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Performance of the Women-in-Agriculture Project in Borno State During and after the World Bank Support

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Abstract: This study compared the performance of the Women-In-Agriculture (WIA) programme in Borno State, Nigeria during and after World Bank funding, 1989-1995 and 1996-2003, respectively. Structured questionnaires were administered to 20 randomly selected WIA agents of Borno State Agricultural Development Programme. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The analysis revealed that most of the WIA activities during the World Bank funding period recorded a high performance index, such as establishment of Small Plot Adoption Techniques (SPAT) (73.10%), establishment of cottage industries (75%) and number of field visits made by the WIA agents (68%). However, after the World Bank funding period, most target set were not achieved, recording (0) achievement rate in (5) activities, such as establishment of cottage industries and equipment of the fortnightly training centers. Based on these findings, it is recommended that funding of the WIA project by the World Bank, Federal, State and Local government should be reactivated. The government should ensure access of women farmers to extension services, inputs and training opportunities.

Key words: Women farmers, performance index, World Bank, Borno state

INTRODUCTION

Rural women participate in all aspects of cultivation, including planting, weeding, thinning, applying fertilizers, harvesting and sales of farm produce (Sabo, 2003). In Nigeria many programmes have brought about remarkable changes in the lives of rural women. For example, the Better Life Programme for Rural Women, this was initiated in 1987. The programme has succeeded in drawing the attention of the authorities and the society in general to the plight of rural women and sort out measures to bring about favourable changes in their lives. The programme made giant strides in different sectors such a health, education, social welfare agriculture and cooperatives. However the programme was terminated in 1993.

In furtherance, the Family Support Programme (FSP) was initiated in 1994 and was aimed to encouraging agricultural pursuit in the family, which will improve small scale household production and development of cottage industries. The programme focused on specific areas as social need of the society and how best this could be addressed through social welfare programme, especially in the areas of health, education and income generation. The promotion of the primary health care, formal and informal education and income generation are the core focus of this programme (Nasiru *et al.*, 2004).

Women farmers play important roles as producers of food, managers of natural resources, income earners and

caretakers of household food and nutrition security (Quinsumbing *et al.*, 2004). Increasingly, they are responsible for ensuring that adequate food supplies are available and their families have access to enough income to purchase food if they do not grow it themselves (Lawal *et al.*, 2004). It has been estimated that 50% of the food in Nigeria is produced by rural women (Lawal *et al.*, 2004).

The Women in Agriculture (WIA) project in Nigeria was developed in an attempt to address the gender-related deficiencies within the existing extension programme. This was launched to improve the accessibility of women to agricultural extension services (World Bank, 2000). This was done within the existing state Agricultural Extension Programme. They were intended to provide practical insights on how to change extension services to meet the need of women farmers in rural areas. The Women-in-Agriculture Programme also created a much greater awareness among policy makers about the need of women farmers. It also led to an increase in the number of Women Extension Agents, resulting in a significant increase in the percentage of women farmers reached by extension system (World Bank, 2000).

The programme was intended to provide a practical insight into how to reform the extension services to meet the need of women farmers. The WIA also created a much greater awareness among policy makers about the need of

women farmers. It also resulted in an increase of women extension agents, resulting in a significant increase in the percentage of women farmers reached by the extension agent (World Bank, 2000).

Despite a decade of World Bank assistance to building up the Nigeria's Agricultural Extension Services, women were receiving minimal assistance and information from extension agents (World Bank, 2002). The World Bank programme was therefore launched as a pilot to improve credibility of the agricultural extension services to women farmers (World Bank, 2000).

The WIA programme has been in existence since 1989 in Borno state, Nigeria. However, there has not been any systematic assessment of its performance. Specifically comparing its achievements during and after the World Bank support. Information on the performance of Women-in-Agriculture project in Borno state during and after the World Bank support is limited. This study intends to evaluate the contributions of the project to uplifting and empowering the resource poor farmers in selected locations in Borno state. The broad objective of this study was to assess the performance of Women-in-Agriculture Programme in Borno state, Nigeria from 1989 to 2003. The specific objectives was to compare the performance of the WIA programme during the World Bank funding from 1989-1995 and post World Bank funding period 1996-2003.

The hypotheses

H_0 = There is no significant difference between the performance of Women-in- Agriculture Programme during and after the World Bank funding.

H_a = There is a significant difference between the performance of Women-in-Agriculture Programme during and after the World Bank funding.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was carried out in Borno state, Nigeria (Fig. 1). The state is predominantly agrarian state. The state is located in the North Eastern part of Nigeria and has about 69, 436 sq km and lies within the latitude 11°N and longitude 13.5°E. It is one of the largest state in the Federation in terms of land mass. Its neighbours are Adamawa state to the south, Yobe state to the West and Bauchi state to the south-west. The 1991 census indicated that the state has 1,239,892 female. Projecting population at 2.8% growth rate, it is expected that the population of the state will be 3,616,676. The climatic condition of the state is hot and dry for most part of the year in the north, while in the south it is a bit milder. The annual rainfall ranges between 500-1,000 mm. The rainy season starts in June and terminates in September in the Northern part of the state. While the rainy season is between the months of May and October in the South



Fig. 1: Map of Nigeria

with relative humidity of approximately 49% and evaporation of 203 mm year. Agriculture is the predominant occupation in the state. People in the state are farmers, herdsmen and fishermen. The state has a vast agriculture and livestock development potentials.

Study population and sampling procedure: Borno State Agricultural Development Programme has three agricultural zones. Zone one has its headquarters in Biu, while zone two and three have their headquarters in Bama and Kakawa, respectively (Fig. 2). The multistage random sampling procedure was adopted for the study. In the first stage, two zones (zone 1 and 2) were selected for the existing three zones in the state. In the second stage three local government areas from each of the two selected zones were selected. In zone one Hawal, Gwoza and

Askira Uba LGAs and two, Bama, Maiduguri, Metropolitan Council (MMC) and Jere were purposively selected. This was based on the relatively large number of WIA groups and WIA extension activities in such areas.

From each of the six LGAs, fifteen contact women farmers participating in WIA programme were randomly selected, totaling ninety farmers. Out of the existing 38 WIA extension staff, 20 WIA extension staff were randomly selected from the two zones, that is (10) from each zone. In all a total of one hundred and ten respondents (90 women farmers and 20 WIA extension staff) were used in the study.

Primary data were collected through structured interview scheduled with the WIA extension staff, while secondary data were sourced from the Borno State Agricultural Development Programme annual reports. The

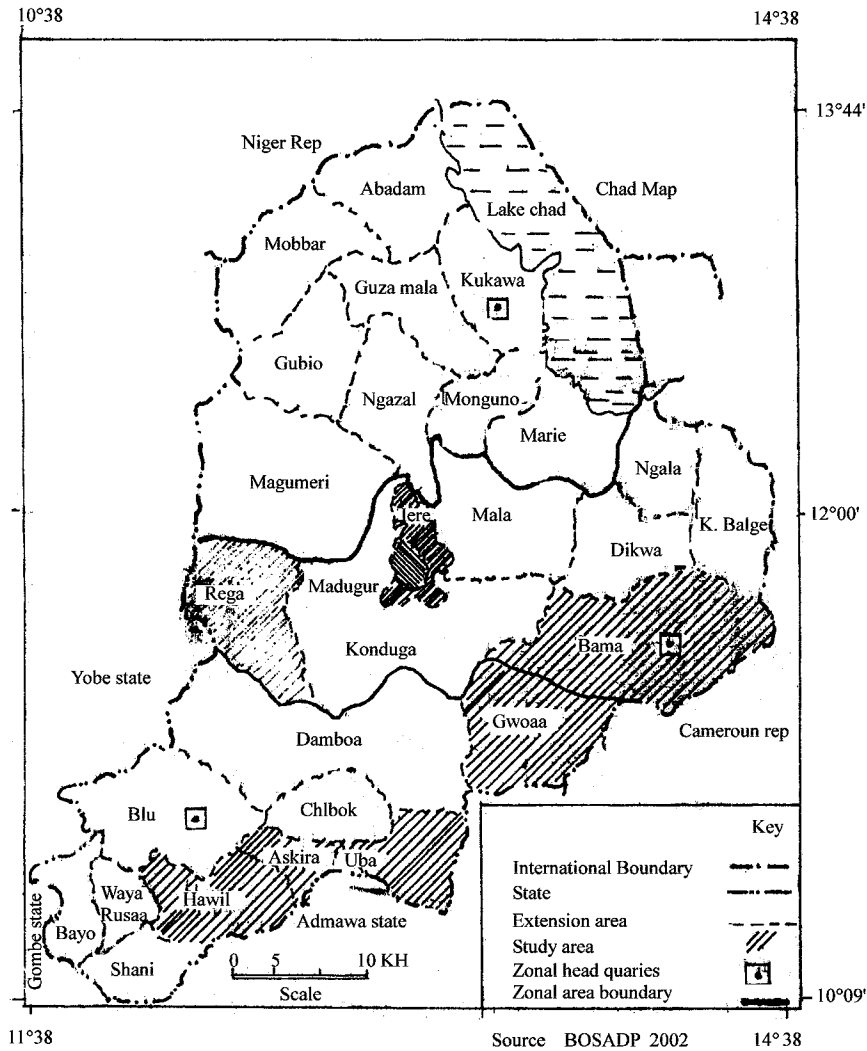


Fig. 2: Map of Borno state showing study area

data relating to the performance of WIA projects as compared to its set targets for 1989 to 2003 were analyzed using the project achievement technique. This technique is a simple and practical method of evaluating a project physical achievement against planned targets (Ogunbameru, 1988). The performance index was determined using the formula;

$$P = A/T \times 100$$

Where P = achievement, A = achievement level, T = target level (target set). In this study, the target level is the set target by WIA project with respect to the activities, While the actual performance is the level of achievement recorded during the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Information pertaining to the perception of WIA agents regarding achievements of the objectives of the WIA programme is presented in Table 1. The data revealed that majority of the respondents (95%) indicated that the objectives to identify technical and logistic and attitudinal constraints facing the extension services in supporting their activities of women farmers as well as “planning the extension staff project interventions aimed at improving services for women farmers and determine he significant agricultural services of women, e.g., field crops, livestock processing etc. were fully achieved. While 45, 40 and 10% of the respondents indicated that the objectives to ascertain the extent to which technology generation/research, identify nature and extent of training needed by extension and Home Economics staff to improve their support for women farmers as well as availability of extension services to women farmers are partially achieved, respectively. This implies that during the World Bank funding period almost all objectives targeted were fully achieved.

Comparative performance of WIA Programme: The main objective on WIA programme include; demonstration on tie and dye, soap making, pomade making, establishment of Small Plot Adoption Technique (SPATs); formation and registration of Farmers Group; equipping the fortnightly Training Centers; establishment of cottage industries; fields visit by WIA agents; provision of mobility and fuel efficient stoves; wood for establishment; and supervision of implemented projects activities. The Performance Index (PI) was computed for the two periods and presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Achievements of objectives of the WIA programme as perceived by the WIA agent during the World Bank funding period (1989-1995)

Objectives	Fully achieved		Partially achieved		Not achieved	
	F	(%)	F	(%)	F	(%)
1: Availability of extension services to women farmers	18	90	2	10	0	0
2: Identify technical, logistics and extension services in supporting the activities of women farmers	19	95	1	5	0	0
3: Planning with extension staff projects interventions aimed at improving services for women farmers	19	95	1	5	0	0
4: Identify nature and extent of training needed by extension and Home economics staff to improve their support for women farmers	9	45	8	40	3	15
5: Ascertain the extent to which technology generation research system is able and actually does respond to technical needs of the women	10	50	9	45	1	5
6: Determining the significant agricultural activities of women e.g., field crops, livestock’s, processing	19	95	1	5.0	0	0

F = Frequency

During the World Bank funding period, it was evident that for most of the activities, there was a high performance index of more than 50%, indicating high achievement level. In fact, for activities such as establishment of cottage industries, performance index is as high as 70%, while establishment of SPATs is 73.1%. The lowest achievements index (25%) was recorded in the area of youth club formation. The high performance index recorded may be ascribed with the provision of facilities. In furtherance Safo *et al.* (1990) considered access to transportation (motorcycles and motorbikes) to be most basic requirement for making extension system effective. Also, Nasiru *et al.* (2004) posited that motor bikes are imperative for proper job performance of female extension agents. The overall analysis shows that during the World Bank funding period, most targets sets were achieved. This shows high performance index of WIA activities during the period.

Table 2: Comparative performance of WIA programme during the World Bank funding period (1989 to 1995) and after World Bank funding period (1996 to 2003)

Activities	1989-1995			1996-2003		
	T	A	PI	T	A	PI
1: Demonstration						
(a) Tie and dye	1,163	526	45.25	850	343	40.35
(b) Soap making	660	392	59.39	600	276	46.00
(c) Pomade making	550	307	55.82	455	196	43.08
(d) Detergent making	500	257	51.40	670	116	31.35
(e) Preparation of local dishes (maize, wheat, millet, soybeans (etc)	1,440	784	54.44	850	326	38.35
(f) Maize threshing	280	137	50.08	245	76	31.02
(g) Use of manual maize miller	655	328	50.08	405	182	44.94
(h) Processing, preservation and storage of farm produce.	2,535	937	36.96	1,620	546	32.81
2: Establishment of small plot adoption techniques	420	307	73.10	420	190	45.24
3: Farmers groups formed and registered						
(a) Women groups formed	38	15	25.00	33	6	18.18
(b) Formation of youth clubs	32	8	39.47	15	0	0.00
4: Equipping Fortnightly training Centers	18	10	62.52	10	0	0.00
5: Cottage industries established	8	6	62.50	10	0	0.00
6: Number of field visits made by WIA agents	578	395	68.34	677	269	46.62
(7): Mobility provided						
(a) Motor vehicle	10	5	50.00	8	0	0.00
(b) Motor cycle	22	10	45.45	6	0	0.00
8: Fuel efficient stove (Construction and distribution)	790	401	50.75	538	199	36.99
9: Woodlot establishment	20	8	40.00	18	1	5.56
10: Supervision of implemented projects activities	1,345	807	60.00	1,344	431	32.07

T = Target level, A = Achievement level, PI = Performance Index

However, after the World Bank funding period, most of the targets set were not achieved, which resulted into a (0) performance index for (5) activities. For example, formation of youth clubs, 15 were set for target, but no single club was formed. Also during the same period, zero achievement was recorded in the area of mobility, equipping of Fortnightly Training Centers and establishment of cottage industries. This implies that the women farmers had benefited more from WIA projects during the World Bank funding period. A comparative illustration of performance index during and after the World Bank Funding period is 52.20 and 25.92%, respectively. Obviously, the null hypothesis stating that

there is no significant difference between the performance of WIA project during the and after the World Bank funding period was rejected. This clearly indicates a successful implementation of WIA projects activities. That is achievements of set targets are highly dependent on adequate funding. Especially, the overall performance index of WIA projects during the World Bank financial assistance almost doubled its performance after World Bank support.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that, for most of the WIA activities during the World Bank funding period there was a high performance index of more than 50% indicating that a high achievement level for WIA projects. However, during the post World Bank funding period, most targets set were not achieved. This is a clear indication that women farmers benefited more from WIA projects during the World Bank funding period as compared with post World Bank funding period. The study therefore recommends that the World Bank, Federal, State and Local governments should embrace funding of the WIA project again. In addition, appropriate policies should be formulated to ensure that women farmers get access to extension services and training necessary for improved agricultural production and productivity. Also the participating farmers should engage in income generating activities to help them finance the activities of WIA and not to be over dependent on government always.

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