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Level of Awareness of Developmental Projects by the Ministry of Women Affairs among Citizens of Ogun State

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Abstract:

Government projects are usually large and capital intensive. Such projects are intended to benefit millions of people and are vital to the process of political, social, and economic development of a nation. In spite of the huge human and natural resources and the numerous projects embarked upon in Nigeria since independence, poverty, unemployment, hunger and diseases remain pervasive. Previous studies reveal that efforts made by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development to implement development programmes is largely limited by: inadequate awareness, insufficient funding and manpower. The study sought to determine the level of awareness of developmental projects by the Ministry of Women Affairs among citizens of six purposively selected Local Government Areas in Ogun State. Using a sample size of 1500 (250 from each LGA), it was observed that the level of awareness by citizens of Ogun State is barely average at a mean score of 8.9776 on a 16 scale count with a standard error of 0.1429. This implies that although the percentage figure might be perceived as high, the actual level of awareness were barely average. This is acceptable if one considers the percentage level of awareness at the various local government levels. The ministry must strive hard to actualize its vision by ensuring that more citizens of the state benefit from its programmes. This can be done through sensitization of the public especially women and children on what they stand to benefit educationally, socially, politically and economically from participating in these programme.

Keywords: Awareness, Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Ogun State, Projects

1. Introduction

Government projects are usually large and capital intensive. Such projects are intended to benefit millions of people and are vital to the process of political, social, and economic developments of nations. They form part of the development process geared towards the provision of basic infrastructures and services to the people, particularly the majority in the rural areas (Odugbemi, Oyesiku and Badejo, 1993; Morgan, 2010). They include projects like the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), National Gender Policy, Vision 20: 2020, Transformation Agenda, amongst others.

With the number of projects embarked upon in Nigeria since independence, one would have thought that the issue of poverty would have been a thing of the past. But this is not the case. Like many other development projects in the developing countries, they have been characterized by weak implementation and low impact on the ground. Many of these development projects had failed to put the people first resulting into deepened poverty and inequality (Baker, 2000; Manjengwa, 2007; Nwachukwu, Ibeawuchi and Okoli, 2010).

Poverty, unemployment, hunger and diseases have been pervasive despite the huge human and natural resources that Nigeria is endowed with. The investments of government especially in the social sector on issues pertaining to health, education, power, water, and sanitation are unproductive due mainly to corruption (Global Call to Action against Poverty/MDGs Nigeria, 2008; Ebikefe, 2012).

The Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development is one of such institutions government uses to execute projects that are mainly women and children oriented. Upon discovering that effort made by the Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in planning and implementation its projects were limited by factors such as inadequate awareness, fund and manpower, and that women in the state were not sufficiently empowered to achieve gender balance and improve socio-economic standards, the study therefore examines the level of awareness by citizens of the various programmes of the Ministry of Women Affairs in Ogun State. One thousand five hundred copies of questionnaire were administered to 250 respondents each from six Local Governments purposively selected from Ogun State. Out of this, 1306 (87.1%) were retrieved.

2. Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development

In June 2003, the Ministry of Women Affairs, Social Welfare and Community Development was created from the defunct Ministry of Industries and Social Development. With the restructuring of Government Agencies during the Governor Gbenga

Daniel's administration, the Department of Community Development was removed resulting to the emergence of the new Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare. The vision of the Ministry is to build a just society devoid of discrimination against women, ensure continuous empowerment of women and protection of the rights of children. It also has a mission which seeks to build a sustainable livelihood for women and promote social integration for the physically challenged and vulnerable groups as well as deter gender disparity and all forms of abuse against women and children (Ministry of Women and Social Development, 2008). Presently, the Commissioner for the Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development is Mrs Elizabeth Sonubi.

The goals of the Ministry are to promote gender equality and empower women; promote and protect the rights of children; rehabilitate vagrants, psychotics, the homeless and beggars; enhance social stability through continuous and intensified matrimonial reconciliation; build a just society devoid of discrimination; promote social and economic wellbeing of all women and children in order to achieve equitable rapid economic growth; and encourage full participation of women in political activities in the state (*Ogun State Ministry of Women and Social Development, 2010*).

The Ministry has an Honourable Commissioner who serves as the Political Head as well as the Chief Adviser to the Governor on issues that affect women and children in the State; a Permanent Secretary who is the Administrative Head of the Ministry; and five Directors that head the Departments in the Ministry. Prior to Governor Ibikunle Amosun's administration in 2011, the Ministry was divided into five directorates: Administration and Supplies; Finance and Accounts; Social Welfare Services; Women Empowerment Services; and Planning, Research and Statistics. Presently the Ministry is divided into seven- Administration and Supplies; Finance and Accounts; Social Welfare Services; Women Empowerment Services; Planning, Research and Statistics; Youth Development; and Rehabilitation. This is in conformity with the structure of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development.

The State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, as much as possible domesticate the policies, bills and programmes initiated by the ministry at the federal level. This they are able to do through collaboration with relevant stakeholders such as the federal agencies and Non-governmental Organization (NGOs) in order to implement relevant Laws/Acts that affect women and children.

3. Activities of the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development in Ogun State

The Department of Women Empowerment established in 2005 prior to 2011 was responsible for the welfare of women and children in the state. Some of the activities of the Department since 2008 include advocacy meetings on enhancing Child Survival; trainers workshop on how to reduce child mortality; sensitization meeting for 100 participants each in the three Senatorial Districts; celebration of the International Women's Day; screening of members of Children's Parliament; workshop for members of the Women in Politics on Leadership, protocol and security; training workshop on the reduction of maternal mortality with assistance from the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs; campaign on Anti-Child Trafficking, launching of the National Women Coalition Against HIV/AIDS (NAWOCA); partnership building on the National Gender Policy Strategy Implementation Framework; stakeholders sensitization meeting on mainstreaming bill; Children's Day Celebration; monitoring of NGOs; signing of state policy on food and nutrition; workshops on loan administration, supervision and monitoring for WOFEE Desk Office; Child Parenting; programme management of finance procedure; Developing Referral System and Network organized by global HIV/AIDS Initiative Nigeria amongst others (Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, 2008, 2009).

In addition, women were economically empowered. The sum of four million naira was disbursed through the Women Fund for Economic Empowerment (WOFEE). The disbursement was done in collaboration with Bank of Agriculture and six reputable NGOs. Equipment such as sewing machines, gas cookers, embroidery machines, over locking machines, grinding machines, power generator, catering and baking utensils, and hair dressing equipment were given to Abeokuta South and Ijebu North Local Government Areas. To raise the economic status of the entire women in the state, the department collaborated with relevant government agencies like the Ministry of Education, Health, Justice, Community Development and Cooperatives, Commerce and Industries at both state and federal levels. The department also sponsored officers of the Ministry for various workshops and seminars (Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, 2010).

Since 2011, when Mrs Elizabeth Sonubi became the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development and Mrs Aderonke Adeyokunnu the Permanent Secretary, intensified effort has been made to ensure that women in the state are empowered. For the State Women Advancement Forum (WAFO), three hundred women were selected from the 236 wards in the state and regular capacity and training programmes organized for them to strengthen their socio-economic status (Olayiwola, 2012: 3). WAFO is "a non-partisan group set up by the Government to represent women in the state in formulating policies and programmes for women development and active participation in decision-making processes" (Sowumi, 2012: 16).

Micro-Credit amounting to one hundred million naira was released to 3,850 women in the state particularly those in the rural areas to help improve their lives and ultimately reduce poverty to the barest minimum. The credit facility was given at a very low interest rate of seven per cent to facilitate easy payment. The department provides regular health awareness campaign for women across the state and offers training on vocational development to interested members of the public. So far, about one hundred and seventy eight youths are currently undergoing training on sewing, knitting, hairdressing, shoemaking, catering and others at the Multipurpose Women Development Centre in Abeokuta (Balogun, 2012: 21). The International Women's Day was also celebrated in the state (Daniel, 2012).

According to the interview with the Head of Department of Women Empowerment, Gender Desk Offices have been established in all ministries in line with the National Gender Policy, women are encouraged to participate in politics, human right and capacity building for women group has been promoted too. Bills such as Gender Based Violence, Equality for People with Disability are before the House of Assembly for ratification. Plans are also on ground to domesticate CEDAW.

Even though 66.8 per cent of the respondents from the six local governments sampled agree that the programmes on women empowerment exist, it is evident that they are known mainly to those residing in Abeokuta, the capital of Ogun State. The respondents indicated that they mostly had problem accessing the micro-finance facilities. This simply implies that there are a lot of women out there in the State who would have loved to be empowered but are denied access. It means also that the department should intensify effort to see that more women in the state are empowered.

The Department of Child Development until 2010 was a division under the Department of Women Empowerment Services where its activities were dominated by the activities of the other two divisions. In 2010, a Child Division was established in the Department of Planning, Research and Statistics. Some of the activities covered by the division were the inauguration of two sets of Children Parliament; sensitization of the public on danger associated with Female Genital Mutilation and the Law Enforcement Agencies on the need to enforce the existing law in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund; participation in various meetings and training organized by UNICEF “B” Field State; monitoring of the activities of CRECHES in the State; commemoration of yearly Children’s Day; collaboration with other Ministries, NGOs, and UNICEF on matters affecting children; and partnering with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Global Fund in disbursing the one million, seven hundred thousand naira given to twenty-four NGOs involved in the care and protection of Orphans and Vulnerable Children (Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, 2010).

Under Elizabeth Sonubi’s administration, the Child Division became a Department on its own. So far, the Department has successfully handled a total of three hundred and fifty child abuse cases (*This Day*, 2012). The Ministry in collaboration with USAID/Hope World Wide Nigeria facilitated and monitored ten million naira conditional grants for the upkeep and maintenance of three thousand orphan and vulnerable children in the state. Four new orphanages were registered (Olayiwola, 2012). Recently, the Children Parliament passed a resolution prohibiting school age children from roaming the streets during school hours. A special task force has been established to implement this resolution (Balogun, 2012).

Despite the fact that the department handles child abuse cases, cases of child abuse still abound in the State as the department only handles cases reported to it. With the passage of the bill prohibiting children of school age from roaming the streets during school hours, it was observed that hardly can you find a child roaming the street during school hours. This is a commendable effort as it ensures that children are educated.

The services of the Department of Social Welfare Services are rendered through the Social Welfare Area offices in Abeokuta, Ijebu Ode, Sagamu, Ilaro, Ota, and Ijebu-Igbo. The headquarters, domiciled in the government secretariat Abeokuta, formulates policies which the Area Offices implement and supervises and co-ordinates their activities as well (Ogun State Ministry of Women and Social Development 2010).

The Social Welfare Department until 2010 had four main units through which its services are rendered. They are the Adult Welfare Services; Juvenile Welfare services; Relief and Rehabilitation Services; and Research, Planning and Training Section. The Adult Welfare Services provide matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, and operates adult probation and marriage guidance/counselling services. The Juvenile Welfare Services renders probation services and corrective institutional training in relations to juvenile offenders, children in need of care and protection and those beyond parental control. Juvenile courts are situated in Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, Sagamu, Ilaro, Ota and Ado-Ode to decide juvenile cases. Juvenile Welfare Services also takes care of abandoned babies through fostering and adoption (Ogun State Ministry of Women and Social Development, 2010).

The Relief and Rehabilitation Services unit handle issues relating to guidance and aftercare of challenged persons, and provides training for blind persons, ex-prisoners, deportees, repatriates and destitute. This is to facilitate their re-integration into the community through the provision of relief materials, training, job placement and aftercare guidance. The last unit which is not the least is the Research, Planning and Training which conduct research on social problems. This they are able to do by liaising with other relevant institutions. The unit organizes staff training courses including in-service training programmes, compiles monthly/quarterly and annual reports, and supervises students on industrial training from universities and other tertiary institutions across the country (Ogun State Ministry of Women and Social Welfare, 2010).

In 2010, a total of one thousand and eighty six juvenile cases were handled. One thousand and thirty four (95%) of the cases were disposed of, while the remaining fifty two (5%) were left unattended to. Seven hundred and ninety nine cases on marital reconciliation were handled, two hundred and ninety nine (30%) were reconciled, eighty five (12%) withdrawn, one hundred and three (14%) abandoned and twenty cases pending further action. Six blind indigenes of Ogun State were offered admission for vocational training into the Nigeria Farm Craft Centre for the Blind, Ikeja Lagos. The sum of one hundred and ninety five thousand was given to three trainees to enable them purchase equipment for the Farm Craft Centre for the Blind in Ikeja Lagos. The Ministry paid the sum of one hundred and fifty thousand naira for the treatment of a vagrant lunatic removed from the street. The department also conducted research on social problems, provided in-service training and supervised students on industrial training (Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, 2010).

Since 2011, under the present dispensation, the sum of N18.8m has been collected from two thousand, one hundred and fifteen fathers from separated homes for the upkeep of three thousand, six hundred and eight children and wards and a total of one hundred and seventy three couples reconciled (Olayiwola, 2012). Vocational training programme on barbing and sewing have been extended to wards at the Abeokuta Juvenile Remand Home.

Visit to three Social welfare Area Offices –Abeokuta, Sagamu and Ijebu Ode where a total of 14 cases mainly those on neglect were witnessed, shows that the cases were thoroughly investigated. The Magistrate and panel members (where present) strive hard to reconcile the parties involved. Maintenance allowances are paid directly to the Welfare Officer, who ensures that the money is used for the purpose it is meant for.

It is worthy of note that the programmes of the department of Social Welfare Services are only popularized in Abeokuta. The limited number of Social Welfare Centres in the State makes it difficult for some people to access its programmes. Presently there

are six Social Welfare Centres each responsible for four Local Governments with staff strength of about eight. The department would have handled more cases if it had a centre in all the Local Governments.

The Department of Rehabilitation was established in 2011. Prior to this time, it was under the Department of Social welfare. According to the Commissioner of Women Affairs and Social Development, “under the Ogun State Rapid Employment Programme, 107 application forms were issued to Persons with Disabilities (PWD), out of which 43 applicants had already been employed while efforts are underway to employ the others into the State Civil Service as promised by the Governor” (*This Day*, 2012). Out of the fifty seven vagrant lunatics/desitute that were rescued, 30 were repatriated back to their respective states, fifteen were re-integrated back with their families while twelve are currently receiving treatment at the Neuro psychiatric Hospital, Aro, Abeokuta. The International Day of Persons with Disabilities was celebrated on the February, 2012. The White Cane Safety Day was also observed with about twenty five white safety canes given to visually-impaired people (Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, 2012; *This Day*, 2012).

Vocational skill development has been extended to the less-privileged and physically challenged in the State in accordance with Article 23 (C) of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities; ex-trainees of the Federal Farm Craft Centre for the Blind were empowered with the sum of four hundred thousand naira (*This Day*, 2012).; and “a temporary rehabilitation centre as part of the measure to rid the streets of beggars and vagrants” (Balogun, 2012:18).

The Department of Planning, Research and Statistics has helped in the area of in-house training programmes for workers in the Ministry on quarterly basis. There has been in-house training on social welfare services, efficient financial control system in the management of public funds, mainstreaming gender into policy implementation process, management staff on effective leadership, entrepreneurship and employment generation, amongst others. They also conduct advocacy meetings and orientation for the National Youth Corps Members (Ogun State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Welfare, 2008 - 2010).

4. Level of Citizens' Awareness of the Activities of the Understudied Ministry

Programme	Abe-okuta South	Ifo	Ijebu Ode	Ado-Odo Ota	Saga-mu	Yewa North	Total	
							A*	N*
1. Children parliament	82 (34.9%)	176 (76.5%)	112 (45.9%)	101 (45.7%)	59 (38.1%)	118 (67.4%)	648 (51.4%)	612 (48.6%)
2. Commemoration of yearly Children day	143 (60.1%)	180 (80.0%)	215 (86.7%)	195 (87.4%)	129 (81.1%)	149 (83.7%)	1011 (79.5%)	260 (20.5%)
3. Women development training centre	119 (50.0%)	158 (69.3%)	136 (56.4%)	117 (53.7%)	111 (70.3%)	107 (61.5%)	748 (59.5%)	509 (40.5%)
4. Business development fund for women	92 (38.8%)	145 (63.0%)	109 (45.2%)	98 (43.9%)	93 (58.9%)	72 (42.9%)	609 (48.4%)	648 (51.6%)
5. Women fund for economic empowerment	105 (44.5%)	132 (57.9%)	109 (45.2%)	94 (42.7%)	87 (54.7%)	81 (46.8%)	608 (48.4%)	649 (51.6%)
6. Sensitization of women in politics	130 (54.6%)	156 (67.5%)	184 (74.2%)	132 (59.7%)	87 (55.1%)	108 (63.2%)	797 (62.9%)	470 (37.1%)
7. Gender mainstreaming	134 (56.3%)	147 (64.2%)	117 (48.8%)	101 (45.9%)	47 (30.1%)	67 (40.1%)	613 (49.0%)	637 (51.0%)
8. Sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children	118 (49.8%)	157 (68.0%)	127 (52.5%)	131 (59.0%)	68 (42.8%)	81 (47.1%)	682 (54.0%)	581 (46.0%)
9. Juvenile welfare	140 (58.8%)	132 (60.3%)	118 (48.6%)	104 (46.8%)	97 (61.0%)	97 (56.4%)	688 (54.9%)	565 (45.1%)
10. Adult welfare-matrimonial reconciliation to disaffectionate couples, marriage guidance/ counselling	116 (48.7%)	159 (69.4%)	152 (63.3%)	120 (55.0%)	94 (59.5%)	108 (62.8%)	749 (59.7%)	506 (40.3%)
11. Relief and rehabilitation services	127 (53.4%)	150 (66.1%)	145 (60.2%)	133 (61.0%)	75 (47.8%)	99 (56.9%)	729 (58.1%)	526 (41.9%)
12. Rehabilitation of abandoned children, the physically challenged, destitute	127 (53.4%)	159 (69.4%)	129 (54.0%)	153 (70.8%)	94 (60.3%)	108 (63.5%)	770 (61.7%)	478 (38.3%)
13. Guidance and after care supervision of challenged persons	114 (47.9%)	138 (61.9%)	100 (41.7%)	123 (56.9%)	86 (55.1%)	104 (61.2%)	665 (53.5%)	578 (46.5%)
14. Training for the blind, ex-prisoner, deportees, repatriates, destitute, etc	108 (45.6%)	137 (61.2%)	83 (34.4%)	112 (51.4%)	69 (43.7%)	99 (59.3%)	608 (48.8%)	637 (51.2%)

15. Implementation of relevant laws/acts that affect women and children through collaboration with relevant stakeholders	101 (42.4%)	137 (60.4%)	103 (42.7%)	103 (47.9%)	53 (33.8%)	83 (48.5%)	580 (46.4%)	669 (53.6%)
16. Care and protection of Orphan and Vulnerable children	142 (59.7%)	17s0 (74.6%)	193 (80.1%)	165 (76.0%)	97 (61.8%)	128 (75.3%)	895 (71.5%)	356 (28.5%)

Table 1: Level of Citizens Awareness of the Ministry’s Activities
Ntiwunka, 2013

*Note: A= Aware and N= Not Aware

According to the data on Table 1, programmes that relate to commemoration of yearly Children’s Day are, in general, the most popular (1011; 79.5%) among all the respondents from the six understudied local government areas. This is followed by high (895; 71.5%) overall awareness on programmes that relate to care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children. The least popular programmes in the list were programmes on gender mainstreaming (613; 49.0%), business development fund (609; 48.4%), funds for economic empowerment of women (608; 48.4%), training for the blind, ex-prisoners, deportees, repatriates, destitute, etc. (608; 48.8%), and programmes on implementation of relevant laws or acts that affect women and children through collaboration with stakeholders (580; 46.4%). The awareness of all the other categories of programmes fell on the average score and above.

5. Discussion of Findings

With 75.3 per cent of the respondents indicating that they are aware of the presence of the Ministry for Women Affairs and Social Development in Ogun State, it is evident that the understudied ministry is known by many people in the state. However, Table 2 below indicates a mean score of 8.9776 on a 16 scale count with a standard error of 0.1429, with the implication that although the percentage figure looks high, the actual level of awareness is barely average. This is acceptable if one considers the percentage levels of awareness at the various local government levels. Moreover, the foregoing cannot be ignored since only two sets of programmes – those that relate to commemoration of yearly children’s day (1011; 79.5%) and care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children (895; 71.5%) are reasonably popular above average awareness level throughout the six understudied local government areas. With all the other programmes having less than average overall awareness, the ministry and its programmes are not popular enough. This is in line with the argument that many projects have failed to put the people first resulting into deepening poverty and inequality (Manjengwa, 2007; Nwachukwu, Ibeawuchi, Okoli, 2010). The implication of this result is that if the understudied ministry was to be popular beyond its current level, there would have been more participation from the people and more benefits to them than witnessed. Therefore, it is evident that the ministry and its programmes need greater publicity than they have enjoyed.

Variables	N	Maximum point scale	Mean score	SEM (std error of mean)
Awareness (Knowledge)	1118	16	8.9776	0.1429
Perception level	977	25	11.7400	0.1978
Average score of rank	517	1-5*	3.0999	0.0466

Table 2: Summary Of Descriptive Statistics For Major Variables In This Study Among Respondents

Source: Field Survey, 2012; Ntiwunka, 2013

According to Paki and Ebienu, “there has been no lack of public policies in Nigeria since independence”. “Most government policies either terminate prematurely only at the formulation stage, or are purposely designed not to be religiously implemented or simply mal-implemented to benefit a few individuals or a sector of the society” (Paki and Ebienu, 2011: 1).

Since the creation of the Ministry in Ogun State in 2003, so many policies have been made and programmes put in place to achieve them. Many of these programmes are not known by the citizens of the State. The results from the questionnaire indicate that programmes such as gender mainstreaming that strives to ensure gender balance in all sectors of the economy is one of the least popular programmes in the state (49.0%). Business development fund, funds for economic empowerment of women, as well as various programmes on implementation of relevant laws or acts that affect women and children are also not popularized in the State (below 50%).

Although on the average, the citizens are aware of political empowerment in the State, the level of involvement and participation is not encouraging. Under the present dispensation, only 5(27.8%) out of the 18 Commissioners in the State are women. These are the Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Mrs Oluwande Muoyo; the Commissioner for Finance, Mrs Kemi Adeosun; the Commissioner for Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Elizabeth Sonubi; the Commissioner for Culture and Tourism, Mrs Yewande Amusan, and the Commissioner for Agriculture, Mrs Ibironke Sokefun. At the Local Government level, one (5%) out of the 20 Local Government Chairmen is a woman. This is far from the 35 per cent affirmative action for women in politics as reflected in the National Gender Policy adopted in 2007.

Even though women occupy key positions in the other sectors of the economy in the State such as the Head of Service and Chief Justice of the State, it is evident that men still dominate the key sectors of the economy. As Osalor rightly puts it, empowerment is important for women as it will create employment for them, enable them have a say in both public and private sectors, and take part in decision-making that will determine the future of their families and country (Osalor, 2012). It is only when the differences in the status of women and men in the key areas are taken into consideration, that poverty can be reduced (Lin, 2011).

Skill acquisition which is also a form of empowerment is provided at the Women Development Centre. The level of awareness is a little bit above average (59.5%). This may be because the centre was not functional until early 2012. It is believed that as the years go by and as the Ministry creates more awareness for the programme, more women/youths will take advantage of the programme.

On sustenance of gender equality through total elimination of various forms of discrimination and violence against women and children, the level of awareness was 54.0% although it was below average in Abeokuta South, Sagamu and Yewa North. The rate of participation in programmes related to the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and children is very low (33.6%). This is not encouraging as “discrimination against women may pose the greatest development challenge” (DFID, 2005:3).

The activities of social welfare are also not popularised in the state. Participation is below average although those that participated signified that their aims were achieved. The Social Welfare Offices are not sufficient as each one serves four Local Government Areas and has limited number of workers.

6. Conclusion

Although the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development executed all sixteen programmes investigated in this study, there level of awareness by citizens of Ogun State were barely average. The ministry must strive hard to actualize its vision which is to build a society devoid of gender discrimination, guarantee equal access to wealth creation opportunities, develop a culture that places premium on the protection of the child and focus attention of both public and private sectors on issues that promote full participation of women and children in national development.

For more citizens of the State to benefit from these programmes, the Ministry needs to sensitize the public especially women and children on what they stand to benefit educationally, socially, politically and economically from participating in these programmes. This is important as it will assist in reducing poverty level; improving health and standard of living; and enhancing efficiency of public investment.

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