

## **Effective and Efficient Management of Social Investment Programme in Nigeria.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The paper titled "Effective and Efficient Management of Social Investment Programme " majorly sought to find out the implications of these programmes Nigerians. Social Investment Programme was conceptualized and its four components which include N-power, Home Grown School Feeding, Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) and Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) were exhaustively analyzed. The challenges of the programme such as poor management, inadequate information and delay in payment beneficiaries were extensively discussed. The paper adopted systems theory which was originally proposed by a biologist, Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1928. Von Bertalanffy proposed that a system is characterized by the interactions of its components and the nonlinearity of those interactions (McNeil! and Freiberger, p. 22, 2003). It was conclusively stated that the programme has put smiles on the faces of the beneficiaries thereby raising their standard of living. The paper therefore recommended as follows: that government should intensify efforts towards sensitizing the beneficiaries as well as the public on the workings and core objectives of the programme, it was also recommended that a department (Social Investment Department) .be set from Ministry of Labour and Productivity for proper management of the programme and that strategy for posting N-power beneficiaries/volunteers to their places of primary assignment should be reviewed towards the realization of the scheme's goal(s).

**KEYWORDS:** Effectiveness, Efficiency, Social Investment Programme.

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Date of Submission: 16-10-2021

Date of Acceptance: 31-10-2021  
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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The issue of poverty has provoked concerns and debates among scholars and organizations in the world. It has become an issue of global interest. It is an endemic, affecting over majority of people in the world, including Nigeria (Central Bank of Nigeria/World Bank, 1991). Orokpo, Haruna and Mutong (2018) stated that "the issue of poverty in Nigeria is a paradox, a case of poverty in the midst of plenty". Similarly, Gonba (2006) remarked that the human poverty index 1999 placed Nigeria among the 25 poorest in the world, according to UNDP (2010) report, the population in poverty is pegged at 68.7 million as at 2004 and in the last quota of 2016, the NBS reported that about 112 million Nigerian representing 67.1% of the country total population of 160 then are living below poverty level (Vanguard, 2016). Ogwumike(2015) stated that, several poverty reduction approaches have been formulated and implemented all with the objective or attempts geared towards arresting the beleaguered poverty situation in the country. From 1999 till date, some of the poverty reduction measures include the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), SURE-P, NSIPS etc. despite the litanies of programmes on poverty reduction in Nigeria, it has been observed that the incidence of poverty in Nigeria is exacerbating rather than ameliorated.

Therefore, this ugly situation appeared to have compelled the Federal Government of Nigeria under President Muhammadu Buhari to establish Social Investments Programmes (SIP) in 2016 aimed at tackling poverty and hunger across the country. The components of the Social Investment Programme include N-Power, National Home-Grown School Feeding, Conditional Cash Transfer, Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP), which consists of the Market-Moni, Farmer-Moni and Trader-Moni schemes and they focus on ensuring a more equitable distribution of resources to vulnerable populations, including children, youth and women. Since 2016, these programmes combined have supported over 4 million beneficiaries across the country. To this end, Laolu Akande, the spokesperson for Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo said that over 1441 billion have so far been spent on the four programmes. N-Power, which is the job programme for unemployed graduates has received 1426.418 billion, being the single largest spending item out of the four social investment

programmes under the 2016 Appropriation while N7.092 billion, 14800 million and 147.301 billion have been spent on Home Grown School Feeding, Conditional Cash Transfer and Government Enterprises Entrepreneurship Programme respectively. No less than 25 million meals have been served under the National Homegrown School Feeding Programme, even as the Presidency is now implementing a huge ramp up of the Social Investment Programmes as directed by the Vice President, YemiOsinbajo whose office supervises the programme. As at 2017, the Government has spent a total N41, 714,793,293 across all the 36 States and FCT implementing different aspects of the four Social Investment Programmes. (Daily Trust August 3, 2019).

A breakdown of the total number of meals served show that 1,051,619 million primary school pupils are now being fed across the seven states of Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Ogun, Oyo, and Zamfara state. No less than 11,847 cooks have also been employed. Altogether, 8,587 schools are involved in those states. Indeed possibly, later in the week, more meals will be served as Delta and Abia states are now ready to be paid under the federal government school feeding scheme. Specifically, Delta State is expected to receive soon, a sum of ₦1463,366,100 to start the feeding of 90,523 primary school pupils. In the same vein, Abia State is also expected to receive ₦42, 921, 200. Besides, Kaduna State has now been repaid ₦3.4 billion for its past expenses implementing the food programme ahead of FG's roll-out.

The Vice President who had received the SIP Update Report recently noted the progress made under each of the programmes, but gave express and urgent directives that the programmes be promptly expanded in coverage so that more Nigerians can start to benefit. A comprehensive SIP implementation analysis shows that every local government area, every state and the FCT have beneficiaries in one of the four programmes, while some states are already benefiting in more than one. For instance, under the N-Power job scheme for unemployed graduates now running in 36 States and FCT, 162,024 unemployed graduates have been effectively enrolled and validated-meaning have been cleared to be receiving the N30,000 monthly stipends, out of the 200,000 originally engaged late last year. A vast majority of the validated beneficiaries have been receiving stipends as at 31st March, 2017. Indeed, an additional number has just been added to the list of those receiving their pay in the last several weeks. Under the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) scheme, 26,942 beneficiaries are now being funded as at last month with the monthly N5, 000 stipend in 9 States and 84 Local Government Areas. The States are Borno, Cross River, Niger, Kwara, Ekiti, Kogi, Oyo, Osun and Bauchi. Also, the Government Enterprise Empowerment Programme (GEEP) designed for the empowerment of market women, traders, artisans and co. has also recorded good progress with the disbursement of 57,234 interest free loans, except a one-time low administrative fee. GEEP which is designed for well over one million Nigerians has now registered 3,162,451 people who have showed interest and are members of 26, 924 registered cooperatives for purposes of the loans. So far, women participation has been remarkable with 56 per cent of loans so far disbursed to women beneficiaries in 28 States and FCT.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The paper was anchored on Systems theory which was originally proposed by a biologist, Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1928. He proposed that a system is characterized by the interactions of its components and the nonlinearity of those interactions (McNeill and Freiburger, p.22, 2003). Therefore, this theory views government as system with input coming from the masses in the form of demands for economic and social well-being as well as the provision of basic necessities of life by the government for the overall benefit of the citizenry.

The theory therefore becomes relevant to the study as it implies that government serves as the processing unit which takes inputs in form of demands, processes them and sent out outputs in form of authoritative decisions in form of policy initiatives in the instant geared towards poverty reduction. The theory shows how government reacts to people's plight in terms of the provision of the basic necessities of life. It highlights hoe demands of the peoples are presented to government, government actions on the said demands and the out being the prograame that will enhance the well-being of the peoples.

### **A Critical Examination of the Components of Social Investment Programme**

The current Social Investment Programme of Federal Government has four components.

1. N-Power job scheme
2. Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP)
3. Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT)
4. Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP)
  - MarketMoni
  - FarmerMoni
  - TraderMoni

In all the schemes, money is paid directly to the beneficiaries.

**N-Power Programme:** The scheme is the largest post-tertiary employment programme in Africa, comprising N-Power beneficiaries that are paid a monthly stipend of ₦5 0,000 and are deployed as volunteers into various sectors of need in the public space, such as health, agriculture, education and public finance. The N-Power is a job employment and empowerment scheme for hitherto unemployed Nigerian graduates under the Social Investment Programmes(SIP). The N-Power programme, our graduate employment scheme now employs 500,000 young men and women in every local government of Nigeria. The N-Power scheme commenced in 2016 and has beneficiaries in all the LGAs of the 36 States of the Federation and the FCT. It has so far provided jobs for 500,000 hitherto unemployed young Nigerian graduates nationwide. All batch 1 N-Power beneficiaries were given the opportunity to select and own electronic devices/tablets for continuous learning as they grow, depending on the selected vocations of entrepreneurship, and to boost the Knowledge Economy while the batch 2 beneficiaries are yet to follow suit. A web-based application was used to select candidates and so provided a level-playing ground for all applicants with no room for favouritism. The N-Power Programme has been able to offer skills development programmes digitally to over 500,000 young Nigerians between the ages of 18 and 35. Based on conservative projections, the N-Power scheme would provide jobs for at least 10 million Nigerians by 2023. It is a scheme geared towards jobcreation; alleviate poverty and empowerment initiatives through volunteering services. It is also aimed at imbibing on Nigerian youths the learn-work entrepreneurship culture between the ages of 18-35 (FGN 2018). According to Olawole (2018), the goals of the programme includes; " reducing the rate of unemployment in the country, facilitate the transfer of entrepreneurial, technical skills and employability ability and to bring solution active public service and government diversification policy. The scheme is divided into three components viz, n-teach, n-tech, n-health, and n-agro as well as other subsidiary non-graduate scheme as n-build and n-knowledge respectively. N-Teach beneficiaries under this sub scheme will serve in public schools as auxiliary teachers for a period not less than two years subject to modification by the appropriate authority. The aim is to help the beneficiaries gain relevant work experience and mould the better for further challenges as may be determine by the political and economic climate. N-Health Volunteers under this group will be deployed to serve as public health assistants in government owned health facilities as well as provide basic health diagnostic services in the area of primary assignment N-Agro, the youths deployed under this group will serve as researchers and the local farmers in a bit to educate them on contemporary farming techniques and innovation to boost agricultural productivity thereby achieving the objective of food sufficiency.

**Home Grown School Feeding Programme:** The Home Grown School Feeding Programme is currently feeding over 9 million primary school pupils. It aims to deliver school feeding to young children with a specific focus on increasing school enrollment, reducing the incidence of malnutrition (especially among the poor and those ordinarily unable to eat a meal-a-day), empowering community women as cooks and by supporting small farmers that help stimulate economic growth. Over 26 States are participating in the Programme and they include Abia, Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi and Imo (South East); Akwalbom, Cross River and Delta (South South); Osun, Oyo, Ondo and Ogun (South West); Benue, Niger and Plateau (North Central); Kaduna, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Zamfara and Sokoto (North West); Bauchi, Gombe, Borno, Jigawa and Adamawa (North East). The number of cooks engaged to prepare the meals are 96,972 cooks while the number of small-scaled farmers that supply the locally sourced ingredients for the meals are estimated to be over 100,000 farmers. The number of public schools currently being reached are 49,837 schools, with over N66 Billion paid out so far to the 26 participating states.

**Conditional Cash Transfer:** The programme provides targeted monthly Base Cash Transfer of ₦5,000 to the poorest and most vulnerable households in the country, with the sole aim of graduating them out of absolute poverty. Under this component, about 300,000 Nigerians now receive ₦5,000 monthly. The programme is currently implemented in 26 States including Borno State IDPs and 297, 973 beneficiaries in 19 States plus Borno IDPs have received payment from inception to date. A total of 2,530 Cash Transfer Facilitators have been trained and 3763 groups and cooperatives have been formed. The following states are currently receiving payment: Adamawa, Anambra, Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Ekiti, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Osun, Oyo, Plateau, Taraba. To ensure that beneficiaries establish a sustainable means of livelihood before graduating out of the programme they are continuously supported, mentored and coached to form savings groups by trained Cash Transfer Facilitators in every ward who visit them weekly to provide capacity building on life skills and basic financial knowledge as well as nutrition, hygiene, livelihood and sanitation information. Beneficiaries (household members 18-40 years) are expected to plant and maintain woodlot or home garden, practice erosion control or maintain household sanitation depending on what the state selects. The number of beneficiaries that have undergone awareness raising exercises to improve their wellbeing is 297,973 beneficiaries while the total amount paid to beneficiaries from inception to date (December 2016 to June 2018) ₦12.835.110,000.00.

**Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP):** Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme (GEEP) is also an important tool for financially empowering small businesses, artisans, market women, petty traders, and table top traders. GEEP comprises of Farmer-Moni, Market-Moni and Trader-Moni. Over one million beneficiaries - market women, traders, artisans, farmers - across all 36 States and the FCT. GEEP (MarketMoni, FarmerMoni, TraderMoni) has given ₦26.4 billion in interest-free loans ranging from ₦10,000 to ₦350,000 disbursed to more than 1.06 million market women, traders, artisans, farmers across all 36 States of the country and the FCT. Under GEEP, 56% of the loans have gone to women.

- **FarmerMoni** loans start at ₦4300,000 and are for farmers in farming clusters, via farm aggregators. A BVN is required for FarmerMoni. The loans are disbursed to the farmers' bank accounts, but the aggregator regulates the use of funds to ensure inputs, fertilizers and farming best practices are provided.

- **MarketMoni** is a short tenor interest-free credit of between ₦450,000 and ₦4300,000 for small businesses - medium-scale traders, market women, artisans, and youth in market associations - under the auspices of their cooperative societies. The cooperative societies help to ensure that these sums are returned. Already, under the MarketMoni scheme, 349,000 new bank accounts have been opened. There are currently close to 500,000 small businesses that have accessed that loan.

- **TraderMoni** is a microcredit loan for the bottom of the pyramid trader, and is expected to empower two million petty traders by the end of 2018, is designed to help petty traders expand their trade through the provision of collateral free loans of ₦10,000. The loans are repayable over a period of six months. Under the scheme, beneficiaries can get access to a higher facility ranging from ₦415,000 to 1450,000 when they repay ₦10,000 within the stipulated time period. When a borrower pays back the first loan, he/she immediately qualifies for a second loan of ₦15,000. After payback of the second loan, he/she progresses to a ₦420,000 loan, and then ₦450,000, and finally ₦4100,000. The micro-credit scheme was first formally launched on August 7 in five markets in Lagos State - Mushin, Ikotun, Agege, Ketu, and AbuleEgba areas. The TraderMoni was later launched in 10 states, including Lagos (August 7), Kano (August 20), Abia (August 20), Akwalbom (August 21), Katsina (September 1), Osun (September 3), Kogi (September 8), Cross River (Sept 12), Oyo (Sept 13), Abuja (September 19) and Bauchi (October 23).

#### **Implications of the Social Investment Programme on Nigerians**

Consequently, it appears that Social Investment Programmes (SIP) has benefited and continued to benefit millions of Nigerians. Across the 36 states of the federation and the FCT, millions can testify to the impact of the Social Investment Programmes. It has not only provided needed welfare support to Nigerians but it has also created jobs and provided more opportunities for Nigerians in the formal and informal economy. Since it started in 2016, about ₦4450 billion has been implemented, and the SIPs have impacted over 42 million Nigerians, that is over 12million direct beneficiaries and about 30 million indirect beneficiaries, comprising family members, employees of beneficiaries, cooks and farmers. In Kano State alone, there are over one million school pupils in over 5,000 public primary schools currently being fed a free nutritious meal daily under the School Feeding Programme, while over 7,000 cooks are being engaged in the programme. Also, the Conditional Cash Transfers initiative has 51,350 households as beneficiaries spread across a total of 1,651 communities in the state, while over 180,000 traders are currently benefitting from the TraderMoniprogramme with plans to engage more people in the state. It is stating the obvious that the SIPs have impacted the lives of Nigerians in all the 36 states of the federation. For instance, the N-Power job scheme, which currently employs 500,000 young Nigerian graduates and 20,000 non-graduates in different areas of public services - health, education, agriculture, building and IT has volunteers deployed in all the 774 local government areas of the 36 states. The Home-Grown School Feeding programme is now feeding over 9.5 million children in public schools in 31 states nationwide; while the GEEP loans, comprising MarketMoni, FarmerMoni and TraderMoni is providing micro-credit loans to over 2 million Nigerian petty traders, artisans and businessmen nationwide. The CCT, which provides a monthly Cash Transfer of 145,000 to the poorest and most vulnerable households in the country, with the sole aim of taking them out of absolute poverty, has been able to reach over 400,000 in Nigeria. The Conditional Cash Transfer scheme currently has almost 14,000 beneficiaries in Adamawa State, with 22,248 more having been enrolled, waiting for disbursements commencing in June 2019. The State has also benefitted from the other components of the N-SIPs. For instance, the school feeding programme in the state has a total number 169,975 beneficiaries, with 167,873 school pupils being fed in over 1000 schools, with 2,102 cooks engaged in the state. Also, smallholder farmers in the state benefit, thus contributing to the local economy. In the same vein, about 40,000 traders are current beneficiaries of the GEEP TraderMoni, FarmerMoni and MarketMoni schemes in the state.

In general, the Social Investment Programmes continues to improve the lives of millions of Nigerians nationwide. This was succinctly captured by independent reports by Civil Society Organisations. One of them, Action Aid Nigeria, acknowledged that the N-SIP "contributes in addressing the problems of out-of-school

children and youth unemployment in Nigeria and knows the programmes are impacting on the lives of Nigerians albeit at different levels. It further said, "We believe more Nigerians can be reached if the voted funds are released, because the intentions are good and commend the highly competent technical staff of the National Social Investment Office led by Mrs. Maryam Uwais for the job done so far. Based on our experience, the National Social Investment Office listens to feedback from the CSOs and many other stakeholders. That is why Action Aid Nigeria is happy to be part of the process and encourage all Nigerians to take interest in how the programmes are being implemented in their locality." This probably resulted to the President's commendation of Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osibanjowhose office oversees the Social Investment Program. President Muhammadu Buhari commended the Vice President for his work in driving the N-SIP of his administration. The SIP has been described as arguably the largest social investment programme in sub-Saharan Africa and the largest social welfare scheme in the history of this country. For instance, one of the cooks in the School Feeding Programme in Kano State, Saffiyya Mustapha Galadanci, had this to say recently: "May God uplift this government and protect it from evil doers. This job has helped our lives because I have 8 children, my husband is afflicted by Hepatitis B. Among these 8, 7 are girls and one is a boy, one of the children has completed her degree and 2 have finished their secondary education but cannot proceed due to lack of funding. Because of this job, I have now taken responsibility to put this two in higher education, Maryam and Batula, one is now in FCE Kano while the other is still in secondary school, I have nothing to say than to pray that God protects this government and that He makes us grateful people." Galadanci made this remark during the special programme held in Kano state when thousands of SIP beneficiaries in the state came out in large numbers at Murtala Mohammed Library to pray for President Muhammadu Buhari and Vice President Yemi Osinbajo over their success at the 2019 polls. Thanking President Buhari and Vice President Osinbajo for the success of the programmes, the beneficiaries urged the Federal Government to sustain the schemes (Mohammed, Daily Trust Augusts, 2019).

## **II. EMPIRICAL REVIEW**

Odey, Stephen Adi (2019) carried a study on assessment of the contribution of N-Power programme to youth empowerment in Cross State. The purpose of the study was to assess the contribution of N-Power programme to youth empowerment in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were; to determine the contribution of N-Power programme to youth empowerment in Cross River, to identify challenges facing the programme in ensuring empowerment of youth in the study area and to suggest ways of improving the N-Power programme for more effective youth empowerment in Nigeria. The study adopted cross sectional survey design while cluster random sampling was used to select beneficiaries. Questionnaires were used to collect data as Key Informant Interview was also used to compliment Questionnaire. Furthermore, the study used percentages for analysis of data. The study discovered that the beneficiaries of N-Power programme were mostly composed of N-Teach strand of the programme, followed by N-Health strand, N-Agro and Voluntary Assets and Income Declaration Scheme (VAIDS) strands respectively. The study also found that N-Power contributed to empowerment of youth through poverty reduction, proficiency skills in ICT, financial empowerment, on the job experience and investment in small scale businesses. However, there were challenges faced by the programme in empowerment of youth which included delay in payment of allowance, unpaid allowances, distance to working places and teacher training for most of N-Teach beneficiaries. The study therefore recommended for prompt and timely payment of the stipends to beneficiaries of the programme by Federal government, timely sorting of problems of unpaid allowances, posting nearest to place of residence and teacher education for N-Teach categories.

Similarly, Bison G, Daniel Bisong (2019) carried a research on impact assessment of the N-power Scheme: A Study of Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The objectives of this study were to examine the impact of the N-power scheme in employment generation, economic wellbeing of beneficiaries and job skills enhancement of beneficiaries in the Cross River south senatorial district. The research design adopted for this study was the survey design. The researcher adopted the purposive sampling technique in selecting sample-, from the population of study. A sample size of two hundred and fifty respondents were selected for study. The researcher utilized the questionnaire in gathering quantitative data for the study. The hypotheses that were stated for study were tested using person product moment correlation. The analysis was run on the Statistical Package for social science (SPSS). The results of the study indicated that there is a positive significant relationship between the N-power scheme and the following variables, economic wellbeing, job skill enhancement and employment generation.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that Government should introduce mandatory training and workshops in areas such as ICT and agriculture for volunteers to increase their employability after the expiration of the scheme.. It was also recommended that Government should provide interest free loans to interested volunteers to start up their small or medium scale enterprises.

### III. CONCLUSION

It was established in the paper that poverty in Nigeria has taken a worrisome dimension in Nigeria, hence the need to address the issue proactively. It is on this ground that the current government deemed it necessary to introduce Social Investment Programme in 2016 aimed at alleviating poverty and hunger in the country. The programme has four components which include N-Power, Home Grown School Feeding, Conditional Cash Transfer and Government Enterprise and Empowerment Programme. The Social Investment Programme has obviously engaged so many youths and women meaningfully, put smiles on the faces of the beneficiaries and by extension raised their standard of living. It has also provided employment opportunities especially for those engaged under N-Power and as cooks for Home Grown School Feeding Programme. According to FGN (2018), the N-power programme has provided a veritable platform for engaging unemployed graduates. The scheme has engaged about five hundred thousand graduates in different sectors of the economy such as education, agriculture and health.

However, the programme is not without challenges as captured in the paper. Issue of poor management, inadequate information, wrong bank verification, non-payment of some beneficiaries, posting N-Power volunteers to long distance from their location and the short life span of the programmes.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Drawing from the above discussion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should intensify efforts towards sensitizing the beneficiaries as well as the public on the workings and core objectives of the programme.
2. It was also recommended that a department (Social Investment Department) be set from Ministry of Labour and Productivity for proper management of the programme.
3. Strategy for posting N-power beneficiaries/volunteers to their places of primary assignment should be reviewed towards the realization of the scheme's goal(s).
4. It was also recommended that state and local governments be adequately carried along for effective implementation and monitoring of the programme.
5. There should be four different coordinators for the four components of the programme.

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Omeje, P. N (PhD), et. al "Effective and Efficient Management of Social Investment Programme in Nigeria." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 26(10), 2021, pp. 64-70.