

## Self-Help as a Panacea for Rural Infrastructural Provision in Kaiama Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria

Toyobo, Adigun, Emmanuel

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University  
of Technology PMB 4000, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria  
Email: toyoboae@yahoo.co.uk.

Amao Funmilayo Lanrewaju

Department of Architecture, Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology,  
PMB 4000, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria  
Email: funmilayolanre@yahoo.com

Ajala Christiana Oluwamayowa

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Ladoke Akintola University of  
Technology PMB 4000, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria  
Email: mayowa.bukola@yahoo.com

### Abstract

Community participatory rural development is often seen as panacea for sustainable growth of rural area. Monitored project evaluation in Kaiama Local Government of Kwara state of Nigeria has offered much opportunity to examine community participatory procedures and effects among rural communities. About 10% of the rural household heads were randomly interviewed on their experiences in community development. The study shows that an average rural resident is aware of development in their area and the system of self- help has helped to uncover practical development plans and encouraged local participation of rural communities. Majority of the respondents participated in a community project or the other, and contributed financially in the past five years. Despite these, societal problems are still not completely solved as rural residents still yearn for government support for the improvement of infrastructural development in the study area.

**Keywords:** Self-help, Participation, Infrastructural Provision.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The idea of co-operation toward community development is very common to every human society. The urban centred approach toward development that polarizes economic activities in cities, leaving lagging regions underdeveloped has however, intensified the need for community development through self help in Nigerian rural regions (Adejumobi, 1991; Chen and Revallion, 2004).

Self help can be refers to the formation of local voluntary association in which members share common interests, organize and coordinate programmes with the sole aim of improving the socio economic well being of their entire community. The lack of good governance in the rural sector has also forced the rural populace to lay emphasis on their indigenous institutions to solve problems of daily existence. This has revived locally based institutions that existed before the colonial period. Advantageously, they now act as life wires that conduct socio-economic development in the Nigerian rural communities.

However, past studies revealed that groups in local communities over the years have successfully organized themselves to construct roads, health centres, bridges and dwelling houses, cultivate farms, offer scholarships, and establish industrial/commercial institutions among others (Akinbode, 1994, Akinola, 2000). Evidence of these has led to the multiplication and expansion of both membership and self-help activities in Nigerian rural communities.

In the past, the concentration of industries and facilities in major urban centres created rural-urban income differentials which attracted migration to cities. Government's position on rural development has however been adjusted. Available data show that nine of the 12 states in Nigeria in 1976 expended N2, 571,269 during the Second National Development Plan period and another nine states allocated N16,691,000 for such projects during the Third Development Plan period. In year 2000 however, about N16,162,000 was devoted for community development programmes in Oyo State. The various governments in the country have been harnessing voluntary private efforts to supplement government effort. Such efforts are called "aided self-help" (Onibokun, 1972, Ggeids 1998).

The notion that community development is a joint effort of both government and individuals has attracted divergent views. Mandondon (1985) and Geldof (1998) observed that the practice of community development is the people's initiatives, originated from self-identified needs and therefore require no government or non-government agencies intervention so that the people's goal is not diverted, misguided or

adversely influenced. On the other hand, United Nations (1965) believed in government involvement in local plans so as to integrate every community into national plans and this quickens the realization of nation progress through support to community programmes. The argument is that government exists to cater for human communities. Exonerating them may indirectly mean that a significant part of the community is put aside on issues that meet their cohesive existence. It is however inadequate for government to negatively influence community goal. In agreement with Olowu (1993) and Akinola (2000) government's intervention in local development should be properly weighed before arriving at a conclusion in community decisions.

The challenges of self-help towards rural development have over the years attracted interests of policy makers and scholars. Therefore, the focus of this study is to examine the community self-help efforts towards infrastructural provision in Kaiama local government. The specific objectives of the study are to: (i) examine the socio-economic characteristics of respondents, (ii) identify the types of infrastructural provision in the study area, (iii) evaluate the involvement of the community in infrastructural provision, (iv) identify the problems associated with the provision of infrastructural facilities through self-help, (v) Suggest recommendation towards sustainability of infrastructural facilities in the study area.

## 2.0 METHODOLOGY

### a. *Brief of the Study Area*

The present Kaiama Local Government came into being on August 27, 1991. It is one of the sixteen Local governments in Kwara state. It has boundaries with Benin Republic, Oyo state, Borgu and Moro Local governments in the West, South, North and East respectively. The Administrative Headquarter of the local government is at Kaiama. It occupies a land area of 65,641.65 hectares. It is mainly dominated by indigenous Baruba's and tribes like Hausa's, Yoruba's and Igbo's can also be found in different parts of the area. The indigenes of the area are well-known farmers while the majority of the settlers are predominantly traders. Thus, the local government is blessed with vast agricultural product such as maize, yam, cowpea, timber, guinea-corn, legumes and shear butter.

### b. *Methods of data collection*

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources of information. The secondary source involves literature review from relevant documents (published and unpublished) relating to self-help efforts in community activities, types and the provision of infrastructural facilities in rural areas. The primary sources of data include reconnaissance survey of the area and a total of 264 structured questionnaire were administered using random system sampling method to solicit information from respondents. This is couple with oral interview from opinion leaders in the area. Direct observations were also used to take the inventory on the availability, adequacy and functionality of physical infrastructural. The perception of respondents of their involvement in community infrastructure provisions were rated using numerical weight: (1). for decision making, (2). Evaluation, (3). Implementation, (4). Monitoring, (5). Management. The same procedure of numerical weight was used to analyse the associated problems with self-help infrastructural provision in the area: (1). Bad leadership, (2). Lack of cooperation, (3). frequent change in government, (4). High cost of building materials, (5). Embezzlement and (6). Too much government control

### c. *Methods of Data Analysis*

Data collected from the field were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency count, tables, and percentages to assess the level of community involvement in the provision of infrastructural facilities in the study area.

## 3.0 RESULT, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### (a) *Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents in the Study Area*

Table 1 reveals the socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study area. Male respondents were (54.5%) and female 45.5%. Married respondents were (53.09%), single (30.3%) and divorce 16.7%. Majority of the indigenes are Bariba (45.5%) with diverse occupational characteristics such as traders, farmers, Artisan and retirees (18%) the same respectively. Christianity and traditional herbalist (18%) the same respectively dominate the area. However, the highest age grade of the respondents was (21-30) years (32.2%) and the least were those above 51 years (17%). Majority of them earn between N20, 000.00 – N40, 000.00 (63.6%) with least income of (18.2%) which is N40, 000.00 – N60, 000.00. However, they tend to participate in self-help programme when they see the benefits through public enlightenment.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents**

Section	Variables	Frequency	%
<b>a.</b>	<b>Sex</b>		
	(i) Male	144	54.5%
	(ii) Female	120	45.5%
<b>b.</b>	<b>Age</b>		
	(i) 10-20	69	26.1%
	(ii) 21-30	85	32.2%
	(iii) 31-40	75	28%
	(iv) 41-50	60	22.2%
	(v) 51-above	45	17%
<b>c.</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>		
	(i) Yoruba	48	18.2%
	(ii) Hausa	48	18.2%
	(iii) Baruba	120	45.5%
	(iv) Others	48	18.2%
<b>d.</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	(i) Married	140	53.0%
	(ii) Single	80	30.3%
	(iii) Divorced	44	16.7%
<b>e.</b>	<b>Religion of Respondents</b>		
	(i) Islam	48	18.2%
	(ii) Christianity	96	36.4%
	(iii) Traditional	96	36.4%
	(iv) Others	Nil	18.2%
<b>f.</b>	<b>Occupation Of Respondents</b>		
	(i) Trader	48	18%
	(ii) Farmer	48	18%
	(iii) Artisan / apprentice	48	18%
	(iv) Retired	48	18%
	(v) Others	24	9.1 %
<b>g.</b>	<b>Income of Respondents</b>		
	(i) 15,000 – 20,000	48	18.2%
	(ii) 20,000 – 40,000	168	63.6%
	(iii) 40,000 – 60,000	48	18.2%

Source : ( Author's field work, 2011)

**(b) The type of infrastructures in the study area**

Table 2 indicates the various infrastructural facilities provided in Kaima through community self-help in the area. The facility ranges from: electricity, cottage hospital, yam mill, agro-base cottage mill, borehole, primary and secondary schools as well as saw mill industry. Majority of the infrastructure provided are concentrated in Kaima township with the least concentration in Vera, Banni, Gwetekuta, Adena, Bezira, Moshegeda, Kemanji, Kweria and Banisula. Kaima is a major town in the area with the large concentration of population while others are smaller rural settlements.

**Table 2: Types of Infrastructural Facilities in the Study Area.**

Political Wards	Electricity		Cottage ospital		Yam mill		Agro/base Cottage Mill		Borehole		Primary School		Secondary school		Sawmill	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
Kaiama	80	30	40	15	80	30	80	30	80	30	80	30	80	30	80	30
Venra	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	12	4.5	20	7.6	40	15
Bani	20	7.6	80	30	40	15	40	15	20	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15
Gwetekuta	12	4.5	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	Nil	
Adena	40	15	12	4.5	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	Nil	
Bezira	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15
Moshegada	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	Nil	
Kemanji	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6
Gweria	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	40	30	40	15	40	15	16	6.0
Banisula	16	6.0	40	15	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	12	4.5

Source: (Authors field work 2011).

**(c) Involvement of the community in infrastructural provision in the study area**

Table 3a, b, c, d, e, f and g reveals the various forms that community involved them self in the provision of infrastructural facility in the area. The highest level of participation was recorded in Kaima for all the facility provided. This was because the people are close to government. However participation was highly encouraged through self-help efforts by the rural communities in the area because of the benefits they would derived.

**(i) Table 3a: Community involvement in electricity provision**

Political Wards	Electricity									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
Kaiama	80	30	60	22.6	40	15	60	22.6	80	30
Venra	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15	40	15	20	7.6
Adena	12	4.5	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5
Gwetekata	20	7.6	40	15	40	15	20	7.6	20	7.6
Moshega	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0
Bani	40	15	12	4.5	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6
Gweria	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15
Kemanji	16	6.0	20	7.6	12	4.5	16	6.0	20	7.6
Banisula	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	12	4.5	16	6.0

Source: Field survey 2011.

Political Wards	COTTAGE HOSPITAL									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
Kalama	20	7.6	20	7.6	60	22.6	60	22.6	20	7.6
Venra	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15
Adena	12	4.5	60	22.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0
Gwetekata	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	12	4.5
Moshega	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	12	4.5	20	7.6
Bani	80	30	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0
Gweria	40	15	16	6.0	12	4.5	40	15	60	22.6
Kemanji	20	7.6	12	4.5	40	15	20	7.6	20	7.6
Banisula	20	7.6	60	22.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15

**(ii) Table 3b: Participation of community in cottage hospital provision**

Source: Field survey 2011.

iii) **Table 3c: Participation of community in yam- mill provision**  
 Source: Field survey, 2011.

Political Wards	YAM MILL									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
Kaiama	80	30	60	22.6	60	22.6	40	15	40	15
Venra	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15	20	7.6
Adena	12	4.5	12	4.5	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15
Gwetekata	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6
Moshega	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	4.5
Bani	40	15	40	15	60	22.6	60	22.6	16	4.5
Gweria	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	20	7.6
Kemanji	16	6.0	20	7.6	12	4.5	16	6.0	12	4.5
Banisula	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	60	22.6

iv) **Table 3d: Participation of community in agro / cottage provision**

Political Wards	AGRO/BASE COTTAGE									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%
Kalama	80	30	60	22.6	60	22.6	60	22.6	60	22.6
Venra	12	4.5	12	4.5	20	7.6	40	15	20	7.6
Adena	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0	12	4.5	16	6.0
Gwetekuta	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0
Moshega	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6
Bani	40	15	40	15	40	15	60	22.6	40	15
Gweria	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15	20	7.6	40	15
Kemanji	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	16	6.0	20	7.6
Banisula	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	12	4.5

Source: Field survey, 2011

(v) **Table 3e: Participation of community in borehole provision**

Political Wards	BOREHOLE									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Kaiama	80	30	60	22.6	60	22.6	80	30	60	22.6
Venra	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6
Adena	20	7.6	12	4.5	12	4.5	20	7.6	12	4.5
Gwetekuta	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6
Moshegada	12	4.5	20	7.6	40	15	12	4.5	20	7.6
Bani	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	40	15
Gweria	40	15	40	15	40	15	40	15	16	6.0
Kemanji	16	6.0	40	15	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0
Banisula	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6

Source: Field survey, 2011

(vi) Table 3f: Participation of community in primary schools establishment

Political Wards	PRIMARY SCHOOLS									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Kaiama	80	30	40	15	60	22.6	40	15	80	30
Venra	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5
Adena	12	4.5	12	4.5	12	4.5	16	6.0	20	7.6
Gwetekuta	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6
Moshegada	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0
Bani	40	15	60	22.6	40	15	60	22.6	16	6.0
Gweria	20	7.6	40	15	20	7.6	40	15	40	15
Kemanji	16	6.0	20	7.6	40	15	20	7.6	20	7.6
Banisula	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	12	4.5	20	7.6

Source: Field survey 2011.

(vii) Table 3g: Participation of community in secondary schools establishment

Political Wards	SECONDARY SCHOOLS									
	1		2		3		4		5	
	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Kaiama	80	30	60	22.6	80	30	60	22.6	60	22.6
Venra	12	4.5	16	6.0	16	6.0	16	6.0	12	4.5
Adena	16	6.0	16	6.0	12	4.5	16	6.0	20	7.6
Gwetekuta	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6
Moshegada	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6
Bani	40	15	40	15	20	7.6	40	15	40	15
Gweria	20	7.6	40	15	40	15	40	15	40	15
Kemanji	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0
Banisula	20	7.6	12	4.5	20	7.6	12	4.5	16	6.0

Source: Field survey 2011.

(d) Selected On-going Self-Help projects in Kaiama Local Government

Table 4 reveal what the communities were able to achieve so far through their self-help efforts. Project that were completed include 5 boreholes at Venra , a police post at Banni, a yam mill industry at Gweria, a cassava mill industry at Moshegada and Bazira, Vocational school at Kemanji and a cottage hospital which is almost completed located at Kaima. However, there are some other on-going projects as revealed in table 4 such as, electricity, shear-butter light industry and nomadic school which are yet to be completed. These projects worth millions of naira which the communities in the area have task themselves to achieve. See plates 1, 2,3 and 4.

Table 4: Selected On-going Self -Help projects in Kaiama Local Government.

District	Wards	Projects	Number	Estimated cost million	Community contribution	Remark
Kaiama	Kaiama	cottage hospital	1	2.5 m	1m	Almost completed
„	Venra	Bore hole	5	2.5m	1.5	Completed
„	Banni	Police post	1	0.5m	0.2m	Completed
„	Gweria	Yam mill	1	0.25m	0.1	Completed
„	Moshegada	Cassava mill	1	0.15m	0.05m	Completed
„	Gwetekuta	Electricity	1	3m	0.8m	Ongoing
„	Bezira	Cassava mill	1	0.20m	0.10m	Completed
„	Kemanji	Vocation center	1	0.3m	0.15	Completed
„	Banisula	Shea butter	1	0.4m	0.15	Ongoing
„	Adena	Nomadic school	1	2.4m	0.8m	ongoing

Source: Community Development Association unit, Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development Ilorin, Kwara state, 2011.

Source: field survey, 2011

**Plate 1: Cottage Hospital by Action Aid (NGO)**



Source: field survey, 2011.

**Plate 2: Shear butter mill by community**



Source: field survey, 2011.

**Plate 3: On-going Hospital by Government**



Source: field survey, 2011.

**Plate 4: Community Clinic**



Source: field survey, 2011.

**(e) Problems associated with self- help infrastructural provision in the study area**

Table 5 reveal the problems of participation in infrastructural facility in the area ranged from bad leadership, (1) lack of cooperation among community members, (2) frequent change in government, (3) high cost of building materials, (4) embezzlement of community project fund, (5) and too much of government control in facility provision. Despite these problems, community were able to embark on some projects through self-help efforts. Kaima, Venra and Banni are briefly discussed in table 5.

**(i) Problems of participation in infrastructural provision in Kaiama**

22.6% of the respondents in Kaima revealed that bad leadership, lack of cooperation and high cost of building materials were responsible for infrastructural provision in the area. While 15% of the respondents believed frequent changes of government and embezzlement of projects funds were responsible for infrastructural



development in the area. Only 7.6% of the respondents said too much government control was a problem. The strong tie among communities in the area motivated them to achieve their desire objectives of the various projects embark upon in Kaima local government area.

**(ii) Problems of participation in infrastructural provision in Venra**

It can be deduced from the table 5 that 4.5% of the respondents show that bad leadership was responsible for infrastructural problem in the area. 6.0% inferred it was lack of cooperation among the inhabitants that is responsible for the infrastructural problems in the area. 22.6% of the respondents revealed it was frequent change of government. 15% of the respondents indicated that it was high cost of building materials and embezzlement were responsible for the problems of infrastructural provision while 7.6% showed that too much government control militated against infrastructural provision in the area. There was community cohesiveness which enables them to achieve the 5 boreholes projects embark upon in the area.

**(iii) Problems of participation in infrastructural provision in Bani**

15% of respondents in Bani inferred that bad leadership, high cost of building materials, lack of cooperation and frequent change of government, embezzlement of projects funds were responsible for infrastructural problems in the study area. Only 7.6% of respondents attributed to too much government control. From the foregoing, it is clear that majority of the respondents were willing to participate in infrastructural provision in their respective domain. The cooperation among members, despite the above problems made them to embark on a police post building project for community benefits.

**Table 5: Problems associated with self help infrastructural provision**

Political Wards	Problems Associated With Infrastructural Provision											
	1		2		3		4		5		6	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Kaiama	60	22.6	60	22.6	40	15	60	22.6	40	15	20	7.6
Venra	12	4.5	16	6.0	60	22.6	40	15	40	15	20	7.6
Adena	16	6.0	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	60	22.6
Gwetekuta	16	6.0	12	4.5	12	4.5	16	6.0	60	22.6	40	15
Bani	40	15	40	15	40	15	40	15	20	7.6	40	15
Moshegada	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0	12	4.5	12	4.5	20	7.6
Kemanji	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	20	7.6	16	6.0	12	4.5
Gweria	40	15	40	15	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0	16	6.0
Banisula	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	20	7.6	16	6.0

Source: Field survey, 2011.

**4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are made to improve the existing situations of infrastructure in the study area:

- Since the study area is a male dominated environment, women empowerment should be encouraged through public awareness programmes by community organization so that they can take their pride of place in order to contribute their quota. Likewise, the programmes should be organized at regular intervals so as to enlighten the community on the events taking place in their communities.
- Agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, improved seedlings, chemicals etc. should be readily available to the people in the community at subsidize rate in order to boast their income capacity for them to able to contribute towards self-help projects.
- Incentives such as soft loans, Agricultural education through the community organization should be encouraged among farmers in the area.
- The Federal, State and Local government and Non-Governmental Organization should improve the state of infrastructure in the community. The feeder roads should be upgraded while the existing health and educational facilities should be improved upon, thereby improving the quality of lives of the community.
- Planning meetings should be organized in a way that everybody could be carried along in deciding what benefit majority of the inhabitants of the community.
- There should be decentralization of leadership in all activities relating to ownership and control of infrastructure at the community level.
- There should be proper accountability for all funds meant for community projects and embarking on too many projects at a time should be discouraged.
- Projects implementation should be prioritized to avoid abandonment of projects and wasteful duplication of resources.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the awareness should be further strengthened by the community leadership as well as sense of belonging among the people. Participation among the people should be continuously encouraged. The average rural person is aware of development efforts in their surrounding and the joy of participation also encourages local development. The system of self- help has therefore helped to uncover practical development plans and modified decision ought to be made by outsiders in order to overcome community problems.

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