

Developmental Projects and National Development in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

A nation like Nigeria endowed with a lot of resources (capital, human and mineral) should see project delivering or execution as the greatest key to national economic development. Unemployment is as a result of lack of developmental projects. This review therefore shall analyse the relevance of developmental projects in national development to see how it has effect on Nigeria's national development can be enhanced through effective utilization of the country's available resources. The study reveals that the relevance of developmental projects provides a lot of solutions to the problem of national development especially in the area of wealth distribution and purpose discovering as well as skill development. It shows that the role of productivity in project delivery is affecting everything concerning the nation and development. The study concludes that national economic development starts from credible government whose leaders create conducive environment for effective operation especially developmental projects which can be done effectively by project leadership or managers.

Keywords: *National Development, Productivity, Leadership, Government, EIA, Project Delivery.*

INTRODUCTION

Project can be defined as an on-going or planned activity that is presupposed to react to the changing circumstances in a required manner and fit to the appraised before investing (Rao, 2006). Project is part of life as long as the world remains and man dwell therein. Life itself is a project. When thinking about project, the things that quickly come to mind are resources and management. That is, how human, capital and mineral resources can be successfully managed and transformed. Since, everything is ready as resources to man, all that is needed is to think and convert these resources to his benefit. To convert means to commence a project as threshold of environment. The level or kind of people in a nation determines the kind of project that will be in operation for delivery that will transform the nation's economy. It is all about how empowered, sound minded, intelligent, skilful, diligent, hardworking and tenacious the people are. The two factors that contributed most vitally to the economic progress of a nation are the quality of its people, and the diversity and riches of its natural resources (Jain and Reo, 2011). There are projects gearing toward

national development and some gearing towards environmental beatification with high cost of maintenance. Project is a medium where the mind-set of people can be changed; positive or negative impact on their mind-set, since environment makes people and leaders determine what happens to the environment. The role of credible leaders will be needed; leaders that have both short and long term vision with good project management skills. The kind of project going on in an environment will determine what happens to that environment; socially, morally, economically and technically. It also determines the kind of investors that it will attract. In every process of project delivery, new things are discovered, challenges spring up, and potentials are discovered. This shows the need for knowledge for solving problems since responsibility will come up and finally makes one fulfilled and challenged.

The myth of growth and development is so entrenched that the country's history passes for the history of development strategies of growth models from colonial time up to date (Tolu and Abe, 2011). In spite of development strategies put in place by successive government and sometimes with good intentions, all attempts to generate meaningful development proved futile. Though over the years, a lot of factors have combined together to fetter nation's development, especially the environment and the mind-set of the people in the environment. Due to the fact that environment makes people, the rate in which poverty and corruption increases the plans and strategies will need to be technically approached and implemented. When it comes to technical approach and implementation, project management skill is appreciated (Aremu, 2003), Nigeria seems the only country where virtually all nations and models of development has been experimented.

Two years after independent, the first national development plan policy was formulated between 1962 and 1968 with the objective of development opportunity in health, education and employment and improving access to those opportunities. The plan failed because fifty per cent of resources needed to finance the plan was to come from external source and only fourteen percent of the external finance was received (Ogwumike, 1995). It is time we appreciate what we have and plan towards them then depending less on external sources of fund to implement our plans by using what we have to plan and implement our plan, ideas and implementation. Living at the mercy of other nations is living a life of slavery and enslaving the nation for the second time. Developmental projects will play a vital role in national development especially a nation like Nigeria endowed with diverse resources with different mind-set and believe with different ethnic group. Developmental project will be well appreciated and achievable if project management approach is used and also managed by a project manager or a leader with project management skill. The problems of insecurity, mind-set, power [electricity], unemployment, transportation, poverty, corruption, fund management, agriculture, and production can be solved by carrying out developmental projects, plan, and design and executed by project management experts. Therefore, this work reviews the role of developmental projects in Nigeria's national development. The aim is to see how Nigeria's national

development can be enhanced through effective utilization of the country's available resources.

The Role of Developmental Projects in National Development

According to Rao (2006), necessity is the mother of invention. This sounds rhythmic with projects as they are the roots of needs and wants. Those needs may be social, political, economic, commercial, and technical or environmental that drives the actions of entrepreneurs to pursue some creative actions. These actions make a tremendous impact both on the macro and micro perspectives of mankind. In fact, most project ideas are chalked out under oracular weather and groomed to reality through evolutionary formulations. Projects are aimed at developing society in such ways as: increasing employment opportunities for youths, increasing the standard of living of the society by providing civic facilities; reducing inequalities of income distribution, improving or protecting the environment, and facilitating the rural poor with minimum necessities of life (water, electricity, transport, shelter).

Some others are oriented towards commercial and industrial development such as establishing a new industry, effecting technology transfer from advanced countries, setting standard for competing in the domestic and global arena, producing high quality goods and services etc. Another set of projects may be involved in Research and Developmental (R & D) activities. R & D projects help in identifying the problems and finding out innovative solutions or inventing new designs or methods to overcome old and recurring problems of a specific region. To manage a project effectively or to become effective manager in project management one has to possess the quality of a psychologist.

In carrying out a project, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is vital and central to its success. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a process designed to ensure that potentially significant environmental impacts are satisfactorily assessed and taken into account in the planning, design, authorisation and implementation of all relevant types of actions (Jain and Reo, 2011). Also, there is need for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process which is forward looking and seeks to prevent adverse environment impacts from taking place rather than fixing or cleaning up existing environmental problem caused by past actions (Shrivastava, 2011). Based on EIA report, decision makers take decision to accept or reject the project, this is always good when the project is at planning or design stage for the purpose of waste of resources, cost and time.

Developmental Projects and Productivity

When a project is well designed, planned and analysed in the areas of risk, cost and EIA well carried out by experts, and project managers with good knowledge of the project it is that there is certainty of wealth (money) distribution, purpose and potential discovering, unleashing and unveiling the hidden potentials, skill development, leadership potential, insecurity reduction, change of mind-set, nation beautification,

poverty and corruption reduction, managerial skill, job opportunity (employment), economic development; increased GDP, reduction of political interest and healthy life and living for the people. Most times implementing our strategies or plan come out of self-interest and result to leadership, management and knowledge problem. These problems highlighted are embedded in project management quality. The problem of leadership, management and knowledge are some of the major challenges facing Nigeria. These challenges are as a result of self-interest and the adverse effect is on society despite the diverse resources.

Productivity is an index that measures outputs (goods and services) relative to the inputs (labour, materials, energy, capital and others) used to provide them (Ubani, 2012). The major problem with productivity is that it means many things to many people. Economists determines it from Gross National Product (GNP), manager view it as cost cutting and speed up, engineers think of it in terms of more output per hour. But generally accepted meaning is that it is the relationship between goods and services provided and the resources employed in their production (Ubani, 2012). The solution to monetary circulation is for the nation to embark on developmental projects. Projects create productive assets.

Since projects convert resources that lie idle into productive assets, project act as prime movers of economic development of any country. In the process of creating productive assets, projects optimize the process of resource allocation. It is not all about the amount of money paid to an individual but what the money can buy: the value the money entails. The value of money in any nation depends on their productivity and how they are able to manage their resources and develop them by refining their resources and moulding the by-products for other productive ventures. Recycling can help a lot in resource management and the use of by-products. Economic growth is a necessary but not sufficient condition of economic development (Dwivedi, 2009). Money is not just meant to be spent on anything, it is wise to invest it. Carrying out developmental projects is investing the nation's money in the life of the generation on born. Money kept in bank or in the hand of someone devalues per second.

CONCLUSION

When developmental projects are going on, naturally conducive environment will emerge and encourage investment and entrepreneurship which will help in developing the nation. Every nation needs development partners to be able to witness total development. When the environment is not conducive, the public are left alone to be frustrated and limited which will definitely affect the economy of the nation for a nation collapses when an individual is collapsing (Okorafor, 2008). Conducive environment for operation can yield and increase entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship was defined by the entrepreneurship centre at Miami University of Ohio as the process of identifying, developing and bringing a vision to life. The vision may be an innovative idea, an opportunity, or simply a better way to do something. The end

result of this is the creation of a new venture, formed under conditions of risk and considerable uncertainty. The help of a project management is to ensure that every resource is well assigned to the right proportion done by the project manager. A project manager is to signify a person who has the overall control of the project and shoulders responsibilities for its execution and performance. Therefore, he is thoroughly involved in planning the work and monitoring, directing and leading the participants and seeks to reach the project goal in time, cost, and quality conundrum. The project manager is either a specialist or a person having predominantly technical background with sufficient experience, exposure, and expertise on multifaceted, multidimensional and multi-disciplinary projects (Rao, 2006). Therefore, there is need for project leadership quality. Leadership quality if well-handled will lead a nation to her promised land while project leadership will transform a nation like Nigeria.

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