

Appraisal of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in Jalingo Local Government Area, Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract: The study appraised the impact of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) in Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State, Nigeria with a view to measure its success or failure since 1999 to date. Using stratified and random sampling technique, 100 respondents were selected from the Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP) beneficiaries, 67 from the Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP) beneficiaries and 399 non-benefiting respondents. A Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also used to assess expert opinions on the impact of the programme. Questionnaires were administered to elucidate needed information from all groups of respondents. The simple percentage score and student t-test were used for analysis. Results obtained shows that most beneficiaries of the programme fall within the age bracket of 15-30 years, while 40.4% of the non-beneficiaries had no access to any formal education. Analysis of dependency ratio also shows that 32.1% of the non-beneficiaries had between 7-9 dependants, while 42.5% of the benefiting respondents had between 4-6 dependants. A greater percentage (71.4%) attested to the fact that benefiting from the programme had a political angle to it. Responses on programme assessment were quite varied. The student t-test result reveals that there is strong positive relationship between income of beneficiaries before and after enrollment in the programme. This relationship is significant at the 0.001% confidence level. The focused group discussion validates the research findings. Appropriate recommendations and suggestions were proffered. The research concludes that the programme needs to be re-designed in order to address some critical poverty sectors.

Key words: Appraisal, poverty, capacity, mandatory, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Sanderson (2005) stated that by issuing its Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations had declared its intention to alleviate poverty and hunger at a global scale over the next decade. But the perspectives and policies to achieve those goals have not address the failure of previous development effort of this kind. In the 1960s and 1970s, Nigeria enjoyed steady economic growth and relative stability. The economy and income per capita grew steadily and few people were below poverty line as the agricultural, industrial and public sectors absorbed most of the labour force. From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, the economy had to contend with severe economic difficulties resulting from the oil shocks, world economic recession, deteriorating terms of trade, debt overhang and macroeconomic imbalances. Poverty incidence was recorded at 43% by the Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) in 1985.

Structural reforms were undertaken in mid- 1986 and the economy recovered slightly, while the number of the poor declined. By 1992, based on Federal Office of Statistics report, poverty incidence declined to 34%. With the collapse of macroeconomic discipline in the early 1990s, the economy was again beset by high inflation, low productive activities and a return to economic stagnation. The proportion of people living below poverty line rose sharply to 61% in 1997 and Nigeria was ranked 54th in the Human Poverty Index (HPI) of the United Nations Development Programme and among the twenty poorest countries in the world (UNDP, 2001).

The Federal Government has in line with the global convention, been trying to ameliorate the worsening condition of the poor, by directing public expenditure towards poverty reduction programmes and projects to cushion the effects of poverty in the country. These programmes include: The Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Better Life Programme

(BLP), Family Support Programme (FSP), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP), National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA), National Agency for Mass Literacy, the People's Bank of Nigeria, the Federal Urban Mass Transit programme, etc.

In spite of the huge resources devoted to poverty reductions, deterioration in fiscal discipline, corruption, political instability and inconsistent policies undermined past efforts; thus making poverty reduction in Nigeria a paradox. The level of unemployment continues to rise, inequality gap continues to widen (the rich becoming richer and the poor, becoming poorer), while poverty conditions are exacerbated. Recognizing the need to create a conducive environment for investment and development, the last administration, indicated that the poverty situation in which more than 60% of Nigerians live below the poverty line of one dollar (US\$1) per day (i.e., about ₦140.00) required concerted efforts to prevent it from getting worse. Consequently, government initiated and launched the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) within the framework of the National Budget in 2000. The programme was designed to provide employment for 200,000 people and the sum of ₦10 billion was set aside for it.

The programme was to be implemented in every state of the Federation and is said to have provided jobs for 214,367 people who were paid stipends of ₦3,500 per month (Aliyu, 2002).

In January 2001, the Poverty Alleviation Programme was phased out and replaced with the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), which has the responsibility for coordinating and monitoring the activities of the core poverty eradication ministries and agencies (Aliyu, 2002). In his 2002 study, Aliyu emphasized that NAPEP focuses on the coordination of activities of 17 Federal ministries and about 30 parastatals based on their activities and relevance to the eradication of poverty in Nigeria. It was more or less an expository study which concentrated on the organizational aspect of the programme with little or no effort to assess its effectiveness and relevance.

It is against this background that the present study will attempt to appraise the impact of the programme with a view to recommending a strategy of implementing poverty reduction programmes that will indeed achieved its original intent of creating capacity for productivity and income improvement.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study area: Jalingo Local Government Area of Taraba State lies between latitudes 8°11' to 8°50'N and longitudes

11°05' to 11°25'E. It is bounded to the North by Karim Lamido and Lau Local Government Areas, to the East by Yorro Local Government Area, to the south and west by Ardo-Kola Local Government Area. It has a total land area of about 1380 km². In terms of relative location, Jalingo is accessible from Benue and Plateau States through Wukari and Ibbi Local Government Areas respectively and through Gassol, Ardo-Kola Local Government areas from the southern axis. From the North-eastern axis, it is also accessible from Adamawa through Mayo-Belwa, Zing, Lau and Yorro Local government areas on one hand and through Demsa and Numan Local Government Areas on the other hand.

Taraba state has a total population of 2,300,736 according to the 2006 provisional census figure. By 1991, Jalingo the study area has a total population of 140,661 with a projected growth rate of 3% Jalingo now has about 243, 573 inhabitants. The population is heterogeneous in nature with numerous ethnic groups and varied historical and socio-cultural background. The climate of the area is typically tropical in nature with high temperature prevailing most part of the year. The area is dominated by 2 distinct seasons, wet and dry each spanning a period of about 6 months each. The study area is endowed with rich potentials for agriculture. Arable farming and rearing of domestic animals is done at subsistent level.

Data collection: The study made used of both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was generated using questionnaire administration. The population selected in this study was grouped into 2 categories (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries). The beneficiaries were further grouped into 2, the Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP) and the Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP) all under the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES) in Jalingo Local Government Area.

Going by the "Yaro Yamane" formula for sampling a finite population as used by Uzoagulu (1998), the formula provides a good medium of sampling a manageable size of population to be studied within time constraint. The formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where,

n = The sample size.

N = The finite population.

e = Level of significance (limit of tolerable error).

1 = A constant (Unity).

Note: e for this study = 0.05 or 5%.

Substituting the population under study to the “Yaro Yamane” formula we have the following samples to be drawn:

A: Beneficiaries: CAP (133) = 100 sampled
MAP (81) = 67 sampled

B: Non-beneficiaries: Projected population (Jalingo) (195,519) = 399 sampled.

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also employed to sample the views and opinions of government leaders, politicians and the management staff of NAPEP with a view to comparing their opinions and observations with those of the respondents. A total of 167 questionnaires were administered to the first set of respondents (beneficiaries) while 399 were administered to non beneficiaries using both stratified and simple random sampling methods.

Data analysis: The method used to analyze the data generated for this study was based on the research problems identified, the objectives of the study and the research questions and hypothesis raised. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for proper appreciation of the activities of NAPEP. The student’s t-test was also employed to test the difference in per capita real income of beneficiaries before and after benefiting from the programme. To assess the difference in per capita real income of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries in the 10 electoral wards of Jalingo Local Government Area, the same technique was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic and demographic characteristics: The results of questionnaire administered for respondents socio-demographic status is presented on Table 1, from Table 1, the result shows that a greater percentage (59%) of the Capacity Acquisition Programme (CAP) are aged 15-30 years. This is so because the programme is tailored to arrest youth unemployment, especially those graduating from secondary school with no immediate prospect for furthering their education. Its sister programme, the Mandatory Attachment Programme (MAP) which is geared towards addressing graduate unemployment also has the lion share of its beneficiaries (79%) within the age bracket of 15-30. again, this is not surprising because the education system in Nigeria (6-3-3-4) guarantee the graduation of an average performing youth at the age of 22/24 from the university. 65.4% of the non beneficiaries fall in the age group of

Table 1: Socio-demographic status of respondents

Variable	Class	CAP (%)	MAP (%)	N. B* (%)
Age	15-30	59 (59)	53 (79.1)	51 (12.8)
	31-45	41 (41)	14 (20.9)	261 (65.4)
	46-60	0 (0)	0 (0)	70 (17.5)
	61 ->	0 (0)	0 (0)	17 (4.3)
Gender	Male	88 (88)	58 (84.6)	280 (70.2)
	Female	12 (12)	9 (13.4)	119 (29.8)
Marital status	Married	41 (41)	14 (20.1)	261 (65.4)
	Single	59 (59)	53 (79.1)	19 (4.8)
	Widowed	0 (0)	0 (0)	87 (21.8)
	Divorced	0 (0)	0 (0)	32 (8)
Educational status	Non formal	0 (0)	0 (0)	161 (40.4)
	Primary	0 (0)	0 (0)	109 (27.3)
	Post primary	53 (53)	0 (0)	72 (18.1)
	Tertiary	47 (47)	67 (100)	57 (14.3)

*Non beneficiaries

31-45 years. This strong virile working age group constitutes the majority here because their non formal background entails early marriage. Gender analysis of the respondents shows that the males are dominant in all three classes of the programme. In the capacity acquisition programme and mandatory attachment programme, 88 and 84%, respectively are males while the non beneficiary had 70.2% as male. This male dominance pre supposes a society that attached much importance to the male child. He is expected to start work at an early age so as to step into his father’s shoe of providing for the family while the female child is highly protected.

Table 1 further revealed that a greater percentage of both CAP and MAP beneficiaries are single while 65.4% of the non beneficiaries are married, 21.8% are widowed and 8% are divorced. This contrasting situation can be explained by the fact that the higher one goes academically, the better the chance for planning in life before marriage. It is therefore clear from Table 1 that an effective poverty reduction strategy must focus on education-which is a mental empowerment for productive and creative reasoning.

Education is a significant indicator in the Human Development Index (HDI) of the UNDP. It is a vital transformational tool and a formidable instrument for socio-economic empowerment. Education is critical to meeting the goals set by NAPEP in poverty reduction. Results presented in Table 1 shows that the Capacity Acquisition Programme has 53% of its beneficiaries who acquired education up to post primary level, while 41% schooled up to tertiary level. The CAP was designed to accommodate people with this level of education because the ability to read and write gives them a good background to understanding the skills involve in the artisan jobs available at this level. The Mandatory Attachment Programme designed for university graduates and equivalent had 100% of its respondents within the group. However, analysis of education status of non beneficiaries shows that a greater percentage (40.4%) had

Table 2: Socio-cultural characteristics

Variable	Class	Beneficiary (%)	Non beneficiary (%)
Dependency rate (children)	None	6 (3.6)	26 (6.5)
	3-Jan	85 (50.9)	55 (13.8)
	6-Apr	71 (42.5)	84 (21.1)
	9-Jul	5 (3.0)	128 (32.1)
	10 >	0 (0)	106 (26.5)
Ethnic composition	Mumuye	27 (16.2)	128 (32.1)
	Kona	22 (13.2)	91 (22.8)
	Fulani (fulbe)	84 (50.3)	77 (19.3)
	Jenjo	15 (9.0)	64 (16.0)
	Wurkum	10 (6.6)	22 (6.0)
	Hausa	9 (5.4)	17 (4.3)
Occupation	Farming		135 (33.8)
	Artisan		102 (25.6)
	Professional	103 (25.8)	
	Business		49 (12.3)
	Others		10 (2.5)

no formal education, while 27.3% schooled up to primary level. Only 18.1 and 14.3% of the non beneficiaries' possess post primary and tertiary qualifications which goes to prove that education is a pre requisite for achieving the goals of NAPEP.

The socio-cultural characteristics of the respondents were also analysed and presented in Table 2. Results from Table 2 shows that majority of the beneficiaries had between 4-6 children per house hold, while the non beneficiaries had between 7-9 children per house hold. This in itself is a clear manifestation of poverty and underdevelopment of the area studied. It is therefore clear that with this number of children per household, meeting their needs like; basic education, access to health care facilities, clothing, shelter and of course a balance diet will be difficult, if not impossible.

Since, NAPEP is a political programme targeted at reducing absolute poverty, it is a common phenomenon in the developing countries that factors like ethnicity could constitute either assets or liabilities in the successful implementation of the programme. Therefore, the implications of ethnic affiliation of the respondents was analysed with a view to draw some inference.

Although, the non-probability sampling technique employed to sample the non-benefiting respondents may not be fair enough to present the actual population of the area studied, it is however worthy to note that there was no fair representation of the ethnic groups in those who benefited from the NAPEP. For example, the Fulanis who are third in the sampled population of the area studied eventually became first in the number of benefiting candidates of the NAPEP with more than 50% indicating their ethnic affiliation to the Fulani (Fulbe) ethnic grouping. These could be as a result of the traditional political power and influence the Fulanis exert on the existing tribes (ethnic groups) of the area since its conquest during the Usman Danfodio Jihad of the 19th Century to date. From Table 2, it is evident that, with

majority population engaged in farming, especially at a subsistence level as is the case in Jalingo local government, poverty will rather be on the increase. The professionals and the artisans/craftsmen may only do little to transform and influence the economic status of the general populace in the area studied. This is because their activities will only add little or nothing to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the society in which they live.

Per capita real income: According to Ayres (1995), the measurement of human development for the time being focus on 3 essential elements of human life-longevity, knowledge and decent living standards. He further pointed out that these elements are influenced by ones level of income. This is because income is not an end, but a means of enjoying real human development. It is against this conceptual background that the National Planning Commission (2004) stated that, by 1999, about 70% of the country's population had income of less than \$1 a day and the figure has risen since then. Considering the critical place income occupies in the study of poverty reduction, Table 3 provides a computations of the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries average monthly incomes.

From Table 3, it is clear that individual's monthly income before NAPEP intervention is nothing to write home about. Both the CAP and MAP beneficiaries had mean monthly income of less than ₦6,000.00 which stood at about ₦3,259 and ₦8,790 before NAPEP intervention respectively. However, after the intervention of the NAPEP, their mean monthly incomes rose to about ₦4,126 for CAP beneficiaries and ₦17,010 for MAP beneficiaries. Although mean daily income of CAP beneficiaries after the intervention was still below the poverty line (₦137.53) of one US dollar per day. This cannot be unconnected with the beneficiaries low levels of mental empowerment educationally. On the other hand, the graduates who falls under the MAP beneficiaries were able to show significant increase in their mean monthly income before and after NAPEP intervention. That is ₦8,790 and ₦17,010 respectively with a mean daily income after the NAPEP intervention of ₦567 which is indeed above the World Bank's poverty line of one US dollar per day. Their mental empowerment through the university degrees and polytechnic HND they have acquired must have accounted for this significant difference.

The mean monthly income of all the beneficiaries after NAPEP intervention stood at ₦9,295 with a mean daily income of ₦309.83 which is generally above the poverty line. However, the non-benefiting respondents has a mean monthly income of ₦6,116 and a mean daily income of ₦203.87. This value of the mean daily income

Table 3: Summary of respondents mean incomes

Respondents mean incomes	CAP beneficiaries (₦)	MAP beneficiaries (₦)	All beneficiaries (₦)	Non-beneficiaries (₦)
Mean monthly income (before)	3,259	8,790	6,124.50	6,116
Mean monthly income (after)	4,126	17,010	9,295	
Mean daily income (after)	137.53	567.000	309.83	203.87

Source: Author's field work (2007)

Table 4: Student t-test result of income inequality

Group	Level	N	Mean	Standard deviation	SE mean	t-value	p-value
CAP beneficiaries	Mean income before	100	3259	1006	101	- 6.62	0.0000
	Mean income after	100	4126	837	84		
MAP beneficiaries	Mean income before	67	8790	3291	402	- 9.10	0.0000
	Mean income after	67	17010	6619	809		
All 3 group	Beneficiaries	167	9295	7613	589	4.59	0.0000
	Non-beneficiaries	399	6116	4689	363		

of non-beneficiaries is quite above the poverty line in the area studied. Although, this generalize value for non-benefitting respondents may not be true for all the non-beneficiaries in Jalingo local government, the mean daily income computed could be a fair representation of the non-benefitting respondents in the area. Students t-test was employed to test the difference in per capita real income of CAP and MAP beneficiaries before and after benefiting from the NAPEP and those of the non-beneficiaries and beneficiaries after the programme in the area studied.

Results obtained from Table 4 shows a significant difference in per capita real income of CAP beneficiaries before and after the NAPEP implementation in Jalingo local government area of Taraba State. The result is significant at the 99% confidence level.

Student t-test result for the MAP also shows that there is a strong difference in the per capita real income of beneficiaries before and after benefiting from the NAPEP. The relationship is also significant as the 99% confidence level. Generally speaking, it is evidently clear from the statistical results above that, although other indices of human poverty may not agree with the result obtained, but due to the improvement in the monthly income flow of the NAPEP to beneficiaries and the enabling environment given to production, the programme (NAPEP) is said to be gradually making impact in reducing human poverty to some extent. It is also important to note that since poverty is not just a by-product of shortage in income, other areas of human basic needs should be refocused by the NAPEP.

Respondents general perception: The popularity of the programme was tested in the study area using questionnaire administration of both structured and unstructured questions, results obtained are presented in Table 5. The beneficiaries were excluded in the analysis because they are part and parcel of the programme therefore a 100% respond would be obtainable. 63.7% of the non beneficiaries however, agreed that they are aware

Table 5: Perceptual level of respondents

Variable	Class	Beneficiaries (%)	Non beneficiaries (%)
Awareness level	Yes		254 (63.7)
	No		145 (36.3)
Political party affiliation	Yes		285 (71.4)
	No		114 (28.6)
Improving quality of life	Yes	23 (13.8)	47 (11.8)
	Partially	84 (50.3)	123 (30.8)
	No	60 (35.9)	229 (57.4)
Programme assessment	Failure	61 (36.5)	293 (73.4)
	Success	3 (1.8)	67 (16.8)
	Undecided	103 (61.7)	39 (9.8)

of the existence of the programme, while 36.3% claimed they don't know about the existence of the programme. This high percentage of ignorance to the programme is unacceptable due to wide adverts on it through the media houses, the peoples level of development must have accounted for this. It, therefore, implies that NAPEP has to intensify efforts towards public enlightenment to this all important programme in order to achieve their targets and mandates.

There was also a majority support among the non beneficiaries with respect to criteria for benefiting from the programme. 71.4% opined that membership of the ruling party is critical in benefiting from the programme. On the other hand 28.6% said a political party affiliation is necessary for benefiting from the programme. Perhaps ignorance and the peoples level of development must have accounted to this on one end and may be, the ruling party faithful must have influenced this contrary opinion on the other hand.

The perceptions of beneficiaries and non beneficiaries was assess with regards to if the programme has improved their quality of life. 13.8% were of the view that NAPEP has improved their quality of life, while 50.3% said, if at all there was any improvement in their quality of life, it is not quite significant. A total of 35.9% benefitting respondents are of the view that NAPEP did not improve their quality of life. The situation is not too different with the perceptions of the non-beneficiaries of the programme as majority (57.4%) said the programme has not brought about any improvement in their quality

of life. However, 30.8 and 11.8% agreed there was a partial and out right improvement in life quality respectively. Those who believe that it did to some extent could have it right since the statistical test of the incomes of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries agreed that there was significant difference in their per capita real income. On a final assessment of the programme's over all performance, responses within the beneficiaries shows that 61.7% of them were undecided. They could not really make out whether the programme was a success or failure. 36.5% boldly agreed NAPEP was a failure, while an insignificant 1.8% said it was a success. Responses from the non beneficiaries were somehow predictable since they did not benefit from the programme. Predictably, 73.4% declare the programme a total failure, 9.8% was undecided and 16.8% saw NAPEP as a success story.

Findings from the focus group discussion: The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) formed an important medium of interactions with the stakeholders, especially as it relates to poverty reduction and reduction in unemployment and inequalities. The main findings of the group discussion are that poverty since 1999 to date is rather on the increase with a widening gap of income and interpersonal inequalities. The group attributed this to the following:

- Lack of basic services such as clean water.
- Lack of access to basic education.
- Lack of access to basic health care delivery.
- Lack of assets, such as land, tools, credit and supportive networks of friends and family.
- Lack of steady source of income which affects the supply of balanced diet, good shelter, clothing and empowerment (political, confidence and dignity).

The focus group therefore unanimously offers the following suggestions as ways of tackling poverty.

- Empower the people through formal and informal education.
- Strengthens the skill base of the people.
- Improve health care services.
- Improve the supply of portable water and sanitary facilities.
- Protect the vulnerable groups – the women, children, youths, peasant farmers and the people living with HIV/AIDS, through creating a conducive environment for them to have access to credit, land, inputs, anti-retroviral drugs, skill acquisition and other labour intensive scheme creation.

The group did not believe that the present effort of the Federal Government in reducing poverty through payment of monthly stipends to beneficiaries is good

enough to tackling the problem on ground since poverty according to them is multidimensional in nature which requires an integrated approach. They call on the Federal Government to religiously implement the policy thrusts of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) in order to achieve a more realistic anti-poverty programme. Their conclusion about the current attempt towards poverty reduction is that, it is a project designed to fail and a failure so far. Well, what else can one expect from such group? Whatever short comings of the programme (NAPEP) for now, it could still be repositioned in order to meet its original goal of implementation.

CONCLUSION

While attempting a poverty appraisal in Jalingo local government area of Taraba State, Nigeria, it was observed that based on indices used for this study, the programme is still far from reaching it's objectives. This is because only the per capita real income of the people are positively influenced, while all other indices of human poverty appears to be negatively influenced. NAPEP just like other poverty alleviation programmes before it, did not involve the beneficiaries in the design and implementation of the programme. The research therefore concludes that apart from intensifying efforts to address the regional imbalance associated with pattern of poverty in Jalingo, the government must also as a matter of priority give urgent attention to educational sector. This is because education seems to be the panacea to poverty eradication.

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