

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENTS' WATER MANAGEMENT POLICIES IN THE LAKE CHAD BASIN

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria controls a substantial geographical area of Chad Basin sharing it with the neighboring countries of Chad Republic, Cameroon, and Niger Republic of African continent. Nigerian Governments' water management policies have over the years centered on the activities of the River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs) that embarked on massive irrigation projects, domestic water supply, improvement of navigation, hydroelectric power generation amongst several others. Despite some of the advantages of the River Basin Development Projects, the activities relating to this policy have negative consequences, more especially on the downstream communities of the affected areas. For instance, the policies have not been able to increase the proportion of irrigated agriculture areas that would make possible two, and sometimes three, cropping seasons in one year by reducing the country's dependence on rain-fed agriculture. On this strength, the paper previews the strength and weaknesses of Nigeria's water management policies. The study argues that the Nigerian Federal Government's wrong grafting of foreign ideas into local realities was a major factor for the failures. Therefore, this paper is of the view that the unintended beneficiaries of the projects have tended to be multinational companies that engaged in design, construction, and maintenance of the dams and its reservoirs. The paper utilizes the theory of environmental degradation and socio-economic impact assessment model and calls for proper consideration and utilization of the two theories while coming up with new projects in future.

Keywords: Lake Chad; Nigeria; Government; Water; Policies; River Basin; and Projects

1.0 Introduction

The Lake Chad hydrographic Basin is theoretically 2,381,635 Km², but the active basin is only 966,955 Km² and it is characterized by wind erosion, silting, drought, and desertification. The affluent of Lake Chad within Nigeria consist of the Komadugu Yobe and the Ngadda and Yedseram systems. It is generally considered that Nigerian sources contribute less than 10%

to the overall waters of the Lake Chad (Olofin E.A 1993).

The conventional basin exhibits a socio-historical unity based on the history shared by the groups, some of which straddle national boundaries. The main language used in the region (Kanuri) reflects the political linkages during the pre and post colonial periods. The old states, such as Kanem, Bornu, the Peul

(Fulani) Empire of Sokoto, Wadai, and Baghirmi contributed to the population distribution in the Conventional Basin (Connah G. 1981).

Agriculture is the main economic activity of approximately 60% of the basin population, with the most common crops being cotton, groundnuts, sorghum, cassava, millet, rice, and onions. Most of the farming in the drainage basin is rain-fed, harvested by hand and cultivated without the use of fertilizers and other agro-chemicals. Mixed farming is widely practiced and rice is grown using both traditional and modern methods. Millions of people, particularly in Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and Nigeria, depend on the lake for most of their economic activities and livelihood (Olofin E.A 1993).

Unfortunately, there are a number of important historical changes in relation to the existing situation in the Lake Chad draining basin. These changes came about because of climate changes resulting from rainfall deficit and reduced runoff in the major rivers that flow into the Lake. This gave birth to a considerable shrinking in the area extent of the Lake Chad. These developments further gave chances for lowering groundwater table levels, declines in perennial vegetation, and increases in vulnerability to soil erosion. In addition, over the past few decades, the region has experienced a series of devastating droughts and animal diseases.

In view of the above developments in the basin, the Government of Nigeria after serious feasibility study of her sector resorted to River Basin Development Programme (RBDP) that embarked on massive irrigation. The idea was a borrowed policy from Asia and the contract that consisted of the design, construction, and maintenance of the dams and the reservoirs were awarded to multinational companies. However, the River Basin Development Authorities (RBDAs), which were intended to

reduce high levels of instability in crop production, urban water supply, hydroelectric power generation and fisheries projects in the country, have ended up in producing unintended negative consequences such as undue focus on large-scale dams with their heavy capital and management intensity that have threatened their sustainability. Therefore, the study is of the view that the activities of the RBDAs are an illusion that benefited the multinational companies more than the country. The negative consequences of the several dams constructed in the nation affected the downstream communities by destroying the means of livelihood of millions of rural dwellers in the affected Lake Chad Basin areas.

The study concludes that the assessment of water management policies in Nigeria is essentially a history of large capital projects, which has often been executed without much comprehensive assessments of their effects either on downstream users or on the environment. Although, some positive results were recorded in the areas of urban water supply, hydropower generation and irrigation farming, this benefited the upstream, water users at the expense of the downstream users. Similarly, the nature and extent of damages done to the natural environment are too worrisome and the amount of capital invested can hardly be imagined when one quantify the success so far achieved.

2.0 History of Water Management Policies in the Nigerian Sector of the Lake Chad Basin

The Nigerian Government parlance, water resources are “concurrent”, that is they are the responsibility of Federal, State and Local Government bodies. At the Federal level, water management policies are generally concentrated around the activities of the (RBDAs). However, the utilization of water and

its resources in Nigeria began since the colonial era. For instance in 1949, an irrigation division was established within the department of agriculture in northern protectorate. Also in the early 1950s, the Bagali region of Niger Republic saw the beginning of rice schemes and simple flood control. Hydrological stations were set up in the Lake Chad region, leading to pilot irrigation schemes on the Yobe and Ebeji rivers in 1956. Hydrology was also established as a division of Agriculture in Nigeria in the late 50s. At the same time a Niger Delta Development Authority was created, which later became a model of the RBDA system. Therefore, the idea of the river basin development in Nigeria could be traced to the early 1960s, but at the tail end of the colonial rule in Nigeria, feasibility studies were carried out, leading to the commissioning of irrigation projects around the Lake (Kyari M. and Iliya A.G. 2012)

Moreover, after the drought of 1973-1975 that affected most of the Sahelian region, the government planned for a comprehensive irrigation and rural development programme. Hence, passed the RBDAs Decree No. 32 and 33 of 14th August 1973 to give legal backing to the establishment of the Chad and Sokoto – Rima RBDAs. Subsequently, the RBDAs decree No 25 of 15th June 1976 and the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority Decree No 37 of 3rd August 1976 was promulgated (Bashir L.I. 1986).

Therefore, Federal Ministry of Water Resources was established in 1976, but it had a somewhat chequered history, It was conjoined with Agriculture to form an expanded Federal Ministry of Agriculture (FMA). Apart from the Ministry itself, other agencies have some responsibility for water resources. The National Water Resources Institute (NWRI) is an agency under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, which was

established in 1978 in Kaduna to provide training in water engineering (Wreca 1977).

The Federal Government approved the division of Niger Basin Development Authority into Upper and Lower Niger Basin Development Authority in 1994. These decrees created eleven (11) River Basin Authorities. The RBDAs include the Sokoto-Rima Basin, Sokoto; Hadejia-Jema'are Basin, Kano; the Lake Chad Basin, Maiduguri; the Upper Benue Basin, Yola; the Lower Benue Basin, Makurdi and the Cross River Basin, Calabar. Others are the Anambra-Imo Basin, Owerri; the Niger Basin, Ilorin; the Niger Delta Basin, Port Harcourt; the Benin-Owena Basin, Benin City and the Oshun-Ogun Basin, Abeokuta (FAO/CP 1991).

Before the establishment of the RBDAs, irrigation development was handled by State Irrigation Department (SIDs), under the State Ministry of Agriculture. When the Federal Government establishment a separate Ministry of Water Resources it also encouraged the states to follow. The advent of RBDAs eclipsed the role of State Irrigation Departments. Pre-existing bodies, such as those responsible for Lake Chad and Sokoto-Rima basins were incorporated into the system. It could be recall that, the positive result obtained from the feasibility study led to a large-scale irrigation project that gave birth to the commencement of the Chad Basin Development Authority Projects in the Nigerian Sector of the Lake Chad. But with the amendment of Decree No. 35 of 1987 readjusted the boundaries to cover parts of Adamawa north and redefined the statutory functions of the Authority to make it a Water Development Agency. During an interview with Engineer Bunu Sheriff Musa had this to say:

"The Authority's area of jurisdiction covers the whole of Borno state and Yobe state and parts of Northern Adamawa

state-from Maiha to Madagali Local Government Areas covering (7) local Government Areas. The lead Office is located at Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State while project offices are established in New Marte, Ngala, Baga, and Gora in Southern Borno state, Potiskum and Gashua in present day Yobe state and Michika in Adamawa state. He added that the Authority has multiple objectives; its primary function is execution of projects aimed at water resource and agriculture development covering the entire Borno, Yobe, and parts of Adamawa States. The total land area covers over 136,000 square Kilometers, which is about 15% of the total land area of the country.” (Engineer Bunu S. M. 2015)

In the First place, the authority’s main objectives in the statutory areas of operation are to engage in a comprehensive development of both surface and underground water resources for multi-purpose use with particular emphasis on the provision of irrigation water for crops as well as portable water, the control of flood and erosion and watershed management.

Secondly, the construction, operation and maintenance of dams, dykes, polders, boreholes, irrigation and drainage systems and other works necessary for the achievements of the Authority’s functions and handover to farmers all land to be cultivated under the irrigation scheme.

Thirdly, the construction, operation, and maintenance of infrastructural services such as roads linking project sites.

Fourthly, development and keeping of up to date comprehensive water resources master plan that will identify all water resources requirement within the Authority’s area of operation, through adequate collection and collation of water resources socio-economic and environmental data.

Fifthly, regulating navigation and fishing on the Lake Chad. Resettle persons affected by the works and scheme specified above.

Finally, to develop plantations and ranches for the production of food and other crops and livestock and to lease such plantations and ranches to private farmers or associations for fee to be determined by the Authority. Indeed, its corporate objective is to improve people’s living conditions on a sustainable basis (I. L. Bashir 1998):

Essentially, the functions are based mainly on the economic activities around Borno State- within the context of agriculture, fishing, livestock rearing, and development of various craft industries. When the Authority investigated the agricultural resources around the Lake, it embarked on experimental projects for the production of rice, wheat, and cotton. To achieve this objective, heavy planned projects were carried out under South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP): Stage 1; South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP): Stage 2; Baga Polder Project (BPP), Alau Dam (AD); and Flood Control Project (FCP) (Longe E.O., et’ al. 2010).

The South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP) is the largest irrigation project of the Authority and it is situated at about 120 kilometers North East of Maiduguri, the Borno State Capital. This project is planned to irrigate 67,000 hectares of land and it is being undertaken in three (3) stages i.e. stage I with 22,000 hectares, stage II with 27,000 hectares and stage III with 18,000 hectares The project registered laudable achievement in the areas of rice and wheat production and provided employment opportunities to the dwellers of the region during its periods of operation. Although, some of the staff still exists, despite the non-functioning of the project and problems of limited funds that rendered them virtually idle. (Peter P.E. 1978).

The South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP) stage 2 is located at Ngala in Ngala Local Government Area of Borno State and it is about 140 kilometers from Maiduguri. The project is aimed at developing 27,000 hectares of irrigable land out of which 4,000 hectares is developed with irrigation infrastructures. Water for irrigation is being drawn from SCIP stage I through Sandridge pumping station, which is a booster station (Peter P.E. 1978).

The Baga Polder Project (BPP) is one of the Authority's viable projects. It was taken over from the then North Eastern Government under Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources in 1975. It is situated at about 200 kilometers North of Maiduguri. The Authority constructed a 14 kilometers intake channel and a 32 kilometers dyke to draw water from the Lake Chad and to protect the polder area of the project from being flooded respectively (Alhaji Muhammad A. 2015)

Alau Dam is situated about 22 kilometers along the Maiduguri-Bama Road of Borno State. It has four (4) spillway gates and one bottom outlet. The dam has an Intake Tunnel of 134 meters length and 3 meters diameter at the end of which is a bifurcation chamber from where water for both Maiduguri Township and the Jere Rice Scheme would be pumped. Alau dam project commenced in 1984 but work did not start in earnest until 1986. The dam was initially proposed to supply water to the 8,000 hectares Jere Bowl Rice Scheme. The depletion in the underground water led to the restriction of the water supply to only metropolitan Maiduguri. This dam is fed by the rivers of Ngadda and Yadseram (Sheriff G. 2018).

As part of its control of the environment, the Chad Basin Development Authority has constructed a number of Flood Control Projects. These include the Ngaddabul Erosion control phase I & II, Galtimari, Polo Erosion control, Ngelzerma Erosion control, Sambisa

Erosion control, Nguru/Hadejia wetland Erosion control, and Gashua Erosion control phase I & II and Potiskum Flood Control Projects (Alhaji Muhammad A. 2015)

Apart from the RBDA System, there are also Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs) in each state, set up with International Bank for Rehabilitation and Development (IBRD) funding. The Agricultural Development Projects, which formerly dealt mainly with rain fed agriculture, became involved in irrigation in the early 1980's. Their approach to irrigation concentrates on small systems – *Fadama* development and encouraging greater private participation.

Nevertheless, *Fadama* Project (FP) is also a part of the activities of the River Basin Development Projects in the Lake Chad area of Nigeria. In Nigeria *Fadama* is a Hausa word meaning a valley-bottom, floodplain or a low land around a river that floods or becomes wet when the river is high'. In other words, the term "*Fadama*" is refers for irrigable land, usually low-lying plains under laid by shallow aquifers found along major river systems (Turner B. 1977).

Therefore, a World Bank assisted National *Fadama* Development Project is among the recent Nigerian government agricultural projects. They have pioneered farmer-managed pumping systems with pumps owned by farmers, and drilling (for wash bores and tube wells), done by the Agricultural Development Project.

The objective of the project is to increase the incomes of *fadama* land and water resource users to reduce rural poverty, increase food security, as well as contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

3.0 The Shortcomings of the River Basin Development Authorities Schemes

A number of factors militated against the successful running of the RBDAs. A major challenge started from the initial plan of the project which is dominated by western conception of agricultural development. This is to say that the plans were imposed on the government. Same project was also enforced to the rural dwellers without due consultations. Local populations who bear heavy social costs of the developments including loss of homes, fertile farm lands, pasture lands and fishing grounds, are not usually consulted in any of the critical decision making phases of project planning, implementation, management and evaluation (Sheriff G. 2018),

Other militating factors include policy discontinuity, inadequate funding due to government dwindling revenue and lack of understanding and focus on its core mandate. For instance, the sacking of the Shehu Shagari's administration in the military coup of 1983, the new military government paid little or no attention to the basins, particularly regarding continuous and adequate funding.

Likewise, in 1992, because of the implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme, substantial subsidy on irrigation was dropped. This was fallout of the government's inability to shoulder the cost of development in the face of slumping revenue and mounting foreign debt obligation (Alhaji Muhammad A. 2015).

Moreover, the underlying economic philosophy of Structural Adjustment Programme was predicated on the assumption that agriculture was purely a private sector business. Therefore, Nigeria's 11 RBADAs are largely failures, especially in promoting all-year round agricultural activities.

One of the more eccentric futures of the system of RBADAs in Nigeria is that their

boundaries reflect administrative and political decisions, rather than hydrological reality. The River basin system was established in 1976 outside the framework of International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) credits and no economic evaluation of the supposed benefits was ever undertaken. The actual number of RBDAs has risen and fallen over the years according to political influences. Although, the basins are supposed to be federal and thus outside state interests, narrowly defined, there is little doubt that the sitting of the Headquarters has a powerful influence on the activities of the authority (Sheriff G. 2018),

A good example is the sitting of the headquarters of the Hadejia-Jamalare River Basin Development Authority in Kano town has led to the development of all the major control structures in the former Kano State as well as the sitting of the initial irrigation areas (Mafara Y. A. 1992).

Largely, the RBDAs originally had substantial financial and administrative autonomy as well as large budget allocations. However, which were stripped of any role in agricultural production and placed more firmly under central control in 1987. Therefore, their objectives are yet to be fulfilled forty one (41) years after. In the recent past, around 1990s Nigeria spends more than \$2 billion annually to only import 1.6 million tons of fish yearly. The country is also the highest importer of rice and wheat in Africa (Saliu, et'al. A. A. 1990).

Basically, the RBDAs rendered less significant service to the country. Because at the end of the programmes it was discovered that the citizens were alienated from the land and water sources, while the multinational companies collected all their dues and returned to their home country without even knowing the extend of damages they done particularly to the downstream communities

and the environment in general (Sheriff G. 2018).

In addition, the *fadama* project in Nigeria as a partner of the RBADAs is faced with many challenges in spite of the laudable goals and approach. A major challenge of the projects is non adherence to implementation guidelines. (Blench R. 2003a).

The immediate environmental impact of the National Fadama Development Project (NFDPP) is the reduction in the *fadama* pasture, and the intensification of the previously known existing strained relationship between farmers and herders. Although, the NFDPP benefited the Nigerian farmers immensely, but the pastoralists saw little if any benefits from the project. Because they were deprived from reaching the greener pasture that were generally found during the dry season, when all were taken over by the farmers for irrigation purposes. Therefore, the intensification of hostile relationship between arable crop-farmers and pastoralists cannot be separated from the non-avoidable negative impacts of the Fadama projects in areas already occupied by herders. (Sheriff G. 2018).

4.0 Impact Assessment of the River Basin Development Projects in the Lake Chad Basin

The impact of the RBADAs on various sub-sector of the economy in the Lake Chad Basin attracted attention from ecologists, soil scientists, zoologists, agricultural and social scientists. This intellectual attraction is sustained by the rather complex, intricate nature of the ecological issues associated with large, and several dam construction.

In general, increased irrigation tends to concentrate pests. Borers, caterpillars, locusts, crickets, birds, and golden sparrows are already endemic. Also, the increased use of pesticides such as DDT, some of which are considered toxic in the United States and

Europe, poses a risk of pesticide loading in water, which have potentially affected the various sub-sector of the economy in the Lake Chad Basin (George D. G. 1977).

Apart from challenges within the irrigated areas, notably water logging and salinity, has been on the downstream area, especially the Hadejia-Nguru wetlands and the Yobe proper. The details of the decline has been documented in a number of reports, especially Barber et al. (1991), Kimmage et al. (1991), Thompson (1992). According to these reports;

“The extent of the flood land varies from year to year, but a broad estimate of the impact suggests that the area flood has declined to one eighth of its previous size because of damming” (Barbier., E.B. and Kimmage K. 1991).

Dam construction first began in the Sokoto-Rima basin during the First World War with the construction of low barrages. However, control works began in earnest with the construction of small dams for urban water supply in the south-west in the 1950s (Palmer-Jones R. 1984).

Moreover, due to large control structure for irrigation, domestic water supply, the Hadejia-Jama'are River Basin Development Authorities and the Kano State Government have put river regulation and flood control in place. There are some thirty dams of varying sizes in the basin, in various stages of development. Most of these projects were intended for irrigation or domestic water supply, although some are now actually used for recreation or aquaculture. The negative impacts are lack of enough and free water supply to the downstream communities of the areas. Therefore, their means of livelihood that largely depended on irrigation farming were put to jeopardy.

Similarly, in the Hadejia basin is the Kano River Irrigation Project (KRIP) (Phase 1). The

major storage works in the upper catchment of the Hadejia River are the Tiga Rapids and the Challawa Dam. The Tiga Rapids dam regulates the Kano River, the largest of the three upper tributaries, provides irrigation water to the Kano River Irrigation Project (KRIP), domestic water to Kano city, and releases for downstream users. The Challawa dam impounding began in early 1992, and the releases from the Challawa reservoir are intended to irrigate land in the Hadejia Valley, Kano River Irrigation Project (phase 11) and to supply Kano city and downstream settlements. However, the major impact in the current development is plagued by institutional, operation, maintenance, and water management problems. By so doing it has congested natural draining ways, due to poor maintenance of internal draining works, which in turn due to over-irrigation resulted in water logging in parts of the command area. There is no operating policy for Challawa dam and it has yet to produce any useful output to the communities of the area particularly to the downstream users (Ben M.S. 1992).

Most of the large-scale irrigation schemes have been developed by the Hadejia Jama'are River Basin Development Authorities under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, while small-scale public and private sector irrigation schemes have been carried out under State Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Development Projects. The large schemes have so far fallen well short of their projected targets. Some of the reasons put forward by some scholars, such as Olofin E.A. 1991, Barbier E.B., and K. Kimmage (1991), and Thompson (1992), include inadequate modern irrigation system, poorly planned, and designed projects, lack of farmer involvement in their planning and designs, and institutional and political constraints (Olofin E.A. 1991).

In the case of the Chad basin, the principal river systems bringing water to the lake are

the Komadugu-Yobe and Ngadda systems. The Komadugu-Yobe system is unusual among Nigerian river system in that it flows northeast instead of south. The exact contribution of the Komadugu Yobe to Lake Chad is uncertain. It must have been an important affluent of Mega-Chad. In the past, its flow passes Yau and into the lake seems to have been on a small-scale and probably insignificant in terms of the overall water budget. (Breunig P. 2004).

The Komadugu-Yobe falls within two River Basin Development Authorities of Hadejia-Jama'are and the Chad basin. In May 1993 these encompassed five states (Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Yobe and Borno) although state boundaries often change at short notice. The Komadugu Yobe, in particular, has been impounded at various sites, notably Challawa, Gorge and Tiga, and further dams are planned, notably at Kafin Zaki. These developments have reduced the water flow into the Lake Chad itself and to insignificant levels to its surroundings (Iwaco B.V. 1988).

The main structures reducing water flows into the Lake Chad are the Alau dam southeast of Maiduguri on the Ngadda River and the Lower Yedseram weir. Similarly, the Jere Bowl was another swampland northeast of Maiduguri town fed by Ngadda River. Like other wetlands, it had an integrated farming (rice), fishing and pastoral economy. The draining area of the Alau reservoir is 4,105 km² and includes part of the Sambisa swamp, which detains inflows from the Ngadda River before these enter the downstream reservoir. Although the Alau dam was notionally intended for irrigation, its enunciated purpose soon become urban water supply to Maiduguri, where the drying-up of conventional groundwater had made alternative water sources a priority (Engineer Bunu S. M. 2015).

Nevertheless, Olofin (n.d.) in his study on Alau reservoir, concluded that there is already

severe siltation in the reservoir and is losing water through the unconsolidated sands on its floor. It is therefore, unlikely to fill to the projected levels and thus will not be able to fulfill its objectives. This is manifested and clear evidence when the Alau which was intended to provide portable drinking water to Maiduguri city, since 1995 to date (2019) failed to supply drinking water to even one quarter of the dwellers of the city.

Therefore, water control in Nigerian sector of the Lake Chad can be divided into two distinct types: structures intended to draw off water from Lake Chad, and those on the Ngadda and Yedseram system that reduce the flow to the lake. Within Nigeria, the two most significant developments drawing water from the lake are the Baga polder and the South Chad Irrigation Project (SCIP). The Baga polder was constructed in the 1970s to irrigate a pilot scheme of 500 ha. This scheme has not been extended due to inadequate water. The project has constructed head works for 49,000 ha, but only 15,000 ha was put to use due to falling lake levels, in part because of the damming of Chari river in Cameroon, but also reflecting a long-term decline in rainfall. By 1990, the lack of water in the lake meant that no irrigation was possible and the channels were completely dry. Instead, farmers were using them as bunds for residual moisture agriculture, the traditional method for cultivating sorghum in this region (Iwaco B.V. 1988).

Largely, the objectives of the River Basin Development Projects that embarked on rapid irrigation farming might have been attained to a certain extent, but the activities related or consequent to this policy has led to several permanent negative consequences, more especially on the downstream communities of the affected areas.

5.0 Challenges of Water Management Policy in Nigeria

Experts attribute the root of where things began to go wrong to when the policymaking and implementation of the programs were left in the hands of foreign experts with the scrappiest data that lack the basic information, which will led to the understanding of how the host societies will benefit based on their system of operation. Since Nigeria's independence, foreign specialists guide the preparation of the country's Development Plans (Konczacki Z. 1978).

It is obvious that despite the ineffectiveness of the foreign experts, Nigeria looks on to them for development efforts. These experts respond by issuing loans, loaded with conditionality. In some places, they even suggest the substitution of locally available raw materials with imported ones. As sound as these recommendations are, they come from a different historical setting, suitable perhaps in their home countries, but having no semblance or relevance to the local producers. For example, the recommendation for the constructions of dams and reservoirs in order to enhance massive irrigation along the rivers that feed the Lake Chad is often the major inhibitor of the drastic shrinking of the lake in recent years (Sandford S. 1982).

Notwithstanding, even the feasibility studies are done by foreign experts who believe in capital- and technology intensive intervention. Normally, with a one-sided view, foreign developers and aid donors arrive in Nigeria with development decisions that were already made in their home countries about what they will do for the indigenous societies. As soon as they arrive, they start uprooting the traditional norms and practices by adapting them to Western standards. In most occasions the programs that have been collectively condemned by planners elsewhere

in the World because there has been no systematic evaluation of what has gone before, and anthropologists' criticisms of their effects are brushed aside as merely reflecting the vagaries of the natives in Nigeria. Consciously or unconsciously, these expatriates introduce programs that antagonize rather than encourage village-level participants (Baechler G. 1998).

Therefore, government's Water Management Policies failed because of two main reasons. First, the design and scope of water schemes are defective, made without adequate hydrological and biological assessments. Second, water schemes ignored socio-cultural dimensions and the inputs of the target beneficiaries. However, the above shortcomings are attributed to lack of proper conduction of environment impact assessment and socio-economic impact analyses. It is a known fact that a better project planning and more informed decision making generally results in improved project design; better co-ordination; more comprehensive use of sustainability principles from the start; early detection of problems or cumulative impacts; and the creation of a framework for environmental assessment throughout the project (Chadwick A. 1995).

This study argues that lack of proper feasibility assessment of the environment and the people before the policies were formulated and implemented led to the root causes of the failures of the Nigerian Government Water Management Projects around the Lake Chad and its water shores. That is why the study conceptually emphasizes the importance of the concepts of environmental degradation and socio-economic impact of the environment and people of the region where the projects are to be executed. These Assessments are usually required by international agencies before funding large capital projects. This is

particularly the case for large dams, as there has been considerable concern in recent years about their deleterious effect on the environment. However, if the Environment Impact Assessments are carried out honestly, they are very unlikely to take a positive view of dam and barrage projects, because of an already bad record in this area.

In a similar dimension, a socio-economic impact concept examines how a proposed development will change the lives of current and future of the communities. Because socio-economic impact assessments are usually carried out to assist, policy makers in making decisions that promote long-term sustainability, including economic prosperity, a healthy community, and social well-being. A socio-economic impact will reveal how a proposed development will affect the lives of the upstream and downstream beneficiaries. In general, it analyzes how societies progress, stagnate, or regress because of their local or regional economy, or the global economy projects (Abalu G. 1985).

Finally, a persistent feature of Nigerian administration is the tenuous relationship between reports and policy documents and actual executive action. This is because of the *ad hoc* nature of administrative decisions, which depend principally on political, religious, and ethnic factors rather than economic or scientific rationales.

6.0 Conclusion

Conclusively, it is widely agreed by most scholars that studied the water policies in Nigeria as very poor. Because most of the policies designed by the governments to provide solutions to the nation's numerous problems ends up without much appreciable success and to some extent a complete failures with worrying circumstances and new dimensions. The present state of the economy is nothing other than that of depleted foreign

reserve and unprecedented levels of collapse and degeneration of the basic economic structures. The failure is due to the lack of clearly defined policies with proper guidelines for poverty alleviation, and the policies suffered from political instability, interference and macroeconomic dislocations, as well as lack of continuity, that are riddled with political deception, outright kleptomania, and distasteful looting (Oshewolo S. 2010).

Equally significant is the governments' continued negligent attitude to the agricultural sector, since the ascending of oil industry in the early 1960s. There is under funding of agricultural sector and inadequate feasibility study (Kyari M. and Iliya A. G. 2012).

In view of this, for any particular region, it is crucial to understand both actual water control projects and the basis for decisions in water resource management that will affect people's lives in the region. The Lake Chad basin makes a useful case study, because of the overall importance of the lake in the ecology of Central Africa and the nature of the damages on millions of beneficiaries.

To meet the requirement for Environment Impact Assessments without their potentially fatal effect on capital projects, the task can be given to a tame consultancy agency whose report will consist of negative impact, but not to the engineering firms that are unlikely to highlight problems that would prevent an engineering project from going ahead (NEDECO 1970).

Therefore, the history of water management in Nigeria has essentially been a history of capital projects. A whole series of control works, dating from the 1930s, have been initiated either to serve the needs of urban populations through town water supply, hydropower or as a preliminary to irrigation schemes. In other words, the history of water resource management in Nigeria illustrates with the benefit of hindsight, some worrying principles at work. Lastly, the findings of the study concludes that the decision-making process in most cases concentrated on upstream benefits, especially hydropower, irrigation, and urban water supply, at the expense of downstream water users.

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