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**DOES ROAD SAFETY PROJECTS RELATE TO  
COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING? A CRITICAL  
REVIEW**

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**Abstract**

*This paper examined the new trend in CSR programmes of private organizations that champion the course of road safety in their host communities. Since most of the contributions from CSR programmes of the private organizations are usually attached to CCB. It is worth mentioning that many private organizations in emerging economy like Nigeria are taking new dimension in their CSR programmes by champion the course of road safety projects/programmes in their respective host communities, but the concern is that does a road safety project relate to CCB concept? This paper intends to give insight into; conceptual meanings attached to CCB concept, the birth of CCB in Nigeria or Africa as a whole, and the relationship between the AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State and the CCB concept. This paper critically reviewed the roles of AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State in relation to CCB with the analytical application of Aspen Institute's (2006) definition*

of CCB and Eade's (1997) model on capacity building. This paper opines that road safety projects are related to CCB concept.

**Key words:** AARSI road safety projects, capacity building, capacity building interventions, community capacity building, corporate social responsibility

### Introduction

Many organizations used corporate social responsibility-CSR as a framework to consider the interest of all stakeholders (shareholders, employees, customers, suppliers, business partners, pressure groups, and government) and they usually claimed that their CSR based programmes are toward community capacity building-CCB. The CSR practices by these organizations reflect the type of CSR culture adopted by these organizations either philanthropic approach like United States' (US) practices or strategic approach like European Union's practices that placed CSR as parts of core business activities in a socially responsible manner. The Commission Green Paper (2001) views CSR as a concept whereby organizations integrate social and environmental issues of concern to their business operations and also interacts with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis. Eilbert & Paret (1973) view CSR concept in terms of good neighbourliness with responsibility not to spoil the neighbourhood, and also with voluntary responsibility to help solve neighbourhood problems.

Most of the multinational organizations in Nigeria are either from the US or Europe, so the CSR practices in Nigeria has led to academic debates among scholars, although there are few studies on CSR practices of the multinational organizations and their contributions to the Nigerian economy, even the available ones are mostly centred on Niger Delta areas and Shell Nigeria (see Ite, 2004; Frynas, 2005; Akpan, 2008). Organizations are using their CSR programmes to contribute towards CCB of their host communities and these programmes varies in dimensions for dealing with various socioeconomic problems of their host communities such as healthcare, youth unemployment, and community safety. Hess *et al.*, (2002) pointed out that over the past half century, corporate community investment-CCI has developed into more complex components with broaden impacts, while Ford Foundation (2001) stressed that CCI is a new paradigm and then demonstrated that business investment in community through collaborations with relevant stakeholders is likely to result in a healthier economy and positive business results. Boutilier (2007) pointed out different roles that companies can play to facilitate CCB which will help to reduce poverty and promote sustainable community development-SCD by connecting social capital to community and stakeholders' networks.

CSR programmes of many organizations in emerging economies like Nigeria, India and Dubai are taking new dimension by champion the course of road safety projects/programmes in their respective host communities. In India, the central government intends to encourage more organizations to inculcate road safety projects/programmes to their CSR programmes and for this reason, the Indian government is willing to give tax benefits of fifty percent exemption on income tax for companies' contributions to road safety activities (*The Hindustan Times*). Currently in Nigeria, the governments (both Federal and State) are imploring organizations to promote road safety through their CSR programmes in order to tackle the road safety problems facing the country which have been major concerns to Nigerians and the outside world.

### AARSI Partnership Organisation

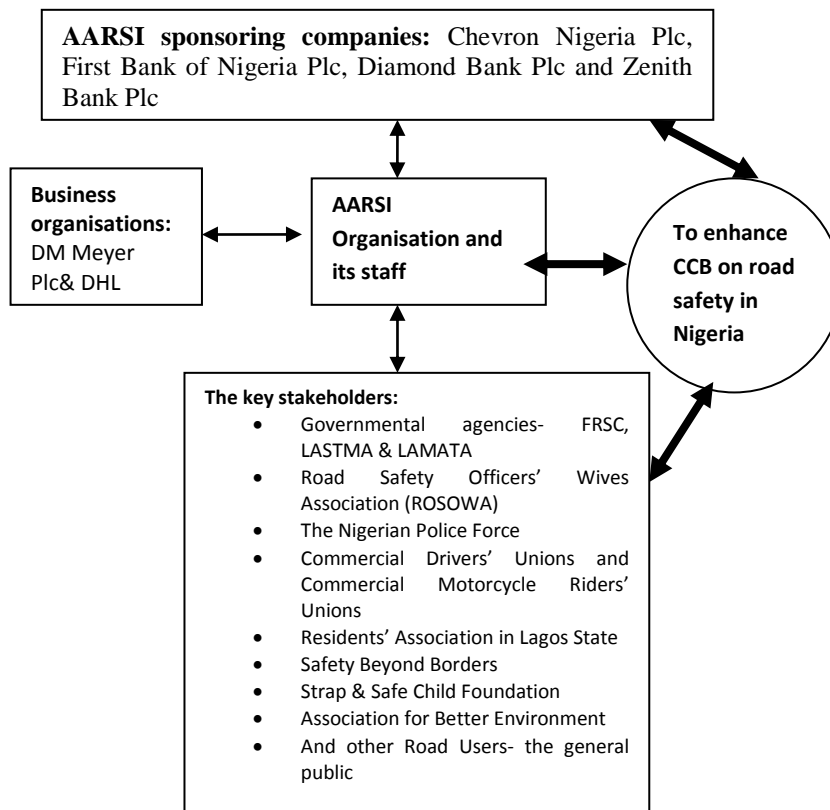


Diagram1- Source: Author

In May 2006, Four Nigerian private companies (Chevron Nigeria Plc, Diamond Bank Plc, First Bank Plc and Zenith Bank Plc) formed a partnership organization called Arrive Alive Road Safety Initiative-AARSI as a CSR commitment to work with the key stakeholders on road safety in Nigeria in order to complement the governments' efforts on road safety.

The AARSI organization is currently based in Lagos State and its mission is to spread its operations and apparatus across other States in Nigeria (see Diagram1 below for the partnership structure). The involvement of private organizations to champion the course of road safety raised series of questions in mind; is it an indirect approach by the organizations to take care of their staff and their customers by valuing their staff as assets and their customers as kings, to what extent can organizations involve in road safety, and does road safety projects/programmes relate to CCB?

The main purpose of this paper is to establish relationship between road safety projects and CCB, and to advance understanding of the CCB concept in order to encourage more organizations to involve in road safety projects/programmes, and also to facilitate more academic research studies on road safety and CCB in Africa.

### **The Evolution CCB and its Conceptual Meanings**

Hawe (1994) opined that the fundamental doctrines attached to CCB can be traced back to 1966 within the community of psychologists, and when a set of American psychologists **broke away** from the American Psychological Association (APA) to stand on their own. The **splinter** group (the new group) argued that the communities have capacity to tackle their own problems and they view health professionals as resources to the community, but not experts. In addition, the splinter group challenges the notion that practitioners and community programmes should centre on what is lacking within their community. Poole (1997) delineates the foundation of CCB to the Health Cities movement which gave birth to decentralisation and outsourcing policies while Craig (2007) pointed out that CCB was labelled as a 1990s and 21st century concept and practice that centred on community's improvement. Mowbray (2004) views CCB from communitarian position of 1990s, which attached communitarian to collective actions that enhance community's empowerment in order to meet individual's needs within the community.

CCB is an important concept in today politics and it has available materials because it has been the centre of attraction in many reports, case studies, academic articles and books (Chapman & Kirk, 2001; Frankish, 2003). Some writers have shown that there is no distinct difference between CCB and capacity building-CB because CCB is a subset of wider ideas and concern for CB- a notion that has something to do with

organizational change and urban development (Hawe *et al.*, 1998; Hunt, 2005). Likewise, some writers see no difference between CCB and community development-CD, and they stressed that CCB is what CD was called in the 1990s and even now in the early 21st century (Schuftan, 1996; Gibbon *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, CCB, CB and CD can be used interchangeably because they are interrelated as pointed out by various writers and which is in line with the usage in this paper, but CCB is the umbrella term adopted in this paper.

Many writers such as Hawe *et al.*, (1998), Smith *et al.*, (2001), Chapman & Kirk (2001) and Frankish (2003) pointed out that despite the fact that the concept of CCB was being cited in many research literature, the concept is often inadequately defined. CB can be viewed as an approach to development that builds independence and also, it can be a **means to an end** where the purpose is for others to take on programs; it can be a **process**, where capacity building strategies are routinely incorporated as an important element of effective practice; and also it can be **an end** in itself, where the intent is to enable others to work together to solve problems (Eade, 1997; NSW Health, 2001). Hawe *et al.*, (1998) defined CCB as development of sustainable skills, organizational structures, resources and commitments to health promotion, and other settings and sectors in order to prolong and multiply health benefits for the people.

Crilly (2003) stressed that people have been using CCB terminology inconsistently and incorrectly, and it is quite common in projects to use the term CCB, but not apply the principles intrinsic to the definition, although, he suggested that differences in using CCB terminology move around perspective of finding solutions to problems that CCB might address and its evaluation mechanisms. Labonte & Laverack (2001) view CCB as a generic increase in community groups' abilities to define, analyse and act on health (or any other) concerns of importance to their members, but the authors pointed out that CCB is not an inherent property of a particular locality, individuals or groups within it.

Napier (2002) expressed CCB as the process by which the capability of the community is strengthened so that it can play more active roles in the economic and social regeneration of their area through long-term ownership of the regeneration process. Flaspohler *et al.*, (2008) defined CCB as ability of the community to identify and address or prevent existing problems, while Diamond & Liddle (2005) expressed CCB as practical support provided to communities to contribute to governance as equal partners, or to enable the wider community to engage in the opportunities provided by economic and social regeneration and then summarized CCB as the development of skills, the development of structures, and the provision of practical support.

CCB has been linked to the process of empowerment and the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (2001 as cited in Verity, 2007, p.15) defined CCB as a process of acquiring and using knowledge and skills, building on assets and strengths, respecting diversity, responding to change and creating the future. Albee (1995 as cited in Verity, 2007, p.15) stressed that CCB should enable people to move from the position of being manipulated by external forces and victims of social processes, to the position of subjects and active agents of change.

CCB as a concept is not different from other concepts in the social sciences with no general universal acceptable meaning because it has different meanings to different people based on their disciplines. Mitchell & Macfie (2004) stressed that CCB is not a clear notion with agreed meaning, and scholars argued that the problem of poor clarification to its meaning reflects the confusion surrounding it whether it is a process or CD in another name (Schuftan, 1996; Gibbon *et al.*, 2002). Some writers such as Hawe *et al.*, (1998), Smith *et al.*, (2001) and Hounslow (2002) tagged CCB to efforts in redress disadvantages, health promotion, social capital and urban improvement that foster social change.

The definition of CCB by Aspen Institute (2006) has been referenced more by writers and commentators in recent papers on CCB, and which defines CCB “as a combined influence of a community’s commitment, resources and skills that can be deployed to build on community strengths and address community problems and opportunities” (Aspen Institute, 2006, p.1). The outcomes or benefits attached to efforts of CCB by writers advocating for this concept can be summarised as empowerment of people within defined communities; development of skills that enhance knowledge and confidence; increase social relationships within the community; providing solutions to community identified needs; and community involvement in resources mobilisation for its needs (see Chapman & Kirk, 2001; Winkworth, 2005). It is clear that CCB concept has controversy surrounding its meaning, but it is frequently used in community programme and does not have a universally adopted meaning which affects how to measure its impact on societal wellbeing.

### **Community Capacity Building in Nigeria**

The birth of CCB in Nigeria or Africa as a whole can be traced back to the era of British colonization in African Continent. The CCB initiative was first known as “mass education”, but later termed as CD in 1948 and was adopted into British colonial administration in form of State-sponsored social welfare scheme (Smyth, 2004). The CCB initiative was mainly designed to involve people within the community to educate themselves to improve their living standard through agriculture, mass literacy and health scheme training. However, this era (1950s) was a

difficult period for the British colonial administration in Africa, because as the CCB scheme is being implemented, the Africans were clamouring for African Nationalism which affects progress and success of the CCB scheme. The struggle by the Africans create constraint for the CCB scheme and by early 1960s African nationalism triumph which opens way to independence for many West African countries, and Nigeria gets independence on October 01, 1960.

The evolution of CCB scheme in the British colonial office for policy and practice can be simply attached to **instructional films and radio**, because they are visual and audio medium that reign in the 1930s and they play major roles in mass education schemes. The social message for CCB through films by the colonial officials started in Nigeria and Kenya with films respectively on rats in Lagos and hookworm on Kenya coast in the 1920s. The purpose of the films were to educate people about health hazards that associate with rampant rats in Lagos and hookworm on coast of Kenya, although, around 1950s United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation-UNESCO takes a keen interest in production of films in Africa to deal with contemporary issues (see Smyth, 2004). However, radio as means to facilitate CCB take off at the end of 1950s before colonial master gives way to independent, but the use of radio to facilitate CCB cannot be underestimated because of its wider reach.

After becoming an independent country, the Federal government of Nigeria has implemented series of programmes to improve CCB at different levels for various sectors of the economy. For example, the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria-ASCON was established by Decree No.39 of 1973 and among its objectives was to provide higher management training for the development of senior executives for the public and private sectors of the Nigerian economy and to conduct research into problems of management and administration arising in different spheres of national life. In November 1978, the *modus operandi* of the college was reviewed and then directed to restrict its role to the training of public officers only in order to cope adequately and effectively with the training needs and requirements of the public service. In addition, various regimes have introduced different programmes to improve CCB for different sectors of Nigerian economy such as National Accelerated Food Production Programme and the Nigerian Agricultural & Co-operative Bank (in 1972), Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (in 1986) and National Poverty Eradication Programme (in 2001) among others.

Many leading global organizations and indigenous organizations operating within Nigerian economy have stepped in to contribute significant resources in support of CCB programmes, although, these contributions take different forms; training and

education (educating youths and adults within local communities), provide jobs, construct good roads and health clinics, provide water and support community safety. These organizations have contributed to CCB scheme through partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), but most of these organizations' contributions toward CCB fall under their CSR programmes. The current trend in CSR practices by the multinational organizations in support of poverty eradication in developing countries have promoted CCB scheme in African as a whole, however the problems of road safety on Nigerian roads have motivated the AARSI organization and the relevant stakeholders to complement the governments' efforts by providing capacity building interventions-CBIs to road safety problems in Nigeria.

#### **AARSI Road Safety Projects and its Roles to CCB in Lagos State**

AARSI organization understands the road safety problems in Nigeria and do not assume that their CBIs will automatically overcome all problems related to road safety, therefore, the AARSI organization commenced operations in Lagos State with motive to spread their CBIs across other States in Nigeria. AARSI organization commenced operation in May 2006 and operates as an NGO in collaboration with appropriate governmental agencies in charge of road related issues and selected stakeholders within the communities. The motto of this organization is **“making our communities' roads safer”** and their overall goals are to empower and to engage relevant stakeholders within the communities in order to compliment the governments' efforts on road safety related issues through holistic approach; providing education & outreach awareness, involving in safety engineering, providing support for enforcement, promoting and advocating for standard traffic law. The AARSI organization in collaboration with other stakeholders has held series of presentations and public campaigns in order to educate the general public and to create awareness on road safety.

Apart from educating the general public, the organization has organised series of workshop trainings which have been used to train some Road Safety Personnel from Federal Road Safety Commission-FRSC and Lagos State Traffic Management Authority-LASTMA on road safety courses. In addition, the AARSI organization has donated breathalyzer equipment worth of \$90,000 to Road Safety Personnel as at 2012, while 20,000 motorcycle helmets worth more than \$350,000 were distributed free to commercial motorcycle riders across Five States in Nigeria (Lagos, Abuja, Imo, Niger and Bayelsa States). The organization has run Radio Jingles Campaign on 3 Radio Stations that centred on pedestrian safety, importance of helmet, danger in drink-driving, and distracting driving (use of mobile phone while driving). The AARSI organization partnered with FRSC to establish 20 Road Safety Clubs in



Lagos schools as at 2013 (where school children receive lessons on road safety weekly) and the organization has produced more than 60,000 road safety comic strip booklets which were distributed free to school children, and also it has corrected some accident hotspot areas in Lagos State worth more than \$100,000 as at 2013.

The AARSI organization with its partners and stakeholders has organized different safety programmes/projects with the Lagos State Government to educate the general public on the importance road safety. The AARSI organization in collaboration with other stakeholders has launched National campaign on Truck Safety with emphasis on problems associated with improper visibility of trucks, dangers of using phone while driving and fatigue driving. However, this campaign has successfully fixed retro-reflective tapes on trucks in 8 States across Nigeria (Lagos, Yobe, Delta, Abuja, Imo, Rivers, Ondo and Bayelsa States) and this tape makes the trucks visible to other road users either when the trucks are in motion or in stationary position. In addition to this campaign, a road safety device (wake-up) was distributed free to long distance drivers in order to alert them against falling asleep behind the wheel.

The CBIs provided by the AARSI organization through execution of road safety projects and free distribution of road safety kits is beneficial to all road users and the community at large because the relevant stakeholders within the communities were carried along and which has helped to enhance partnership sustainability and stakeholders networking. The benefits from AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State can be summarised as a mechanism that facilitates empowerment of people through development of skills that will enhance knowledge and confidence on road safety; increase social relationships within the communities; and complement the governments' efforts to provide solutions to road safety problems which is in line with benefits expected from CCB programmes.

### **Relationship between AARSI Road Safety Projects and CCB Concept**

This paper intends to establish relationship between the AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State and the CCB concept. In order to make a robust argument and justification on this issue, this paper adopts the definition of CCB by Aspen Institute (2006) and Eade's (1997) model on capacity building to analyse the relationship between AARSI road safety projects and CCB concept. Aspen Institute (2006) definition of CCB (as defined above) emphasized on three key factors (commitment, resources and skills) and which was applied to AARSI road safety projects to establish their relationship with CCB concept. First, the AARSI organization has shown strong commitment to road safety projects by associating with necessary governmental agencies on road safety within the communities to create awareness, identify road safety related problems, opportunities and practicable solutions. Second,

the AARSI organization has deployed vast resources (financial, material and human resources) to road safety projects (as form of capacity building interventions) in order to enhance road safety campaigns within the communities by complementing governments' efforts. Third, AARSI road safety projects have been used to mobilise skills from different individuals within the communities to address road safety related problems. AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State are related to CCB based on the CBIs provided through these projects in order to strengthen communities' resources and to address community road safety problems.

This paper used Eade's (1997) model on capacity building as a second approach to demonstrate relationship between the AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State and the CCB concept. The Eade's (1997) model (in Table1 below) shows how capacity building in the NGO and civil society can serve as means, process and ends which helps to strengthen capacity of all stakeholders within the community to achieve their defined objectives. Eade's (1997) model shows that capacity building in the NGO will serve as means to strengthen the organization so as to perform specified activities, and it will serve as process by examining the NGO's mission and its activities, and also it will serve as ends to strengthen the NGO to survive and fulfil its targeted objectives. The model also shows that capacity building in a Civil Society serves as a means to strengthen the capacity of primary stakeholders to implement their defined activities, and serves as a process of fostering communication and relationships among stakeholders to deal with their differences, and also serves as an end by strengthening the capacity of primary stakeholders to participate in the socio-economic activities of their community and to achieve set objectives. The application of Eade's (1997) model to AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State really established its relationship to CCB concept (see Table2 below).

The application of the Eade's (1997) model to AARSI road safety projects in Lagos State can be viewed to serve as a means of strengthening capacity of the AARSI organization and the key stakeholders to implement defined activities. It also indicates that the AARSI road safety projects can serve as a process of fostering communication and relationship between the AARSI organization and the key stakeholders in order to improve capacity of dealing with road safety related problems and likewise, it can serve as ends by strengthening capacity of stakeholders to fully participate in the community road safety programmes in order to prevent and reduce road traffic accidents in Lagos State.

The position of this paper is that the AARSI road safety projects/programmes are related to CCB concept because when the two approaches (Aspen Institute's (2006) definition and Eade's (1997) model on capacity building) are synthesised, it puts the

AARSI road safety projects in place of CBIs to road safety problems in Lagos State. These road safety projects/programmes can be viewed as efforts to foster social change that will facilitate community engagement and commitment so that the community can take responsibility for the empowerment and development of its area toward effective road safety mechanism.

This paper has contributed to body of knowledge by providing in-depth understanding on CCB concept through the AARSI road safety projects/programmes and which should facilitate more academic research studies on road safety and CCB in Africa. This paper also intends to encourage more organizations to share position with Eilbert & Parket (1973) on CSR concept in terms of voluntary responsibility to help solve neighbourhood problems such as community safety and infrastructure development in Nigeria or Africa as a whole.

Table1- [extracts from Eade (1997, p.35)]

	<b>Capacity Building as means</b>	<b>Capacity Building as process</b>	<b>Capacity Building as ends</b>
<b>Capacity Building in the NGO</b>	Strengthen organization to perform specific activities	Process of reflection, leadership, inspiration, adaptation and search for greater coherence between NGO mission, structure and activities	Strengthen NGO to survive and fulfils its mission as defined by the organization
<b>Capacity Building in Civil Society</b>	Strengthen capacity of primary stakeholders to implement defined activities	Fostering communication: processes of debate, relationship building, conflict resolution and improved ability of society to deal with difference	Strengthen capacity of primary stakeholders to participate in political and socio-economic arena according to objectives defined by them

Table2- Source: Author [The application of Eade's (1997) model to AARSI Road Safety Projects in Lagos State]

<b>CCB in Lagos State</b>	<b>AARSI Road Safety Projects as means</b>	<b>AARSI Road Safety Projects as process</b>	<b>AARSI Road Safety Projects as ends</b>
Capacity Building in Lagos State through Road Safety Projects by the AARSI organization	Strengthen capacity of key stakeholders (safety personnel and community representatives) to implement defined activities.	Fostering communication and relationship among stakeholders (AARSI organisation, safety personnel and community representatives) in order to improve capacity of dealing with road safety problems.	Strengthen capacity of stakeholders to fully participate in the community safety programmes in order to prevent and reduce road traffic accidents in Lagos State.

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