RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: A CASE STUDY OF CROSS RIVER STATE

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ABSTRACT
This paper presents rural development programmes as strategies for growth and development in Cross River State with particular emphasis on the areas of food production, education, employment generation and poverty eradication. This research shows that the various efforts of the government of Cross River state past and present have been directed at maintaining sustainable by developing, maintaining and implementing various policies and programmes. These programmes include: Cross River Agricultural Development Programme (CRADP), Growth Enhancement Support Schemes (GES) etc. The study also shows that economic growth either in policy design or implementation has been accorded marginal attention because of a lack of political will and inadequate resources. Therefore, for any meaningful development to take place in the rural areas, these programmes must be adequately funded and accountability must be key. The study revealed that several community development projects have been carried out by this rural development agency and recommended that the various local government areas should establish their own grass root development agency to deepen the effort of the state and federal government on rural and sustainable development.

KEYWORDS: Rural, Development, Sustainable, Nigeria, Cross River state.

INTRODUCTION
In a bid to ensure that rural communities benefit fully from the economic and socio-cultural development of the nation, there is need to accord priority to programmes aimed at sustainable development in these regions. Rural development, according to the World Bank is defined as “a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people usually referred to as the rural people”. It is aimed at extending the gains of development to the poorest amongst rural dwellers. This group according to the World bank includes small scale farmers, tenants, women and children as well as landlords (World Bank, 1979:3). Thus rural development is an integrated approach to food production provision of physical, social and institutional infrastructures with an ultimate goal of bringing about good healthcare delivery system, affordable and quality education, improved and sustainable agriculture, etc. that bring about a high living standard in rural communities.
Sustainable development for its part involves the use of natural resources as well as national infrastructures in such a way as to avoid the exhaustion of those resources. Rural socio-economic transformation is a means of ensuring that the rural sector of the population has some share in the fruits of economic activity. It is the most pragmatic means of bringing government facilities and services to the door steps of the population of rural areas. But unfortunately rural areas are characterized by dearth of infrastructure, roads, health, water and poor electricity supply. The World Bank (2003) observed that per capita income is below $280, economic and social activities that are power-dependent are incapacitated, thus compounding rural unemployment. The continuous neglect and absence of basic social infrastructure coupled with high level of poverty renders its potentials socio-economic transformations unattainable.

It is noteworthy to state that development efforts over the years have been in favour of urban centres, leaving the rural areas devoid of modern attractions that characterize the urban centres. For example, the urban areas of Nigeria accounted in 1990 for over 60 percent of the socio-economic infrastructures available in the country, 80 percent of industrial establishment, 70 percent of trade and commerce and 90 percent of banking facilities. And there are also huge differentials in employment, income, power, education, health and general material well-being between urban and rural areas in Nigeria. The rural economy depends much on road transportation in that it facilitates agricultural and other socio-economic activities, the provision and maintenance of the access roads is a sine qua non for the development of the rural economy, most especially the development of a small scale business which has been recommended as strategy for improving the rural economy hinges on access roads (Aliyu 2004).

Cross River State has about 70 percent of its population dwelling in the rural areas. Majority of the population reside in the rural communities and their major occupation is farming. For Cross River State Government, the development of her rural communities has become a priority. However, the effort has been impaired by marked challenges such as bureaucratic problems that impedes implementation of programmes, inadequate funding, political instability and change in government administration which can lead to projects abandonment. There is also problem of vague and unrealistic goals in which case the programme fails to receive the support of those affected by it and is unworkable. The rural development programmes of the Cross River State government has also suffered from a lack of concern for implantation and environmental and other socio-economic and political factors. Given this, there is need to examine the Rural development programmes embarked upon by the State so far with a view to appraising its challenges and offering recommendations for sustainable development.

The objective of this paper is to examine Rural Development Programmes and Sustainable Development in Nigeria, taking Cross River State as a case study. The research paper is organized into introduction, conceptual clarification, theoretical framework, development programmes in Nigeria and Cross River State etc
CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

There are basically three concepts that merits clarifications as it relate to this study. These concepts are rural development, development programmes and sustainable development.

a) Rural Development

The concept of rural development has taken a front burner in development discussion. The whole essence of rural development is mirrored in the improvement of the physical quality of life and the socioeconomic wellbeing of people living in the rural areas. The concept focuses on how to improve production methods in agriculture, improve food security, reduce mortality through the provision of accessible and affordable health facilities, improving road infrastructure that facilitate the movement of agriproducts to the market and enhance profitability of agricultural activities and discourage rural-urban migration.

In the past, a number of researchers have attempted an investigation to establish the impact of rural Development programs on sustainable development in a region. The problem according to Ocheni, Atakpa&Nwankwo (2012) is “as result of the under-development of the rural communities; more qualified people to migrate from the rural communities to the major towns and cities. They agreed that, most highly qualified professionals at community level migrated to the urban areas, leaving only a handful behind. The overall impact of this dearth of professionals at the local level has compounded the problem, making development at that level an impossible task”. Other issues that have resulted in poorly developed rural areas as enumerated by Bertolini, Montanari and Peragine (2008) can be summarized as social and economic in nature. These are in form of low birth rate, negative natural increase, higher mortality rate depopulation, especially due to out-migration by the young people caused by lack of employment, low population density; Labour market: low educational status, higher rates of unemployment and long-term unemployment; Spatial dimension of poverty as being exacerbated by a poor and deteriorating infrastructure; and Significant fragmentation of land’s ownership.

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As a result of the aforementioned problems that plague rural communities, there has been an increase in rural-urban migration. Several attempts made by successive governments to combat this have yielded little or no results. As noted by Okhankhuele and Opafunso (2013), claimed that several methods to remove rural-urban development gap have been carried out in Nigeria with little success, therefore the rural areas still remain highly underdeveloped in comparison with the urban areas. They believed that numerous studies have been carried out on the causes and consequences of rural-urban migration and also related the consequences of rural-urban migration on the urban centers to serious problems such as overpopulation, insufficient physical and social infrastructural amenities. Some of the past studies linked the causes of rural-urban migration to unbalanced government policies in support of urban development, response to disparities in income, employment and other socioeconomic services available within the metropolitan and country sides, with the urban areas being fortunate. In other to bring about sustainable development through the implementation of programmes aimed at impacting positively on rural dwellers, researchers have put forward a number of areas that should be targeted. Oggunnowo and Oderinde (2012) studied “the linkages among rural transformation, provision of basic infrastructure and agricultural productivity that endure food security, and concluded that massive investment on rural infrastructure and sustainable management of the infrastructure is necessary for food security.

In his view, Ogwu (2005) posited that “the local governments in Nigeria are expected to constitute the grassroots organ that should stimulate and mobilize the rural communities for an integrated development to solve the problems of poverty; unemployment, ignorance, and inequality. Local government areas are supposed to be the engines of national development. A quiet rural community grows into a bustling city, and the local leader makes this possible. However, in developed societies, when people are tired of living in the cities they relocate to rural communities International Journal of Public Administration and Management”. Thus, the provision of sustainable social amenities, development in agricultural and small/medium scale business activities can be of great help. Abah, (2000) viewed rural development to include the provision of social and physical infrastructure, the provision of financial services in non-urban areas, non-farm and small-medium enterprises activities in rural communities and market towns that are more closely linked to the rural economy than they are to the economies of the larger urban cities, as well as the development of traditional rural sectors, such as agriculture and natural resource management. It noted the key elements that will facilitate the realization of rural development to include social infrastructure, physical infrastructure, and financial services.

b) Development Programmes

Development programmes are intervention by government, government
agencies or non-governmental organizations, whether tangible or intangible projects, aim at providing or producing the intended or actual impact on a particular area in the society.

Programmes aimed at ensuring sustainability in the development of rural areas in Nigeria are numerous. Tenuche and Ogwo (2005) enumerated the following: “Agricultural Development Programmes and River Basin Development Authorities, Operation Feed the Nation and the Green Revolution, rural electrification schemes, rural banking schemes, urban and rural water supply schemes, credit schemes to small scale holders through various specialized institutions, transport schemes, health schemes, Universal Primary Education scheme, and low cost housing scheme. These policies show the zeal of different governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which has led to the proliferation of development agencies.

Despite the numerous rural development policies introduced at different times by successive governments coupled with the huge financial and material resources employed, little or nothing is felt at the rural level as each policy has often died with the government that initiated it before it starts to yield dividends for the rural dwellers”.

c) Sustainable development

According to the Brundtland Commission Report, sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Borowy, 2014). The import of rural communities is that it hold the hope and the future of a cleaner and natural environment which man was originally known for. Rural communities is less polluted in terms of land, air and sea. The chance of humanity continuous existence lies in the availability of clean air, and healthy environment, something the urban areas has lost due to reckless infrastructural development and industrialization. So in bringing development to the rural areas, cognizance must be taken to ensure that the environment is not polluted and the serenity of the rural setting is not compromised. This is what a sustainable development in the context of rural communities entails.

Aslam (1981) defined the concept as a process aimed at developing the rural poor, their economy and institutions from a state of stagnation or low productivity equilibrium into dynamic process leading to higher levels of living and better quality of life. In a similar vein, Schumacher (1983) conceived “rural development as developing the skill of the masses to make them self-reliant through instruction which supply appropriate and relevant knowledge on the methods of self-help. From these definitions therefore, it is clear that for rural development to occur, emphasis must be laid on human resource development. Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people, the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. The group includes smallscale farmers, tenants and the landless. (Aliyu, 1999).
Abah, (2000) viewed rural development to include the provision of social and physical infrastructure, the provision of financial services in non-urban areas, non-farm and small-medium enterprises activities in rural communities and market towns that are more closely linked to the rural economy than they are to the economies of the larger urban cities, as well as the development of traditional rural sectors, such as agriculture and natural resource management. It noted the key elements that will facilitate the realization of rural development to include social infrastructure, physical infrastructure, and financial services. Having examined these available definitions, it is clear that the concept of rural development lays emphasis on the promotion of the wellbeing and productivity of rural dwellers as well as ensuring that rural communities are fully involved from the programme initiation phase to its implementation phase in other to achieve full acceptance and use of it.

The sustainability of rural development refers to “long-term human and material sustenance. It is the continued existence of programmes long after their establishment”. The need to ensure sustainability is key to all rural development as it is the driving force that ensures continuity and long life of any rural development program. A programme’s results are called sustainable only when it has direct benefit and is utilized key recipients after it is completed. “To plan for sustainable results, programme designers must pay close attention to the content of three programme formulation framework (PFF) sections: Major elements, host, governments commitment. Sustainability is achieved by planning and deliberate programme management and monitoring of the conditions that will bring about sustainability during programme implementation. “Sustainability” in the context of rural development means not only the continued existence of programmes after its creation stage but also the positive impact of such developmental effort in ensuring ecosystem balance so that our planet is both safe for habitation even after exploring it for human endeavours.

Sustainable rural development therefore demands for the introduction of environment friendly technologies, customs, production systems and environmental impact assessment (EIA) of human activities so as to avoid activities that may be detrimental to the environment as well as human and non-human species. As a policy goal in sustainable rural development addresses the creation, promotion and co-ordination of awareness, enabling conditions and concrete action towards rural development. It describes the initiative of government. Policy makers, environmental protection groups, industrial executives and the international community involving many people and organizations of different categories, social classes and interest at various levels in becoming knowledgeable skilled pursuers of sustainable rural development and to transmit such knowledge, skills and strategies to target individuals and groups (Pearse, 2014).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Generally, these theoretical formulations represent various intellectual postulations and
exploratory accounts by scholars of varied disciplines aimed at explaining the presence or otherwise of development in different rural communities. These approaches have been identified by scholars as modernization, transformation, improvement, comprehensive and modernization approaches (Ujo, 1999: 113-120). The Modernization Approach “is a total transformation of a traditional society into types of technology and associated social organizations that characterize the advanced economically prosperous and relatively politically stable nations of the world. In this approach, social transformation of a rural area should accompany economic development. Economic development thus takes place through modernization of technology, commercialization of agriculture, the industrialization process and eventually urbanization” Moore (1963:89).

The Transformation Approach according to Ujo (1999; 115, 166) is aimed at transforming the rural areas through the introduction of rural developments programmes. A good example of the transformation approach given by Aziz (1978: 114-120), is in the case of China. China has only 8% of the World Cultivable Land but 20% of the World population, and yet it has managed without any significant external assistance to provide adequate food for its over 1billion people. The secret of this success is in its rural development programmes. The China rural programme is in form of Agricultural communes. The communes are multipurpose political, administrative and organizational units covering a full range of economic and social activities. By it, China has tackled unemployment by mobilizing labour for improving the infrastructure and cultivating land more intensively.

The Improvement Approach: this approach which the World Bank actively advocates throughout developing countries is aimed at a progressive improvement of agriculture through various forms of assistance. It does not involve changes in the land ownership or a transformation of agriculture. According to World Bank experts, this type of rural development strategy would provide the means with which to explore the productive reserves of the farming population (World Bank, 1979 : 41-42). Hardiman and Midgley (1982) on their part said that the comprehensive approach to rural development involves detailed planning based on a careful definition of the needs and resources of the target population and the setting up of appropriate institutions for implementing rural development. An example of this is the Commilla Project in Bangladesh. The major attributes of the Commilla project were that developmental projects should be carried out at community or village level where people know one another and there exist understanding and mutual trust but in which technical know-how, knowledge, skills and resources were in short supply. The Project therefore adopted the method whereby Primary Cooperative Societies were formed for farmers in each participating village. This would become a self-sustaining unit in which members would learn how to use modern equipment to save money and to use credit for agricultural improvement.
Mobilization Approach: the last approach identified by Obanure (1998) is the Mobilization approach. Mobilization he said, “is the process of pooling together, harnessing, activating, actualizing and utilizing potential human and material resources for the purpose of development. It is a process whereby human beings are made aware of the resources at their disposal and also motivated and energized to collectively utilize such resources for improving their spiritual and material well-being” Obanure (1998). An example of such an approach was the Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) launched by the General Obasanjo Military regime in 1976. According to Obanure, the launching of the programme was motivated by government’s realization that Nigeria as a nation, was lagging behind in food production for both domestic consumption and export purposes. The aim of the programme was to reawaken the citizens’ awareness and improve on our agricultural activities and enhance self-sufficiency in agricultural production (Obanure, 1998:3). The Obasanjo government encourage everybody to produce food. The strategy was to put all arable land into cultivation and to develop or increase backyard gardens and poultry farms through massive government financial and material assistance to farmers (Ujo 1999:120).

CONDITIONS NECESSARY FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT
Aziz (1978:114), asserted that the following conditions are necessary for rural development: More equitable distribution of land and other rural resources in order to give greater opportunity to the poorest segment of the rural population to meet their basic needs; Organization of rural producers and rural economic activities on cooperative or communal basis in order to ensure a fuller utilization of available physical and human resources; Diversification of the rural economy to provide additional employment opportunities and to improve the quality of life; An active policy of social services and improvement of social relations; Political and administrative capacity for the planning and implementation of community development strategy to provide linkages with the rest of the economy and protect the legitimate interest of the rural population.

The concepts of development according to economic scholars has many definitions. Rodney (1999:4 -5) defined it as a many sided process. They include at individual level, “increase skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being”. Therefore, sustainable development goes beyond economic indicators, and according to Todaro (1999:5) development is a multidimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system. This involves, in addition to improvement of income and output, radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes, customs and belief.
From the forgoing, sustainable development can only be brought about if the objectives of development are realized and effectively implemented. Therefore, for development to be sustainable, certain conditions must be met. These include continuous capacity of the various development institution to bring about growth both in the economic, social and political sectors; a continuous quantitative rise in Gross National Product; a continuous structural transformation of the economy; political capacity to implement developmental programs; high rates of social and ideological transformation and radical changes in institutional, social, administrative and economic structures to be able to cope with the new globalized competition. Sustainable development will therefore also mean a continuous improvement in the condition of living of the people, which is one of the main indices of development according to the improvement approach to rural development.

**DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN NIGERIA**

According to Ladele (2005) there have been several attempts by successive regimes in Nigeria at poverty reduction and rural development, the approaches have usually been determined by the interpretation given to rural development by the different regimes or interventionists. Notable among these programmes are: The 1976 Operation Feed the Nation: to teach the rural farmers how to use modern farming tools; 1979 Green Revolution Programme: to reduce food importation and increase local food production; 1986 Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI); 1987 National Directorate of Employment (NDE); 1993 Family Support Programme and the Family Economic Advancement Programme; 2001 National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) to replace the previously failed Poverty Alleviation Programme; 2004 National Economic Empowerments and Development Strategy. (NEEDS), meant to achieve poverty reduction through wealth creation, employment generation and value re-orientation.

**RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN CROSS RIVER STATE**

Over the years, different government administrations in Cross River State has embarked on several rural development programmes aimed at insuring sustainable development in these areas. This is due to the fact that majority of Cross Riverians live in the rural areas and therefore these rural development programmes would serve to uplift the living conditions of these ones. Improved rural productivity through rural programmes would also strengthen natural food security and reduce the trend in rural-urban migration.
At this juncture, it is necessary to examine these programmes in terms of their objectives, their implementations, obstacles, failures and or successes. This will provide avenues to making necessary recommendations. Among the various policies and programmes of rural development in Cross River State includes the Cross River Agriculture Development Programme (CRADP); FADAMA III Project; Cross River Agriculture and Rural Empowerment Scheme (CARES); IFAD/FGN/NDDC Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme; Songhai Cross River Initiative (SCRI); Cross River Farm Credit Scheme; Growth Enhancement Support Scheme (GES); Community and Social Development Agency

Cross River Agricultural Development Programme (CRADP): The Cross River State Agricultural Development Programme (CRADP) was established in 1997 via Edict No. 4 of 1997. The Programme is the principal vehicle with which the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources carries out Agricultural Extension Services to all categories of farmers both in the urban and rural areas. The major objectives of this programme is to provide and maintain an integrated Agricultural Extension Service in the State, initiate and develop Agricultural Programme in the State in line with the National Policy on Agriculture, enhance the development of Agriculture by improvement of farming methods, research and farm management techniques, initiate and administer projects that will raise the living standards of the rural population and carry out projects that will support increased Agricultural production in the State. Since its inception, the programme has and is currently implementing a National Programme on Food Security (NPFS), Root and Tuber Expansion Programme (RTEP), Pre-Emptive Management of Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD). These programmes helped in ensuring that agricultural produce is made available in commercial quantity for sale by rural farmers.

FADAMA III Project: This is a World Bank assisted project that covers the thirty-six states in the country and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). According to Cross River State Ministry of Agriculture report (2012), this project is targeted at subsistent farmers, the rural poor, pastoralists, fisher folks, processors, hunters, gatherers and other economic interest groups in the Agricultural Value Chain. The beneficiaries are encouraged to organize themselves in economic interest groups called Fadama User Groups (FUGs) and further form Fadama Community Association (FCAs) roughly within areas of political wards. The objective of the Project is to sustainably increase the income of land and water users. Resources of the Project are disbursed directly to the Fadama Community Associations. The Project uses Community Driven Development (CDD) Approach to provide assistance to Fadama User Groups (FUGs)/Fadama Community Association (FCAs)”. In addition to the aforementioned objectives of the project, it also ensures availability of inputs to farmers like seedlings and seeds, day old chick, fertilizers and organic manure etc.
**Cross River Farm Credit Scheme:** The aim of this program is to assist investors as well as farmers in the agricultural sector to get easy access to loan facility that will help them increase their performance in terms of output. Soft loans are usually extended to farmers and those engaged in farming activities. In 2015 fiscal year, the Cross River Farm Credit Scheme has concluded the disbursement of One Billion Naira (N1B) to over 600 farmers and food processors across the state under the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Commercial Agricultural Credit Scheme (CACS). The objective of this scheme is to fast track development of the agricultural sector in the state by providing credit facilities to commercial agricultural enterprises in the state; to enhance national food security by increasing food supply thereby reducing the prices of agricultural produce in the state and country; to increase access to affordable credit in agricultural production, so farmers can exploit the full potentials of the sector; to increase productivity of farmers thereby improving the living standards of rural dwellers and ensure sustainable supply of farm inputs for processing plants and agro-allied industries in the state.

**IFAD/FGN/NDDC Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme:** This programme derives its support and funding from “the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Cross River State Government. Its main focus is the reduction of poverty in the nine (9) Niger Delta States of Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, Abia, Imo and Ondo”. The strategy is to use community development approach in improving the living standards and quality of life of rural families. The target groups under this programme are the women and youths in rural dwellings. The programmes overall objective is to improve the standard of living of the rural poor with emphasis on women, youth and other vulnerable groups”. As it relates to Cross River state, its specific objective is to “improve the living standards of 43,000 poor rural families in Cross River State. Also, the programme is executed in 9LGAs and 27 communities selected across senatorial districts”.

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### Table 1: Names of LGA and Participating Communities in CBNRMP

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<th>Local government area</th>
<th>Participating communities</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
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<td>1.</td>
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<td>1. Lekpaduel</td>
<td>Of town construction of school hail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Ebom</td>
<td>construction of rice processing and</td>
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<td>3. Agbara</td>
<td>construction.</td>
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<td>2. Alangkel</td>
<td>3. Motorized boreholes drilled</td>
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<td>3. Mbenkpep</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Odukpani</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Obubra</td>
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<td>2. Ogurude</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Obudu</td>
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<td>3 motorized boreholes drilled</td>
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<td>2. Behuatian</td>
<td>3 motorized boreholes drilled.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Biase</td>
<td>1 Etono central</td>
<td>Construction of town hall</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Abini</td>
<td>Renovation, 8 classroom block construction of</td>
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<td>3. Idoma</td>
<td>4 classroom block.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Yakurr</td>
<td>1. Assiga</td>
<td>Construction of town hall</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Ekori Beach</td>
<td>Construction of 6 classroom block</td>
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<td>3. Agoi Ibami</td>
<td>Roofing of 4 classroom block.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Yala</td>
<td>1. Ngidi Wanakom</td>
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<td>3. Egbeja Yache</td>
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**Source:** 2010 DIDS Annual Report

From the Table above, CBNRMP which is one of the rural development programmes LGAs like Abi, Ogoja, Obubra, Obudu, Biase, Yakurr, Yala inspite of its challenges and shortcoming, thereby bringing sustanable development to these areas which is of its development activities. CBNRMP through its sustainable small scale infrastructural development activities have been able to impact on many LGAs and 14 communities for sustainable development.
Songhai Cross River Initiative (SCRI): This program came into existence with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between “the Cross River State government and the Songhai Regional Centre in Porto Novo, Republic of Benin to build an integrated World Class Centre for Agribusiness and Entrepreneurship in the state. The objective of this programme is to develop human, technical, infrastructural and organizational capacity in order to improve and scale up production; To provide services and training to young agro-entrepreneurs in the state on a sustainable basis; To develop well-defined processes and tools to support the establishment of Songhai farms in other local government areas; Improvement of an effective advocacy and knowledge sharing on small scale agribusiness and related SMI/SME in the state; To provide support to the State Government in promoting accessibility of youths and women to appropriate agribusiness and managerial skills required for their effective participation in wealth creation and investments in commercially viable agribusiness in all the rural communities in the state. To provide strength to the core administrative and technical capacities of all agricultural centres in the state to serve as the basis for development of a state-wide network of agricultural youth enterprises as well as support centres and linkages to rural development in the state. The target beneficiaries of the programme includes Unemployed youths, men and women already in agribusiness or those that plan to make agriculture their profession. The benefit of the programme has been Poverty reduction through sustainable agribusinesses, Rural youth empowerment, Wealth creation and reduction of unemployment in rural areas, Sustainable broad-based and all-inclusive development, Establishment of training institutions and business promotion centres, Reduction of vulnerability and increase in the adaptive capacity of rural youths.

Growth Enhancement Support Scheme (GES): The Growth Enhancement Support Scheme (GES) is a component of the Federal Government's Agricultural Transformation Agenda (ATA), designed specifically to provide cheap and affordable agricultural inputs like fertilizers and hybrid seeds to farmers in order to increase their yields per hectare and make it comparable to world standard. The Scheme planned to achieve its purpose by making use of electronic system and by encouraging private sector investment in the distribution and delivery of fertilizers and other critical inputs directly to farmers. This is in a bid to improve farmer's income, standard of living and food security.

Community and Social Development Agency: The Cross River State Community and Social Development Agency (CRSCSDA) is the implementing Agency for the Community and Social Development Project (CSDP) in Cross River State. CSDP is a scale-up of the Community Based Poverty Reduction Project (CPRP) which was a pilot project implemented in 8 states of the federation. CPRP closed on March 31, 2009 while CSDP became effective on April 1, 2009.
The Agency was founded by a law of the State House of Assembly 2009 and is funded by the World Bank and Cross River State government. CSDP which is currently implemented in over 27 states of the federation is a collaboration of the World Bank, State and Federal Government of Nigeria towards poverty reduction. It “utilizes the Community Driven Development (CDD) approach, a bottom-up development strategy which places the poor on the driver’s seat of development by giving them a voice in decision making for development. It is a participatory and socially inclusive approach which allows the poor to identify, design, part-finance, implement, manage and own assets created towards poverty reduction.

CHALLENGES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES
Even when policies and programmes have been put in place to ensure sustainable development in the rural areas, it is observed that government efforts towards development often come out unsuccessful. Larson (1987: 9) attributes it to the following reasons summarized as: setting of unattainable or unrealistic/vague goals that makes the programme unable to attract the interest of those it is meant to affect and is unworkable; Poor Implementation which occurs through a display of lack of concern for analyzing and implementing policies and programmes; Environmental Factors such as climatic in nature, topography, population, political, culture, social structure, technology etc that influence the formulation and implementation of such policies and work against its success; Bureaucratic

Problems in cases whereby conflicts of interest causes frictions between unit or departmental heads which can stall the programme; Inadequate Funding arising from overdependence on one source of revenue can cause economic programmes of the government to suffer; Communication Problem and political instability also leads to abandonment of viable programmes that would have been sustainable for rural development.

CONCLUSION
From the above analysis and data presentation, we can see that Cross River State government is serious about developing the rural areas. We have seen that Nigeria central government over the years have several development programmes in her effort to bridge the development gap between the urban areas and rural areas. Despite this laudable effort, there have been marked impediment to sustainable development in rural areas which has resulted in lack of essential services as electricity, pipe-borne water supply, good roads, and good medical services. The rural farmers still engaged in subsistence farming without any technological improvement and small scale industries as posited by the modernization approach to rural development. Moreover, these programme have not been able to attract able bodied men from the cities to rural areas as expected, as life in the rural areas has become unbearable every day and the growth and development envisaged have not been realized.
Therefore, for any meaningful development to take place in the rural areas, these programmes must be adequately funded. There is need for transparency in governance to check corruption. There is also a greater need for cooperation between the government, communal organizations and rural dwellers for support of these programmes. The study will like to conclude by recommending that all of the eighteenth local government areas of the cross river state should take a leave from the state government and establish a local government agency for grass root development to drive rural development in all corners of the state.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
To ensure sustainable development and the achievement of the objectives of rural development programmes in Cross River State, the following are recommended:

a. There must be proper mechanisms put in place to adequately supervise and monitor with a view to ensuring that policies and programmes embarked upon are duly implemented in local government areas across the state.

b. Before formulating any rural development programme, proper feasibility studies should be carried out in order to establish its suitability and sustainability to the rural dwellers that it is meant to affect.

c. Enlightenment of the rural community is very essential for them to understand that the policies/programmes are in their best interest.

d. An efficient communication channel that cut across all ministries, departments and agencies concerned with the policy would facilitate information dissemination.

e. Adequate funding and accountability is key to a success of any rural development program if it is to be sustainable.

f. Rural dwellers must be fully involved in the programme initiation stage through the execution and implementation stage to prevent it from being hijacked by the elite class and to make the programme acceptable by intended users, the locals.

g. There is need for a transparent government with the goal of curbing corruption.

REFERENCES


Ogunnowo & Oderinde (2012)” Sustainable Development and Management of Infrastructure for Effective Transformation of Rural Communities In Nigeria: Implications For Food Security” Journal Of Social Sciences 5(3), 87


