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Full-Length Research Paper

Evaluation of the Benefits of Crop Farmers Participation in IFAD-CASP Program in Zamfara State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The study looked at the advantages of crop farmers participating in the IFAD-CASP programme in Zamfara State, Nigeria. To collect data from the 360 respondents chosen for the study, an interview schedule and focused group discussion (FGD) were used. The respondents were chosen using a multistage and simple random sampling procedure. For data analysis, descriptive statistical tools (mean, percentages, frequency distribution) and a 5-point Likert scale were utilized. According to the study's findings, the majority of respondents were married, with an average household size of 8 people and a monthly income of less than N 20,000. The study discovered that the benefits of participating crop producers in IFAD-CASP are that their participation in the programme resulted in an increase in high yield with a (mean = 3.97), an increase in food security with a (mean = 3.84), and this was attributed to the participating crop producers' high level of adoption of recommended practices. The findings also indicated that the IFAD-CASP programme in the study area had increased the yield of the participants and helped in the dissemination of improved farming technologies that help to boost their productivity with a (mean = 3.69), creating awareness on climate change with a (mean = 3.68), reducing poverty with a (mean = 3.36) and creating off season business activities with a (mean = 3.36). Based on the study's findings, it is possible to conclude that rural banditry contributes to bad economic growth, increased rural poverty, low participation, and poor programme execution, as well as instilling fear and uncertainty. As a result, the study recommends that the government urgently provide adequate security personnel to man the porous borders, enrol the vulnerable in government social investment programmes, organize training/seminars for peace building purposes, and that the government register all mining sites and properly monitor their activities.

Keywords: Benefits, Crop Farmers, IFAD-CASP Program, Zamfara State

INTRODUCTION

Rural banditry has become a pervasive social issue that is wreaking havoc on a number of societies around the world. In most cases, rural banditry is the decision of individual centrally organized organizations inclined to participate in open violent fights over power over government and territory, and such conflicts are generated by a variety of circumstances (Abbas, 2012). Among the factors are insincerity on the part of one or both parties involved, disappointment from either party involved, internal disagreement (Anka, 2017), inability to address the root cause of a long-standing conflict, proliferation of weapons and arms, which causes armed conflict, and ethnicity, according to Dimelu (2017). According to Dimelu (2017), rural banditry is only conceivable when weapons are accessible to fight, inflicting injuries and, in some cases, death on persons. Mischievous people, on the other hand, use it to cause disruption in order to achieve their goals (Ashe, 2019). Rural banditry is growing more popular in underdeveloped countries than in industrialised ones, according to Adamu and Yau (2018). It is also quickly becoming a vital element of most emerging nations'

operations, such as Nigeria's. Previous research (Adelakun et al., 2015) has shown that the aftermath of armed conflicts in society has consistently been negative, for example, increasing the rate of poverty, resulting in an increase in the number of internal displacement of several persons, causing outbreaks of diseases, reducing food security, and impeding economic growth. Nigeria, like other developing countries, has undergone numerous forms of armed conflict over the last five decades, most notably following independence (1960). It has occurred in practically all of the country's six geopolitical zones. Despite the fact that the incidents do not affect every state in every geographical zone, practically every state has suffered from the detrimental results, either directly or indirectly (Abubakar, 2013). Thus, the implications of rural banditry on Nigerian society are negative and limitless since, in addition to affecting nearly all of the federation's states, it also affected virtually every other area of the state where it happened. For example, in Zamfara, it has resulted in tremendous loss of life and property, as well as disease and disability. It has also resulted in a rise in the number of widows, widowers, and orphans. It has increased the prevalence of despair, trauma, mental retardation, suicide, and environmental degradation, with disastrous effects for agricultural production and food scarcity (Adesola, 2016). In certain sections of Zamfara state, the violence has resulted in a major food crisis and insecurity. Likewise, a number of agricultural lands have been damaged. Environmental changes, agricultural soil degradation, erosion of agricultural biodiversity's genetic base, water scarcity, poor governance, rising demand and shifting consumption patterns, uncontrolled deforestation, export-oriented agricultural development policies, and political dysfunctions have all been factored in (Ebrahimzadeh et al., 2006). The state administration of Zamfara established several programmes such as amnesty to alleviate the consequences of war in the rural areas of the state. The goal of this programme is to reduce the effects of rural banditry on the inhabitants of Zamfara State. When the military force failed to deter militants and restore normalcy to the region (Chukwuemeka et al., 2012), the Federal Government of Nigeria adopted a similar strategy through the amnesty programme in the Niger Delta, where people were forced to devise coping strategies to ensure their survival. Prior to the emergence of rural banditry in Zamfara, the federal government implemented the International Fund for Agricultural Development-Climate Change Adaptation and Agribusiness Support Programme in seven northern Nigerian states: Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe, and Borno, as a strategy to effectively combat hunger and poverty (Ashe, 2019). Women and farmers with tiny land holdings were the most vulnerable individuals in these states, suffering from hunger and poverty. Since the persistent rural banditry began in Zamfara State, the socio-economic position of these people has deteriorated dramatically, owing to a drop in participation in rural development programmes, which, in turn, puts the IFAD-CASP in jeopardy.

METHODOLOGY

Study area

This study was conducted in Zamfara State; the capital of Zamfara State is Gusau. The state was established in 1996 by the then military administration of the Late General Sani Abacha. Zamfara State was carved out of Sokoto State. It comprises of fourteen (14) Local Government Areas, with an area landmass of 38,418 sq. km. The state stretches between Latitude 10 21’ to 13 15’N and Longitude 60 20’E (Figure 1) (Google maps, 2019). Zamfara Sate is bordered in the North by Niger Republic, in the South by Kaduna State, in the East by Katsina State and in the West by Sokoto, Kebbi and Niger States respectively, the state lies in the Sudan Savannah Agro Ecological Zone of Nigeria and has a population of 4,515,400 according to (NPC 2019) projection. Statistics have shown that more than 80% of the people living in Zamfara State engage in various forms of agricultural activities ranging from crop production of millet, guinea corn, maize, rice, groundnut, cotton, tobacco and beans to livestock and fish farming. The climate exhibits a definite mark of wet and dry seasons. Tropical continental air mass predominates during the dry season while harmattan last from December to February and wet season June to mid-October. Rainfall distribution varies from 675mm to 1000mm with an average annual temperature of between 26 and 30 degrees centigrade.

Sampling techniques and sample size

The population of the study comprises of participating crop producers of IFAD-CASP in Zamfara State, North West Nigeria. The State is divided into three agricultural zones namely: Northern Zone (Birnin Magaji, Kaura Namoda, Shinkafi and Zurmi LGAs), Central Zone (Bungudu, Gusau, Maru and Tsafe LGAs), and Western Zone (Anka, Bakura, Bukkuyum, Gumi, Maradun and Talata Mafara LGAs). A comprehensive list of CDAs was obtained from IFAD-CASP office in Gusau, then the selection of sample for the study was done using multi-stage sampling technique. At the first stage, from each of the three agricultural zones, three LGAs were purposively selected to obtain a total of nine (9) LGAs. At the second stage, twelve (12) CDAs were selected from each of the

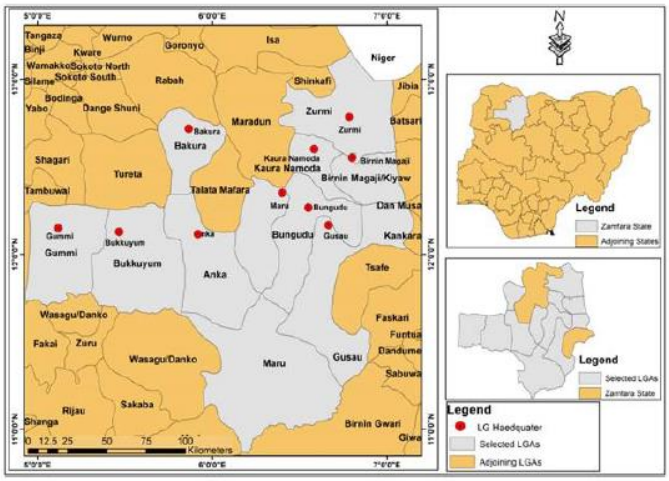

Figure 1: Map of the study area. Source; Department of Geography UDUS

LGA selected to obtain a total of thirty-six (36) CDAs. At the third and final stage, ten (10) respondents were selected using simple random sampling from each of the selected CDA to obtain a total of three hundred and sixty (360) respondents (Figure 2).

Method of data collection

The researcher engaged the services of research assistants. Both the researcher and the research assistants administered the structured questionnaire directly to the respondents and immediately retrieved them upon completion. While secondary information was obtained through journal, books, magazines, internet, past thesis, Online Library, encyclopedias and research proceedings etc.

Method of data analysis

After the data collection process, the researcher reviewed, sorted and labeled the instruments before the commencement of the analysis. This was done using the variables in line with the research instruments. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) and 5 point Likert scale.

Models specification

Likert scale

This scale falls under the criterion group instrument whereby items are collected and analyzed against a criterion. Each item has a weight or score attached to it. A person's score on the final attitude scale is simply the sum of the weight of the alternatives he/she has checked.

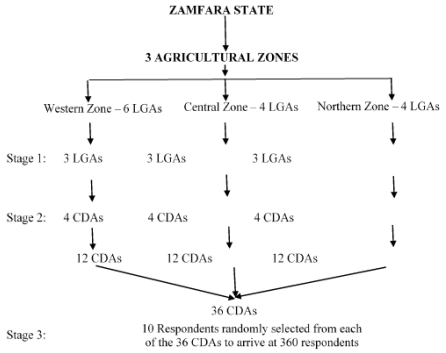

Figure 2: Sampling procedure

Weights are usually assigned to that high scores which indicated favorable attitude.
For perception scale under positive statement, scores assigned are;

Strongly Agreed…… 5
Agreed…… 4
Undecided……3
Strongly Disagreed ……....2
Disagreed ……..... 1
While for negative statements, the scores assigned are:
Strongly Disagreed……..1
Disagreed……2
Undecided……3
Strongly Agreed……...4
Agreed…….....5

Where average mean score=Total sum of perception score / Total number of respondents

Most important positive and negative (attitudinal) statements

The mean score =

$$= \frac{5+4+3+2+1}{5} = 3$$

Then an arbitrary number of 0.5 will be added to 3.0 to obtain3.5 while 0.5 will be subtracted
from 3.0 to obtain 2.5 for negative statements. Hence, the important positive statements will be all those from 3.5 and above while the negative statements will be those below 3.5

Gender of the participating crop producers in IFAD-CASP

Table 1 shows the socioeconomic characteristics of IFAD-CASP Participating Crop Producers.

Table 1: Distribution of socio-economic characteristic of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers in Zamfara State N 360.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	259	71.9
Female	101	28.1
Age		
18-27	56	15.5
28-37	117	32.5
38-47	79	21.9
48-57	80	22.2
58<	28	7.9
Marital Status		
Single	49	13.6
Married	280	77.8
Divorced	9	2.5
Separated	5	1.4
Widowed	17	4.7
Income/Month		
>20,000	199	55.3
20,001-50,000	132	36.7
50,001-80,000	16	4.4
80,001-110,000	10	2.8
110,001<	3	0.8
Residence		
Rural	298	82.7
Urban	62	17.3
Household Size		
0-5	122	33.8
6-10	135	37.5
11-15	70	19.4
16-20	33	9.3

Source: Field survey, 2020.

Majority 71.9% of the participating crop producers of IFAD-CASP were male due to their active involvement in outdoor activities such as farming and animal rearing. While female participates mostly in indoor farming activities such as small animal rearing, processing, threshing and packaging of farm produce this is so because Islam is the predominant religion and has put some restrictions on women to interact freely outside the matrimonial homes and getting responses from such category is sometimes impracticable. These discrepancies are believed to have been influenced by the nature of the study theme- rural banditry which is highly practiced by the male counterparts (Amani, 2003). Again, some women felt this is not their area of interest because they hardly participate. Even though they are also directly affected by these harmful acts as they are mostly the victims of rape abduction and other forms of sexual abuses (Ani *et al*., 2017).

Age of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers

The age of IFAD-CASP participating crop producers has effect on the level of activities. It determines the level of participation in the programme and it is an important measure of farm productivity. The age grouping can be divided into say the active group and dependent age group. Table 1 shows that about (32.5%) of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers were between the age ranges of 28-37years which is the active age range. At this age, the respondents are expected to be virile and able to do a lot of farm work if given proper incentives. According to Andrea (2014) majority of the respondents were within their youthful ages of active involvement in rural occupations which are mostly farming and rearing of domestic animals and invariably became more affected by the problem of cattle rustling as they are usually the target. This agrees with the findings of Anioke, (2002) who posited that youth perform most active farm operation and majority of the youth are between the ages brackets of 18-35years. This was an expected indicator based on the fact that the youths have been highlighted as the main players in the rural banditry activities. This agrees with the findings of Dimelu, (2017) who opined that Majority (52.2%) of the farmers were below the mean age indicating that the farmers were still in their active and productive years. Consequently, they may respond violently to conflict issues or become very aggressive to herdsmen due to youthful exuberance. Also, the results show the dominance of male in farming probably

because men are more energetic and capable of involving in tedious production activities associated with farming than women.

Marital status of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers

It is believed that married couples are likely to participate more in IFAD-CASP than single parent families due to labour supply in farming activities and access to productive resources in agriculture (Atala and Hassan, 2012). The research findings show that, majority of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers are married having (77.8%), single having (13.6%), widowed (4.7%) and divorced (2.5%).

This implies that most of the participating crop producers have some responsibilities; therefore, marital status is an important factor to be considered in any programme of change to be introduced to the study area since family decision will be required in any activity to be embarked upon Adelakun *et al.* (2015).

Income of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers

Zamfara State Climate Change Adaptation and Agribusiness Support Programme Officer (IFADCASP), said that the Programme was aimed to providing access to improved seeds and technologies that has helped farmers increase production as well as their income. According to the State programme officer raising the income of farmers through the provision of improved seeds and farming practices, which the farmers adopt has recorded high yields. “The programme has helped many farmers by increasing their yields and enhancing the farmers' income”.

However, this research finding was in disagreement with the above statement due to rising issue of rural banditry and rural banditry in the study area. Majority (53.3%) of the IFADCASP participating crop producers in the study area has an income of <₦20,000. This implies that participating crop producers suffer more loss such as reduction in output and income from crop as a result of the destruction of crops and indiscriminate bush burning by rural bandits. The findings of Adelakun *et al.,* (2015) shows that majority of the farmers suffer more losses from farmer-pastoralist conflicts, especially economic losses such as reduction in output (20.0%), loss of properties (28.3%), and scarcity of food (23.3%) were regarded as severe economic losses experienced by farmers. A larger percentage (46.7%) of the farmers indicated loss of properties as a major economic loss encountered as a result of conflict.

Residence of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers

It is necessary to establish the residence of the participating crop producers, in such a way to find out the location of the participating crop producers either urban or rural dwellers. Majority of IFAD-CASP participating crop producers (83%) are rural dwellers in the study area which are more affected by the issue of rural banditry and rural banditry while (17%) are urban dwellers. According to Dimelu (2017) in his studies on Livelihood issues in herdsmen-farmers’ conflict among farming communities in Kogi State, find out that (22%) of the farming family lives in urban area. This could negatively affect the farmers’ perception of conflict situation and subsequently their behavior and altitude to conflict. This might be one of the reasons why farmer-herders’ conflict has remained unabated and a regular phenomenon in Zamfara state. This is in agreement with finding of this research which revealed 83% of IFAD-CASP participating crop producers are rural dwellers.

Household size of the IFAD-CASP Participating Crop Producers

Relatively the larger the family size of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers may mean more people to cater for and more labour force will be available to work on the farm and help with other farming activities. The result in Table 1 shows that majority (33.8%) IFAD-CASP participating crop producers have a household size of 0-5, followed by (37.5%) of the participating crop producers have household sizes of 6-10 people. This implies that most of the IFAD-CASP participating crop producers have a larger household size which may have resulted from the need for family labour which may increase household productivity and larger household size may consequently result to more dependent family members.

Table 2 shows the perceived benefits of participation in IFAD-CASP by participating crop producers, reveals that their participation in the programme brought increase high yield with a (mean = 3.97), increase in food security of the participating IFAD-CASP crop producers with a (mean = 3.84) this was attributed to the high-level of adoption of recommended practices by the participating crop producers. The finding implied that the IFAD-CASP programme in the study area had increased the yield of the participants., their participation in programme help in dissemination of improved farming technologies that help to boost their productivity with a (mean = 3.69), Creating awareness on climate change with a (mean = 3.68), Reduce poverty with a (mean = 3.36) and Creating off season business activities with a (mean = 3.25). This indicates that IFAD-CASP participating crop producer

Table 2: Distribution of IFAD-CASP participating crop producers according to participation benefits.

Participation	SA		A		SD		D		UD		Sum	Mean	Rank
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%			
Increased high yield	191	53.1	57	15.8	50	13.9	35	9.7	27	7.5	1430	3.97	1st
Creating awareness on climate change	91	25.3	152	42.2	34	9.4	78	21.7	5	1.4	1326	3.68	4th
Dissemination of improved technologies	135	37.5	57	15.8	110	30.6	38	10.6	20	5.6	1329	3.69	3rd
Creating off season business activities	30	8.3	157	43.6	84	23.3	54	15.0	35	9.7	1173	3.25	6th
Reduce poverty	43	11.9	168	46.7	58	16.1	59	16.4	32	8.9	1211	3.36	5th
Increase food security	157	43.6	84	23.3	54	15.0	35	9.7	30	8.3	1383	3.84	2nd

Source field survey 2020. Key *S/A = Strongly Agree Scored 5, *A = Agree Scored 4, * S/D = Strongly Disagree Scored 3, * D = Disagree Scored 2 and *UD = Undecided Scored 1.

participated actively in all the process and were not just passive recipients of information. The programme has exposed IFAD-CASP participating crop producers to technologies that are location specific been practiced by them that needed adoption and continuity.

The programme played a complementary role in extension delivery and technology dissemination in the Zamfara State. The participation of IFAD-CASP crop producers lead to high level of adoption of the recommended production practices introduced to the crop producers. This level of adoption of new technology led to increase yield (productivity) and access to food in rural areas (food security). This is in line Ekumaoko (2013), which says that the participation in IFAD-CASP under the role of extension agents, who act more as facilitators than as problem solvers are to help agricultural producers gain access to knowledge, resources and services that will increase their productivity and well-being. They can help build both social and agricultural capital in post conflict settings and can help government agencies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) identify community needs for either development or security. Domenici and Littlejohn (2001) views participation of farmers in community based projects as a means of diversifying farmer's enterprise, thereby improving the standard of living of the rural people and transforming their socio – economic lives.

Conclusion/ Recommendations

Based on the summary finding of this study, the research established that majority of IFAD-CASP participating crop producers were male, married with a mean age of 33 years and an average income of less than N 20,000/ month. The factors influencing the participation of IFAD-CASP participating crop producers in the programme appears positive and statistically significant. This implies that a probability increase in the independent variables (conflict, insecurity, fear, location and experience in conflict) would led to decrease in dependent variable (participation). Further established was widespread poverty, proliferation of small arms and weapons competition for gold mines and dispute over farm land account for causes of rural banditry in the study area, resulting to economic, social and physical decline in livelihood of the crop producers. These conflict engagements have drastically affected the activity of IFAD-CASP in carrying out its mandate to the respondents in the study area. In addition, IFAD-CASP participating crop producers were perceived to derive less benefit from the programme.

The research therefore concluded that rural banditry has significantly affected IFAD-CASP participating crop producers in Zamfara state Nigeria. The following recommendation were deemed necessary with a view to make IFAD-CASP viable instrument for the implementation of Agriculture, rural poverty and development.

1. The Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affair, Disaster Management and Social Investment in collaboration with States, Local Government and Non-Government agencies should enroll the vulnerable into its social support investment programmes such N-power, Presidential youth empowerment scheme (P-YES) conditional cash grant, market money and other special intervention scheme.
2. Government should as a matter of urgency provide adequate security to mann the porous borders of the north-western states. This can be achieved through the Nigeria immigration service and other sister security and intelligence communities.
3. Federal Government in conjunction with State and Local Government should hence forth register all mining sites and the activities of mining companies be properly monitored by the Nigeria police force, security agencies and the community
4. Both primary and secondary stakeholders like the community, traditional leaders, politicians, government and NGO should focus on providing information for early warning, organize training, workshop and seminar on peace building process and reconciliations. Promises made during such gathering should respected and redeemed.

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