

**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY BASED YOUTH ORGANISATIONS'  
INVOLVEMENT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN OSUN STATE,  
NIGERIA**

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### CERTIFICATION

This research project written by AYINDE Julius Olatunde has been read, approved and adjudged to meet part of the requirements for the award of Ph.D. Degree in Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria.

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### **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to the Holy Trinity, my mother, my beloved wife and our loving children.

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## ABSTRACT

The study assessed the involvement of Community Based Youth Organisations (CBYOs) in rural development activities in Osun State by identifying and categorising the formation, characteristics and functions of the organizations, types of project executed and determining their level of involvement and the factors influencing their activities. This was with a view to providing information on CBYOs in rural areas and the extent to which they are involved in rural development activities in the State.

A multistage sampling procedure was used to select respondents from the three agricultural zones (Osogbo zone; Ife-Ijesha zone; and Iwo zone) in Osun State. At the first stage, 40 percent of the total number of Local Government Areas (LGAs) from each of the three zones was randomly selected, five from Osogbo, four from Ife-Ijesha and three from Iwo. In stage two, the first three rural communities having more numbers of CBYO were purposively selected from each of the LGAs, making thirty-six (36) rural communities while in the third stage, 40 percent of the CBYOs in each of the selected communities were randomly selected. At the final stage, systematic random sampling technique was used to select the respondents using group registers as sampling frame with a random start at an interval of 3. In all, 431 respondents were interviewed using pretested and validated structured interview schedule. Also, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informants interview were employed to elicit qualitative data such as information on communities that have larger percentage of CBYOs, actual and locations of the projects executed by CBYOs. Appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

The results showed that the majority (91.9%) of CBYOs was non-religious, 50.9 percent focused social development and 25.7 percent on educational development. Sixty percent were established between 2001 and 2010 with the mean membership size/strength of  $\pm 23$ . Above average (52.6%) of the CBYOs executed up to two social projects in the last five years, among such projects were sign-posts, deep-well and distribution of writing materials in schools. The mean age of CBYOs members was  $\pm 24.32$  years. The majority (81.4%) of the respondents were male with average household size of  $\pm 6$  people. Reports of FGDs and key informants interviewed revealed that CBYOs executed most of the projects they claimed. Furthermore, membership size/strength ( $\beta = 0.070$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ), criteria used for membership admission ( $\beta = 0.164$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ), years of existence ( $\beta = 0.030$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and organisation sources of income ( $\beta = 0.241$ ;  $p \leq 0.05$ ), among others, would increase the level of involvement by their corresponding values when their values are varied by one unit. The T-values show that only two of these explanatory variables contribute significantly to the level of involvement of CBYOs in rural development activities. These significant variables are: years of existence ( $\beta = 0.030$ ;  $P \leq 0.05$ ), and membership size/strength ( $\beta = 0.070$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ). More so, household size ( $\beta = 0.284$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) and project cost ( $b = 0.863$ ;  $p \leq 0.01$ ) were found to have significantly contributed to the level of involvement of CBYOs in rural development activities. Among the factors contributive to effective involvement of CBYOs in rural development were personal development (25.1%) and social contact influence (19.74%).

It was concluded that the CBYOs were involved in community development activities in rural areas of the State to about 65 percent.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the study

Rural areas offer a lot of opportunities, especially to young people, among which are: stable social structures, close links to decision makers, people who know how to bring ideas into reality and an atmosphere full of creativity (Titilola and Igben, 1992; Goellner-Scholz, 2001; ILO, 2001; World Bank, 2006). They need these opportunities to take responsibility, to identify themselves with their home villages, to influence their environment and their society. Youths in any society are known to be the leaders of tomorrow; hence, their role in sustainable national development cannot be over-emphasised. But they have been given less attention by the Nigerian government by not properly integrating them into the process of national development (Seider, 1995; Torimiro, 1999; Kibwika and Sermana, 2002; Sermana, 2002; UNESCO, 2002; Giwa, 2008; NAYES, 2008). The most important thing is to trust young people, to offer them places and resources to work out their own ideas and help them to realise their dreams.

Torimiro *et al.* (2003), Torimiro and Dionco-Adetayo (2005) and Akpomovia (2010) expressed concern on what the future may look like in the rural areas if the youths are not strategically motivated to stay and organise themselves to bring about rural development so that the entire country may witness an era of sustainable rural development. For sustainable community development to be achieved in Nigeria, involvement of youth organisations towards rural development is an imperative. Hence, youth organisations must discover the need to change their own misdirected priorities, shed their dependency thinking, gain skills and



knowledge for self-empowerment and conscientisation in order to enhance sustainable development in rural areas.

One of the main challenges of sustainable development is to achieve solidarity between generations, including the generations to come. Commonly, sustainable development is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs” (ILO, 2001; YJF, 2006 and Bennell, 2007). Moreover, youth organisations are central actors in the work for sustainable development. Youths are one of the keys in progressing sustainable development regardless of whether it is at a global, national or local level, and regardless of whether the focus is social, economic, environmental, cultural, or a combination of all these elements.

Young people are agents of change and are essential to sustainability of any national development efforts. However, the Nigerian situation presently is that, while most countries are making progress in the implementation of international recommendations for youth development and are reaping the benefits of such implementations, the Nigerian youths are still grappling with the effects of poor economic growth and unprecedented rise in unemployment. This is in addition to the huge challenge of finding a place in the political and socio-economic development of the nation (Torimiro, 1999 and Otumara, 2000).

A number of challenges have risen from this situation, which could be adequately addressed in order to improve the situation of the Nigerian youth. These challenges include; increased incidence of youth crime, HIV/AIDS prevalence, human trafficking, drug abuse, unemployment and underemployment, poverty and hunger, lack of participation of young people in decision making process, lack of patriotism and commitment to nation building and increasing out of school phenomenon (UNESCO, 2002). Having identified the situation and challenges of

the youth in Nigeria in relation to the global community, the appointment of a minister of state in charge of youth affairs in 2002 and the eventual creation of a ministry solely responsible for youth development in 2007 was realised. The ministry proposed a holistic framework for youth development that will encompass various options for resolutions arising from the dominant global youth development, which is youth empowerment for sustainable development. Youth empowerment, as defined by Torimiro *et al.* (2000); YJF (2006); Giwa (2008) and Okorie *et al.* (2009) is “creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others”. This view is in consonance with Chamala’s (1990) submission that “telling young adults what to do provoke reaction, but showing them triggers the imagination, involving them gives understanding and empowering them leads to commitment and action”. According to Chamala (1990) the term “empowerment” means to enable, to allow, or to permit and can be viewed as both self-initiated and initiated by others.

Youth represent the future and hope of every country. The high returns on resources invested in young people today have both immediate and long-term benefits. Where they exist and are functioning well, rural youth programmes play an important role in building skills of individual young people; strengthening families and communities; and working towards sustainable agricultural and rural development as a major contributor to the over all progress of a country (Bie, 1996 and Oyatoye, 2006).

The agricultural sector in Nigeria has witnessed a considerable high level of evolution within the last three decades. This was occasioned primarily by the desire to increase food production in

order to enhance self-sufficiency and empower the rural youth economically. Nigeria as a developing country has to develop its agriculture if it is to be reckoned within the committee of nations. There is a decline in agricultural production

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