

Participation of Rural Dwellers in Selected Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOS) Activities in South West Nigeria

M.G. Olujide

*Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development, University of Ibadan,
Ibadan, Nigeria*

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ABSTRACT This study focused on the participation of rural dwellers in selected Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) activities in south-west Nigeria. Variables considered in the study include demographic characteristics of rural dwellers such as age, gender, marital status, religion, and educational attainment in NGO activities, level of participation of rural dwellers, the perceived benefit derived from NGOs activities were determined and the constraints faced by the rural dwellers in NGOs activities were investigated. Three hundred and eighty seven rural dwellers were randomly selected from three NGOs operating in south west Nigeria. The selected NGOs were Nigerian integrated Rural Accelerated Development Organisation (NIRADO), community Women and Development (COWAD), and Farmers Development Union (FADU). Quantitative and qualitative data were collected through interviews and focus group discussion (FGDs) respectively. The result showed that majority (95.6%) of the rural dwellers were youth, particularly in the case of NIRADO, COWAD and FADU rural dwellers were mostly females and married. Most of the rural dwellers had limited formal education, but NIRADO rural dwellers were generally of lower education than COWAD and FADU rural dwellers. NIRADO activities were directed to mainly education and training while those of COWAD and FADU focused upon health, agriculture, skill development, basic education and training and income generating activities. The constraints experienced by rural dwellers in NGO activities were lack of finance and transportation. The results revealed further that the total benefit derived from the NGO activities had a significant relationship with transportation, lack of land and labour and access to infrastructure among FADU rural dwellers (χ^2 1439, 5.25, 9.07, $P < 0.05$ respectively), while among COWAD rural dwellers, the total benefit derived had a significant relationship with inability to attend meeting ($\chi^2 = 9.75$, $P < 0.05$). Rural Dwellers in NIRADO activities benefited in education and training, thereby improving their vocational skills. COWAD and FADU rural dwellers benefited in area of income-generating activities, improved agricultural technology and credit, thereby increasing their production and productivity. It is clear from the study, that NGOs assist people in rural development activities. However, greater emphasis needs to be directed towards provision of credit, infrastructure and programme enlightenment so that rural dwellers can have tangible improvement in their lives.