



THE IMPACT OF E-GOVERNMENT IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ADAMAWA STATE

ABSTRACT

The paper examines strategy and policies used by government in catapulting the use of e-government processes to improve and transform rural areas in Adamawa State by government, and how those policies can strengthen rural areas to identify and embrace opportunities, and also ease how fund are granted to the rural dwellers and the paper discovers government neglecting behind the adequate provision of relevant ICT equipment's to enable farmers and other small businesses have direct access to them, and giving opportunities to people in the urban areas to increase production in industries. Secondary source of data was used in this paper to analyze how government policies and programmes are geared towards linking them with government, and the paper recommends that supervision should be adequate through providing farming materials, bridge communication gap and the paper recommends that the act of mismanagement should be abolished by public bureaucrats, ensure adequate social services which ordinary rural dwellers cannot afford to provide in their localities.

Keywords: e-government, rural, transforming, policies, welfare, programme.

INTRODUCTION

The motive of people in Africa when discussed about rural area and people in it seems complete farmers, and it diverts people's thinking towards farming alone. This is so because rural areas are left with no other alternative from the transformation of developmental variables but always expect government for help, and that raw materials are tapped from them and are transformed in the urban cities for export and beautification of the urban centers who are professionals in the area of development and administration of public policy.

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Many people relates rural areas primarily to areas that have a relatively low population density compared to cities, areas where agriculture and related activities usually dominate the landscape and economy, and places where transport and communications need to cover relatively large distances making travel and service provision relatively difficult and costly. However, our concern also includes the towns (as opposed to cities) that are located in these areas and which are linked to them culturally and economically by acting as a focal point for people living in the surrounding areas - places where they can meet, exchange goods and services, and find transport to larger urban centers. Moreso, we are also interested to some extent in the semi-urban areas - the areas that lie on the fringes of the urban environment including the edge of major cities which can be developed through e-government modernization.

While the challenges facing urban and rural populations in developing countries have much in common, there are differences as well. The distinct challenges facing rural communities relate above all to the problems associated with e-facilities, natural resource-based livelihoods, low population densities, and poor communication systems, among others. These problems are a recurring theme in the examination of different conditions, challenges and processes in e-government and transforming rural development in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the incidence and severity of poverty will for some time continue to be higher in rural areas as compared with urban areas, so that even though the number of urban people in the world overtook the number of rural people sometime in 2010, the number of poor rural people remained higher than the number of poor urban people (IFAD 2010).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scholars in the areas of rural transformation through e-government have made it clear that workable policies to transform rural areas requires full government attention towards long term plan in harnessing raw materials and processing industries put in place similarly to good roads for transporting finished goods to cities for development and gross national income. The expression of rural development may also be used, however, to refer to processes of change in rural societies, not all of which involve action by e-government. In this case, the activities of rural development as a form of state intervention, must be considered simply as one of the forces concerned. Although it is one which has become of increasing importance to transform rural areas to link up with urban cities using e-government policies and allow rural people get access to receive agricultural loans, subsidized farm inputs and mechanized techniques. Harriss (1982).

The term "Rural Development" connotes to a distinct approach to interventions by the state in the economies of underdeveloped countries, and one which is at once broader and more specific than 'agricultural development'. It is broader because it entails much more than the development of agricultural production - for it is in fact a distinct approach to the development of the economy as a whole. It is more specific in the sense that it focuses (in its rhetoric, and in principle) particularly on poverty and inequality. Although there is a substantial overlap between the field of conventional agricultural economics and the concerns of rural development, the kinds of study required to understand the factors affecting rural Development are not contained within the discipline of agricultural economics. Not only does rural Development include attention to other aspects of rural economies such as labour, farming, rearing animals for local consumption, but the analysis of distributional issues demanding an inter-disciplinary approach in which the broader social and political factors interacting with economic processes are subjected to examination.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural and livestock production, fishing and aquaculture, forestry, mining, the production of renewable and non-renewable energy, and tourism are all at least partly rural activities. A small portion of manufacturing and services related to primary activities are also rural or dependent on rural areas while the food and fresh water that we depend on are rural products. Despite the widespread idea in some circles that the rural economy is a kind of antiquated machine, many of the most dynamic and innovative spaces for economic growth in the coming decades will be in rural areas: the bio-economy, new sources of renewable energy, environmental services, carbon capture services and the conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and resources, (FAO, 2018).

The rural areas in Adamawa State are relevant for development not only because they continue to be the home of a significant part of the nation's population, but also because of their many contributions in different sectors, ranging from food production, energy, environmental services, culture and identity, to the landscapes and natural resources such as water that are vital for life on the planet. As the rural sector lags behind in opportunities for development, it also generates negative externalities for the state, such as the proliferation of illegal economies, greater insecurity and violence, and the destruction of environmental resources.

E-GOVERNMENT AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS OF ADAMAWA STATE

E-governance is a set of technology-mediated processes that are changing both the delivery of public services and the broader interactions between citizens and government. Governance refers to the capacity of governing systems to co-ordinate policy and to solve public problems in a complex situation (Pierre, 2000). For OECD (2001) governance is concerned with how society collectively addresses and solves its problems and meets all needs. In particular, the existence of governance indicates that there are new and stronger networks between government and non-governmental actors (Stoker, 1998).

The concept conveys the idea that public decisions would remain less within hierarchically organized bureaucracy. For Parrado (2002), governance is a fashionable term that is used by most international organizations which, although providing different lists of principles, always give several items in common. The

European Commission considers that five principles underpin good governance: “openness, participation, accountability, effectiveness and coherence”. For the OECD, the good governance principles are: “respect for the rule of law; openness, transparency, and accountability to democratic institutions; fairness and equity in dealings with citizens, including mechanisms for consultation and participation; efficient, effective services; clear, transparent and applicable laws and regulations; consistency and coherence in policy formation; and high standards of ethical behaviour”.

The advent of e-government has provided new opportunities to enhance governance, which include the improvement of efficiency, new services, the enhancement of citizen participation, and the strengthening of the global information infrastructure (Bohman 2001). According to Clift (2003) e-government in governance seeks improving government decisions, increasing citizen trust in government, enhancing government accountability and transparency, accommodating the public in the information-age and involving stakeholders, NGOs, business, and interested citizen in new ways of meeting public challenges. All countries, except the U.K, hardly consider legislative mandates, political pressures, or the need to increase revenue as primary factors driving e-government. (Deloitte, 2000).

DEFICIENCY IN ADOPTING POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES OF E-GOVERNMENT FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ADAMAWA STATE

The Adamawa State rural development policies is vested in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development who coordinates agendas for development in line with the formulated policies that has occurred in the rural areas which regulates the past years. The aim of those plans were to remove statutory obstacles for regional rural development while at the same

time, allow for sustainable development, so that the characteristics, heritage and qualities of the rural settlement may be transformed to objectivities instead of peasants. This effort will emphasize agriculture's importance and its integration into the open space farming that characterizes the rural businesses.

The ministry gives direct funding to support such rural planning. Plans that receives assistance are master plans and their basic outlines. Typical plans include open spaces, stream improvement, tourism, and a biosphere region. Maintaining the character of the rural settlement and its legacy include the following points:

- i. Retaining cooperative agricultural frameworks and active councils.
- ii. Sustainable solutions for agricultural resource improvements and development.
- iii. Non-agriculture related productions that preserve agricultural products.
- iv. Development of rural and agro-tourism of agricultural activities.
- v. Organic demographic growth that is manifested in expansion of already existing settlements while strengthening both veteran and new communities.
- vi. Quality of life in the rural development area through an improved project.
- vii. Renewal of the rural tradition – emphasizing the creation of a community that preserves its heritage, reflects its past and the history of its development as the basis for its growth.

Transforming the rural areas into development do not necessarily geared towards improving agricultural activities and rearing animals for consumption in the nation, but also creating a strong and viable marketplace where these goods produced can be sold and preserved substantively. This can be seen in the bulleting from the developed countries where tomatoes, fish, vegetables are preserved for a long period of time so that it does not become waste. This form of storage methods are some of the transformation that is expected to be established in the rural areas and this is the fact that there is enough space which can capacitate the industries in the rural areas, and creating job opportunities in the rural areas forcing the rural youth to rethink of migrate to urban centers, searching for greener pasture when the green opportunities can be transferred closer to them.

In Adamawa State, there are rural productions that have been existing and needs to be improved in the management and production aspects, which include the Sugar farm in Numan, animal feed mill in Michika, Benue fishing activities in both Yola and Numan, and some private sectors who are directly associated with government. The dilemma of whether to build new institutional arrangements for rural transformation, or to continuing to patch up what we have now, is expressed in many diverse questions. For example:

How do we promote more public-private collaboration?

How can the sectors whose actions are relevant for agricultural, food and rural development be coordinated?

How can socio-environmental conflicts be managed and resolved?

How are attributions and relationships between national governments and territories defined, and how can a balance be achieved between sectoral and territorial development?

How can urban-rural linkages be strengthened?

How can private investment be encouraged, and what are the limits in the face of environmental, social or territorial threats?

How can increasingly powerful new economic, financial and technological actors be regulated given their important impact on agriculture, food systems and rural areas of the state, but which are alien to them and are often actors whose decisions and strategies are beyond the reach of national governments?

How can certain countries be prevented from imposing conditions that violate international agreements and that impede or limit the access of our producers and entrepreneurs to their markets?

What space and legal recognition do the institutions, practices and ancestral customs of indigenous peoples have in our societies?

How should countries coordinate to govern trans-boundary processes, such as migration, climate change, violence in rural areas derived from illegal economies, or pollution of the oceans and depredation of fisheries?

If these questions are answered in such a way that they provide solution to the development of rural areas and enhance the information technology used to transform the urban areas, it will certainly increase the participation of youth in developing rural transformation against the migration to urban centers searching for what they called “green cola job”.

CHALLENGES OF E-GOVERNMENT IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ADAMAWA STATE

It is known that rural development is faced with many challenges right from the socio-political, economic and development sphere. This is so because rural areas were left with no other but areas where harnessing and mining, crop production and degradation is occurring. Quality education and standard hospitals are not commonly established in the rural areas in Adamawa State because of lack of attention by government and political offices which influence and diverts the attention of most politicians, coupled with inadequate intervention of federal government in assisting the developing rural areas and the people in realizing e-government potentials, (Survey, 2021).

A survey study reveals that if projects that were intended to be established in the rural areas, joined with the government enterprises, since they are closed to raw materials environment can be actualized, they can source nearly 20% of income to Adamawa State government. This is so because most of the production enterprises of government in Adamawa State are demanded by the people in the state and the environment, just like what is derived in Baga local government in Borno State for the fish production process. It cost government not much to revamp those areas and bring them to action, looking at the demand of the society in food, animal production and processing, modernization of schools and luxuries, etc.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper having studied and make critical observation on the impact of e-government in the transformation of rural areas, there are points to note on the implementation of the e-government agency in the rural areas where government can benefit and improve the standard life of the rural people, using modernization model of development, which connotes the transformation of the people from one level to another, putting in mind that the rural people contribute nearly 40 to 50% of nation's income. It will be of importance to reactivate those enterprises to enable Adamawa State recover its sources of income and create job opportunities to the citizens, thereby boosting the strength of the state's economy.

The paper also recommends the following:

- i. Adamawa state should create websites that can give access between government and people of the rural areas to enhance communication.
- ii. Public Private Partnership should be encouraged to improve work efficiency in rural and urban areas of the state.
- iii. Adamawa state government should also emphasize capital projects in the rural areas and engaged in searching for raw materials for export.
- iv. More ICT centers be established in the rural areas to link urban/rural areas to ease feedback objectives.
- v. Agricultural bank is strongly recommended to enable extensive farmers acquire loans to boost their chances of producing more to the economy with low interest.

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