%)	100 (7.8%)	156 (12.1%)	767 (59.7%)

Source: Field Survey 2012

Project Planning and Implementation by Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

According to Paki and Ebiefa, “there has been no lack of public policies in Nigeria since independence”. “Most government policies either terminate prematurely only at the formulation stage, or are purposely designed not to be religiously implemented or simply mal-implemented to benefit a few individuals or a sector of the society” (Paki and Ebiefa, 2011, p. 1).

Since the creation of the Ministry in Ogun State in 2003, so many policies have been made and programmes put in place to achieve them. Many of these programmes are not known by the citizens of the State. The results from the questionnaire indicate that programmes such as gender mainstreaming that strives to ensure gender balance in all sectors of the economy is one of the least popular programmes in the state (49.0%). Business development funds, funds for economic empowerment of women, as well as various programmes on implementation of relevant laws or acts that affect women and children are also not popularized in the State (below 50%).

Although on the average, the citizens are aware of political empowerment in the State, the level of involvement and participation is not encouraging. Under the present dispensation, only 5 (27.8%) out of the 18 Commissioners in the State at the time of the study were women. These were the Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Mrs Oluwande Muoyo; the Commissioner for Finance, Mrs Kemi Adeosun; the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Elizabeth Sonubi; the Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Mrs. Yewande Amusan, and the Commissioner for Agriculture, Mrs Ibronke Sokefun. At the Local Government level, one (5%) out of the 20 Local Government Chairpersons was a woman. This is far from the 35 percent affirmative action for women in politics as reflected in the National Gender Policy adopted in 2007.

Even though women occupy key positions in the other sectors of the economy in the State such as the Head of Service and Chief Justice of the State, it is evident that men still dominate the key sectors of the economy. As Osalor rightly puts it, empowerment is important for women as it will create employment for them, enable them have a say in both public and private sectors, and take part in decision-making that will determine the future of their families and country (Osalor, 2012). It is only when the differences in the status of women and men in the key areas are taken into consideration, that poverty can be reduced (Lin, 2011).

Skill acquisition which is also a form of empowerment is provided at the Women Development Centre. The level of awareness is a little bit above average (59.5%). Out of the 1106 respondents, 405 (36.6%) indicated that they have benefited from the programme. The centre was not functional until early 2012. It is believed that as the years go by and as the Ministry creates more awareness for the programme, more women/youths will take advantage of the programme.

On sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children, the level of awareness was 54.0% although it was below average in Abeokuta South, Sagamu and Yewa North. The rate of participation in programmes related to the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and children is very low (33.6%). This is not encouraging as “discrimination against women may pose the greatest development challenge” (Department for International Development (DFID), 2005, p. 3).

The activities of social welfare are also not popularised in the state. Participation is below average although those that participated signified that their aims were achieved. The Social Welfare Offices are not sufficient as each one serves four Local Government Areas and has a limited number of workers.

The citizens recognising the importance of the Ministry in the State believe that the Ministry is indispensable as it contributes to the economic empowerment of women in their communities and the reduction in the discrimination against women. Although the Ministry has put in a lot of effort in taking care of people with disabilities through rehabilitation and empowerment, some are yet to be rehabilitated and empowered. Destitute are still seen across the state

Conclusion

The research work examined citizens’ perception of project planning and implementation. The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development which is well known to the citizens of the Ogun State offers quite a number of programmes that deal with women, children and people with disabilities. These programmes are executed through the four operational departments, namely the Department of Women Empowerment, the Department of Child Development, the Department of Social Services and the Department of Rehabilitation.

Although all the sixteen programmes investigated were offered by the ministry, the level of awareness of the programmes by residents of Ogun State can be classified as being barely average. The most popular

programme was the commemoration of the yearly Children's Day (79.5%) followed by programmes relating to care and protection of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (71.5%) while the least popular programmes were gender mainstreaming (49.0%) and micro-credit facilities (48.4%).

Two programmes that respondents widely participated in were commemoration of yearly Children's Day (57%) and care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children (51.7%). It was observed that the majority of the respondents did not participate in most of the applied programmes and that more than half of the total respondents in each case of programme examined were able to achieve their aims for participating in the programmes. Majority of respondents encountered problems in accessing the micro-credit facilities –Women Fund for Economic Empowerment (64%) and Business Development Fund for Women (62%). The four most beneficial programmes to the respondents were commemoration of the yearly children's day (23.4%), children's parliament (17.3%), care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children (16.9%), guidance and after care and supervision of challenged persons (15.5%) while the least beneficial programmes were sensitization of women in politics (10.5%) and adult welfare, matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage guidance/counselling (10.9%).

Although 53 per cent of respondents indicated that the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development had been the most active Ministry in the State, only 50.8 per cent agree that development programmes had been organized in their communities by the understudied Ministry.

Based on findings, the level of perception of the usefulness of the various projects implemented by the understudied ministry is moderately low as the statistical summary shows a mean of 11.7400 at a standard error margin of 0.1978 on a 25 point scale. The work established that although there is a strong relationship between the level of citizens' awareness of and participation in the programmes of the Ministry, there was an inverse relationship between citizens' awareness and perception. This means that awareness does not have a link with citizens' perception of the usefulness of the activities of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. Citizens' perceptions are based on the benefits they get from participating in the programmes.

The study therefore recommends the need for the Ministry to create awareness of its programmes throughout the state. This can be done through publicity and lectures especially at the grassroots level. The ministry constantly needs to survey the views of the citizens on proposed programmes as well as their implementation. The Ministry of Women

Affairs and Social Development should intensify efforts to empower more women in the state especially those in the rural areas. This will help alleviate poverty in the state. The environment under which the ministry renders its services should be conducive. Hence the need to renovate buildings and repair or replace damaged or outdated furniture. More vehicles should be provided for close monitoring of projects and awareness purposes. Similar studies should be carried out in other states of the federation and the results should be compared with the outcome of this study. This will help ascertain the position of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Ogun State at the national level and lead to further recommendations that will improve the services provided by the ministry.

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