

## Participatory Communication and the Question of Objectivity in Development Intervention: A Study of Fadama Project IIIAF in Tsambaki Community, Kano State

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### Abstract

Participatory communication is one of the communication approaches that has gained recognition among communication for development enthusiasts. Conceived as viable for community mobilization and project execution, participatory communication remains an integral component by which successful and sustainable development is guaranteed. However, it is ironic that despite the viability of this approach, studies have documented encounters of undesirable results on account of deploying participatory communication in development interventions. It is against this backdrop that his paper highlights lack of objectivity as one of the key reasons why the deployment of participatory communication has yielded undesired results. Using Fadama Project III Additional Financing and Tsambaki as case studies, this paper, establishes the viability of participatory communication in development interventions. The paper also underscores objectivity, emphasizing its integral role in participatory communication context and contributes to the body of knowledge on some of the reasons why deploying participatory communication might leave much to be desired. To achieve this, the paper used qualitative research method hence Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion were conducted and inferences were made to arrive at the study findings. The study concludes that participatory communication is a promising approach to communicating development but other variables must be taken to cognizance if successful and sustainable development through this approach is envisaged.

**Keywords:** Participatory Communication, Objectivity, Fadama Project IIIAF and Journalism

### Introduction

Engaging communication in the pursuit for development is a long-aged phenomenon which gained global prominence in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Established as a counterpart to development intervention, communication is a fundamental catalyst for mobilisation and empowerment as far as successful and sustainable development is concerned (Mefalopoulos, 2008). The earliest use of communication for development intervention was predicated on the recommendations of the dominant paradigm which was symptomatic of development based on the transfer efforts of the West to the periphery. Therefore, the mass media was conceived as a prerequisite for transforming the periphery into modern societies particularly since it was perceived to have a magic multiplying power. The understanding of development as a unidirectional

adventure made change assimilative and the mass media became a sine qua non for translating this ambition into reality (Moemeka 1984).

Unfortunately, this did not happen and the highlight of the criticism that greeted the dominant paradigm reviewed how it was conceptualised and the principal communication approach by which its development agenda was dispersed. As the conduit by which the philosophies of the paradigm were transferred, the mass media came under the fire of criticism from scholars in developing countries and their arguments labelled its use asymmetric. Huesca (2002 pp4) substantiates that; scholars concluded that the uses of mass media in development imposed the interests of dominant

classes on the majority of marginalized people, resulting in the reinforcement, reproduction, and legitimation of social and material relations of production. The dialogic facet of communication, identified as one of missing ingredients of the paradigms' communication approach became the springboard for robust research endeavours that birthed new approaches to communicating development (Servaes, 2008). Conceived as an offshoot of participatory model, participatory communication remains one of the earliest results from the investigation and deconstruction of modernization paradigm and its attendant communication approaches.

Believed to have gained momentum in the 1980s and 1990s, participatory communication became the end product of participatory research which focused on engaging stakeholders for issue identification in development process. Scholars like Paulo Freire who experimented with participatory communication on matters of an adult-literacy campaign for peasants in North-eastern Brazil, Orlando Fals Borda who developed participatory action research (PAR) and Robert Chambers who was instrumental in developing participatory Rural Appraisal research (PRA) are labeled some of the originators of this communication approach. Founded on the principle of free and open dialogic process, participatory communication advocates for a horizontal relationship between the centre and the periphery for successful development intervention (Tuft and Mefalopulos, 2008; Waisbord, 2008). In fact, studies have established the role of participatory communication in development programmes as an imperative particularly when the ultimate goal is sustainable development. Urquiola (2021pp.8) substantiates that,

Participatory communication is key for development projects. Participatory communication can take place in each stage of the development project. Depending on the approach and the necessary means, it can be more useful in the research, design, implementation, or evaluation stage. It helps build an accurate definition, ensure the most effective and reliable partnerships in the region; foster relevance, commitment, and sustainability.

Conceived as the exchange of information between parties involved in development process through dialogue, participatory communication has become a force to reckon with in developing countries and its impact on matters of change is a testament to its potency (Sitti, 2016).

While the historicity of participatory communication establishes it as a fundamental breakthrough in communication research and development practice, field experiments and studies suggest that it is not a magic wand and might be ineffective when poorly deployed in development projects. In favour of this argument, Kigbu (2019), substantiates that the application of participatory communication for development can be shaped by the way the concept is interpreted. This argument has been established by other studies and the view remains that to achieve desired result through

participatory communication, the understanding of the approached by development practitioners/enthusiast must be indicative of synergy with other approaches and functions of communication. Addressing a crucial facet of these functions Tuft et al (2008) assert that, the participatory communication paradigm does not call for a replacement of the basic communication functions associated with information dissemination, but rather broadens its boundaries to include more interactive ways of communicating. While the role of other communication functions cannot be overemphasized, this paper considers the essential function of objectivity in participatory communication. Objectivity simply denotes any communication or information that is based on and reflects truth, accuracy, and balance. Suffice to say that the absence of objectivity in any communication process reduces the process or the information disseminated during such process to entertainment as well as a personal or political opinion (Broersma, 2011).

Development projects are based on and driven by specific agendas that outlines the intentions of the project and how it would be achieved. Therefore, the early stage of mobilization through dialogic approaches like participatory communication creates a platform for dialogue that encapsulates promissory statements from facilitators of the project on 'what will be done. However, the failures of many development projects begin when stakeholders record discrepancies between the promises of the project and its fulfillment during the project's time span. Worthy of note is that a variety of factors can be responsible for these discrepancies but the stakeholders often conceive such project and its entirety as embodiment of lies and deception. Therefore, the burden of responsibility falls on facilitators of development projects who must handle avenues created by participatory communication objectively to avoid epileptic trust cum sparse participation in development projects. While participatory communication creates a levelled playground for stakeholders' involvement, objectivity maintains their involvement throughout other stages of the development project. Consequently, the success of deploying participatory communication in development project is dependent on the commitment of the project to deliver on the promises made during these dialogic sessions (Thuillier et al, 2004). In developing countries like Nigeria, the absence of objectivity in participatory communication manifest itself in forms of an uncompleted project, delay in project implementation, and partially completed projects. This predicament remains a principal factor limiting the viability of participatory communication to serve as catalyst for participation and social mobilization (Mafelopulos, 2003).

Objectivity is a crucial facet of communication and while it is conceptualised differently in diverse fields of study, a fundamental component that is common in every understanding of the concept is its affinity with truth. The field of journalism in communication studies comes to mind when objectivity is used but this does not limit the role of the concept to journalism alone. The role of objectivity in participatory communication and the setback it can bring to development intervention is primary concern of this paper. Therefore, this paper underscores the role objectivity and its attendant impact on Fadama Project IIIAF Intervention of in Tsambaki Community.

## Literature Review

### Objectivity in Perspective

Objectivity is famously considered an emblem of journalism but evidence from other studies have shown that its use and importance is not limited to the field of communication. Affirming the role of objectivity in science, Reiss et al (2014) aver that understanding scientific objectivity is central to understanding the nature of science and the role it plays in society. Armstrong (1979) corroborates that, it is the foundation of scientific work. The objective scientist is looked upon as the ideal to strive for; at least, that is the popular conception of the ideal scientist. The field notwithstanding, affinity with the truth is the common trait that objectivity share across different study areas and endeavours. Wien (2017) validates that, concepts such as 'truth' and 'reality' cannot be separated from the concept of objectivity. The concept objectivity has deep philosophical roots because it pertains to the ontological enquiry of what is true and the epistemological argument of how people know it to be true. Heidegger (1943) cited in Boudana (2011) conceptualizes objectivity to mean a standard that promotes truth, defined as a correspondence, grounded in correctness, between thought and reality. One of the prominent roles of objectivity in communication endeavour is coherence with reality which is requisite for making accurate decisions concerning any subject matter. Heidegger argues that objectivity arms the recipient of any information with the ability to measure discrepancies between disseminated information and reality.

In this sense, reality can be exemplified in the question forms of 'what happened (news) and why is this happening (present implication)'. Thus, objective information remains the intermediary between both realities; providing answers that helps recipients make decision about 'what is happening and prospective decision concerning 'what might happen. However, in a case where these intermediate information are fabricated, key amongst the cost of such information on target audience are fatigue, psychological stress, emotional overload, unfounded decisions, and the attendant lack of trust that will greets the news agency or source of that misleading information (Bennett, 2005; Hoxha et al, 2017; Rocha, et al 2021). Studies provide clear exemplification on this cost of fabricated information. In fact, Pulido, Ruiz, et al (2020, pp. 2) exemplifies the argument of information and reality

"Disinformation spread by the anti-vaccine movement has led to episodes regarding vaccination, provoking easily preventable disasters, such as the measles epidemic in Washington state. The spread of false information also explains a decrease in immunization behaviours with respect to measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccinations, explaining the drop in the demand for this vaccine in the UK and the USA between 1999 and 2000".

It is instructive to note that objectivity in communication did not emerge as an ornamental tool to mark decades of progress in journalism rather it emerged as an antidote to the proliferating

falsehood and biases that essentially stemmed from partisan struggles. Therefore, the possibility that seeking insight into objectivity would lead one to survey scholarly arguments on journalism abounds. Not only has the concept gained prominence through journalism but journalism remains the fraction of communication studies that mirrors pragmatic objectivity. Buttressing this point, Schudson et al (2005) avers that the value of objectivity is upheld specifically against partisan journalism in which newspapers are declared allies or agents of political parties and their reporting of news is an element of partisan struggle.

Historically speaking, the lack of objectivity became an issue of concern within the nineteenth century and the United State was in focus because of the integral role of journalism in her political structure. The political potentials of journalism begged the need for a non-partisan journalism that will frustrate an exploration which is interest-based, enabling it to serve a heterogenous political audience. To this end, objectivity became the essential cure for partisan proclivities and the possibility of alienating a significant amount of audience based on biases and interest (Maras, 2013). Consequently, practical insight on the subject matter of objectivity would be somewhat difficult especially when it is devoid of journalistic context (Ward, 1999). Conceptualizing pragmatic objectivity Asogwa et al(2012) hold that, objectivity is all about reporting the news in a fair and balanced manner. It is also related to professionalism in journalism. Thus, it is the ability of the journalist to recognise his personal leanings and his ability to control them. Journalists are duty-bound to report the truth. In a more practical sense, Azuka et al established a scenario where the biases and personal leaning of the journalist prevailed over them and deprive the general target audience an in-depth analysis of Nigeria's condition. According to Omenugha et al (2008 pp.15),

"The Rt Rev, Abidun Adetiloye, Anglican Archbishop of Nigeria, was sighted at Murtala Mohammed Airport, Lagos. Journalists crowded him, asking for an interview on issues of national importance. The man of God spoke at length... His views were newsworthy. But the journalists felt they needed something more to write the news. They asked for "transport money". The religious man declined. Resulting in a mutual blackout".

The conspicuous cost of non-objective information notwithstanding, arguments abound that the operationalization and practice of objectivity is an unnecessary burden of impossibility, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Perhaps the tension of the arguments about objectivity has been more intense and sharply felt in the discourse of journalism both in theory and practice. Traditionally considered as the cradle of communication endeavour, objectivity has been facing incessant attacks by critics which seems to be having extinctive effect on this integral concept (Hanitzsch et al, 2009; Calcutt et al 2011; Mara, 2013).

While scholarly arguments emphasize the unnecessary burdens of objectivity in journalism practice, this paper argues that it is a prerequisite for notable success in other field of communication

studies. Participatory communication is one of such fields and objectivity is considered a central component that makes for success when participatory communication is deployed particularly in the rural communities of developing countries. Trust is an essential ingredient in development interventions but people do not trust in a vacuum hence creating the environment that breeds trust is the duty of participatory communication. Ezezika, et al (2012, pp. 3) affirm that,

Trust among the partners and with the community has been identified as an important element of effective public-private partnership (PPPs). Factors affecting the establishment, development, and maintenance of inter-personal and inter-organizational trust can either ensure or compromise the success of agbiotech projects. Agbiotech PPPs often face scepticism and resistance due to the public's lack of trust in genetically engineered crops and the involvement of the private sector.

As earlier discussed, participatory communication creates such an environment that builds trust, and words of interaction that are shared between facilitators and beneficiaries in such an environment is the mortar that holds the bricks of trust together. The idea of this kind of communication embodies horizontal interactive platforms where the needs of beneficiaries and intentions of the agencies are not only discussed but interwoven for better outcomes. Conceived to have gained roots in Communication for Development praxis, participatory communication remains a key communication approach of development intervention with predictable positive outcome.

However, absence of objectivity in the deployment of this viable communication technique has resulted in its futility during development interventions; thereby, creating a plethora of complexities, incurring losses of both invested resources and expected outcome. In fact, the evidence from the field study of this paper makes bold to say that lack of objectivity in the use of participatory communication makes its further/future deployment futile if not totally impossible. Therefore, drawing from the field research experience on the deployment of participatory communication, this paper accentuates the importance of objectivity as an imperative especially when successful result in the use of participatory communication is envisaged.

## **Fadama Project III Additional Financing**

Fadama III Additional Financial (Fadama IIIAF) was rolled out as a continuation to scale up the impact of the mother program Fadama Project III. Fadama project was an agricultural program established as a development intervention by the Nigerian government to not only tackle the concerns of national food security but to improve the living standards of her rural populace who represent 70% of her total population and are predominantly farmers. Consequently, in partnership with World Bank, Fadama Project I took off in 1992 and adopted six states in Northern Nigeria. The sole aim of Fadama project I was to address some of the identified factors militating against agricultural intensification

in rural areas. Focusing mainly on irrigation and agro-infrastructure, the project built upon some of the successes of the Agricultural Development Programme (Akinleye, et al 2015).

Fadama Project II followed and built on the lessons from Fadama project I. Prominent among the lessons that Fadama project II built on was in the area of organization, management, and communication since the program expanded its scope to accommodate more Nigerian states. Encouraged by the success of Fadama Project II, the Nigerian government rolled out Fadama Project III for the entire country and sought the assistance of the World Bank (Agriculture and Rural Development, Department Central West Region 2003; World Bank 2016). The implementation of the project was the responsibility of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (FMARD) hence FMARD delegated the coordination of the project's activities to the National Fadama Development Office (NFDO). By way of coordinating the project, the Agricultural Development Programme (ADP) under respective state Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development were employed to manage the project's activities at the state levels. Worthy of note, is the participatory approach that was adopted in the subsequent Fadama projects after the completion of Fadama Project I (Agriculture and Rural Ocar Development Department Central West Region, 2003).

The Community Driven Development approach (CDD) was adopted by subsequent Fadama projects and provided the framework for the general implementation of the project with enormous impact in core areas like communication. The sole aim of this participatory approach was to create a horizontal communication flow which made the stakeholders active participant in both the planning and the execution of project. The intended outcome was to give a sense of belonging, trust, and belief in the project which are some of the key prerequisites to sustainable development. This approach is also deemed imperative because the project would provide agro-infrastructure, support in the form of equipment hence a sense of belonging, trust and belief is necessity particularly since sustainability is the overall goal (Third Quarter Progress Report, 2014).

Based on the provisions of CDD approach, participatory communication became an integral element of the subsequent Fadama projects, facilitating productive interactions between the project functionaries and the rural stakeholders in different communities. Fadama Project III Additional Financing (Fadama III AF) was the final phase of the overall Fadama project and remains the focus of this paper because, among other Fadama Projects in Kano state, it is believed to have made the highest impact on the farmers in the state. Also, the project focused on support in key areas like irrigation and key staples like rice which are some of the main stay of farmers in the study area. Furthermore, improving the living standards of small-scale farmers enlisted among the objectives of the project as rural farmers in the study area are among the large rural populace with very low income hence poverty alleviation is an important aspect of the project (Pate and Dauda, 2013).

Tsambaki is one of the communities in Bunkure Local Government Area with surrounding villages like Zango Kummai, Kawan, Gurigo, Gwamma Lauteye, Zango Buhari and is the case study for this article for a host of reasons. Prominent among them is that it is one of the adopted communities of Fadama IIIAF under ADP Kano with Fadama User Groups. It is endowed with a population of 3, 050 with 90% as farmers and has ways that enables irrigable agriculture which is deemed a prerequisite in Northern Nigeria because of the late onset of rainfall (Farauta et al 2011; Netherlands Enterprise Agency, 2020).

## Methodology

This study adopted qualitative research method to collect data hence a well-structured checklist was developed with the sole aim of providing a guide in the inquiry process. Therefore, Key Informant Interviews (KII) were held with the functionaries of ADP Kano who coordinates the activities of Fadama project IIIAF at the state level. The Head of Communication, the Head of Development, Youth and Gender for Fadama IIIAF, ADP Kano and the Community Facilitator for Tsambaki community were interviewed using the KII instrument. Also, KII was conducted with 2 farmers who were group leaders in the farmers groups of the community under study. While Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was held with farmers in the community. These farmers were selected using purposive sampling hence members from different farmer groups were selected randomly to makeup the group of 8 participant as Focus Group Discussant. Using a checklist with well-structured questions as guide, data were collected through which the results, discussions and conclusion of this study are made.

## Result and Discussion

The study found that participatory communication was not only deployed in mobilization of stakeholders and beneficiaries in Tsambaki community but it was the conduit that afforded the farmers the opportunity to do an intensive need assessment for the project. Affirming this finding, the Key Informant aver that,

*As part of our early engagement and sensitization process, we engaged with members of the community. During the meeting, we discussed at length about their issues of concern. The CDD approach which is an integral component of the Fadama project IIIAF has made interaction with the stakeholders more participatory and engaging so we followed the participatory method of communication (KII response from Interview with ADP Kano's Head of Communication, Kano state).*

Corroborating the above, a Focus Group Discussant concur that,

*I like the way the Fadama people talked with us and how they allowed us to talk about our problems as a community. They sat with us and we talk for long on some of our challenges as farmers and how help can be made available.*

*This approach gave me a sense of belonging and hope for a good farming year (Paraphrased response from FGD participant in Tsambaki community, Bunkure LGA, Kano state).*

The evidence from this data validates the deployment of participatory communication for stakeholder mobilization and situation investigation during project. Trust in the development agenda of any project is an important component, particularly when sustainable development is envisaged hence the advent of participatory communication remains an apt solution to this impasse. This finding supports that of Chitnis et al (2011) who in analysing the application of participatory communication in a health program called "Comprehensive Rural Health Project (CRHP)" in Jamkhed, India, found that the application of participatory communication through the sharing of information for mapping joint problem between insider and outsider creates collective knowledge and strengthens the changing environment. The case of the rural farmers in Tsambaki was no different as the study shows and this was made possible because of the way that the participatory communication session was structured. The Key Informant Informant elaborates thus,

*A major part of our discussion with the farmers was based on the amount time we were willing to spend with them on matters that concern their needs and how they would want them to be solved. Discussing with the local people in our communities here would be difficult if you do not use our local language (Hausa) and you are not willing to spend quality time with them. During my discussion in Tsambaki I was able to discuss the challenges o the farmers highlighting the ones that were most important to them (KII response from Interview with project facilitator for Tsambaki community, ADP Kano).*

Participatory communication has been applauded for its ability to create a sense of belonging in development project where target beneficiaries do not sit on the sidelines and observe but play active roles from the beginning to the end development projects. However, a major challenge remains that beneficiaries who are farmers in this context will easily sport discrepancies of any sort when they occur because they are invested in the project. This is where objectivity in deploying participatory communication is deemed imperative. The result of successful participatory communication is that it facilitates the process of building trust, belief, and a sense of belonging in development projects. Therefore, in a case where the implementation of the project does not mirror the items agreed upon during the participatory interaction, the project suffers a great setback as was the case in Tsambaki.

### *The Question of Objectivity in Fadama Project IIIAF in Tsambaki Community*

The question of objectivity in participatory communication for development is puzzling because many variables interplay from the beginning stages of development projects to the implementation stage. Consequently, it is imperative to underscore the burden of responsibility that these encumbrances place on development facilitators. More so, while objectivity in journalism require fairness, balance, and truthfulness in news reporting, its emphasis in participatory communication is more on truthfulness, especially on the part of the facilitators. Objectivity during participatory communication is not only concerned with relying truths about project's agenda during horizontal interactions; it is equally concerned with moderation during community engagement such that functionaries avoid loquacity. This implies that facilitators in maximizing the moment must avoid the temptation of making promises that the project cannot keep because of its design and promises that are not feasible within the life span of the development project. Objectivity in participatory communication must also be advocative of transparency where possible uncertainties about the project is made bare at a moderated and manageable level during the participatory communication process.

Communal complexities and sensitives can pose a challenge at the beginning stages of development projects hence it often pressure facilitators to be verbose and cunning with information as a way of salvaging the situation. However, the data from this study is a stern prove that such mechanism can have negative impacts on interventions particularly in rural communities. It is against this premise that the finding of this study show that objectivity was lacking and evidence from this study show that this resulted from the way participatory communication was interpreted by facilitators. This finding accentuates the conclusion of Kigbu (2019) that, the application of participatory communication for development can be shaped by the way the concept is interpreted. Consequently, this study holds that lack of objectivity in deploying participatory communication for Fadama project IIIAF constituted a notable obstacle that minimized the resultant effect of this communication approach in Tsambaki community.

This position supports the finding of Msibi et al who enumerated some of the vices that does not only constitute lack of objectivity but pose as hindrance to the successful utilization of participatory communication approach. According to Msibi et al (2010) participatory communication plays a significant role in local government development initiatives" though challenges such as unavailability of development communication practitioners, lack of finance and lack of high spirit of empowerment to the local people. The Key Informant for the community under study corroborates that;

*In 2017 the Fadama people came to Tsambaki, discussed with us very well, and registered us in groups where I was made the leader of my group. We discussed a lot of issues and some of them were the bad roads in this community which does not allow us to transport our farm produce and the lack of water pumping machines that has not enabled us to farm rice very well. After the whole session, they gave us*

*their numbers and told us that they would come to see us to begin further planning and discussions but we did not see them again and when I try to call them, they would not pick (Paraphrased KII response from Interview with group leader for Tsambaki community, Bunkure LGA).*

Elaborating on the testimony of the Key Informant, one of the Focus Group Discussant added that,

*I am one of the members of the Fadama User Groups formed in this community in 2017. The Fadama people came to this community that year and interacted with us concerning the Project and part of the requirements to benefit from the programme was to form a Fadama User Group of 15 members which would enable us interact with them as the Project does not deal with individuals but groups. We did as they instructed and we never heard from them again (Paraphrased response from FGD participant in Tsambaki community, Bunkure LGA, Kano state).*

One key rationale behind the advocacy for objectivity in the overall deployment of this communication approach is the intricate nature of development projects. The project under study is one of such that is lace with intricacies and prominent among them is the counterpart funding system by which it operated. A development project which depends solely on the counterpart funding efforts of both federal and state government is bound to experience challenges, particularly during project implementation stage. This was the scenario in this context, the Key Informant affirmed that,

*Fadama project IIIAF operates a counterpart funding system meaning the government and World Bank share in the payment for the implementation of the project. The project is funded by the federal and state government hence the amount of money that any state ADP can access is highly dependent on the state's ability to pay the required counterpart percentage. Therefore, on any account where the government is unable to meet its own end of the agreement the beneficiaries suffer greatly and this problem is common in other Fadama project IIIAF states. The was the problem we encountered in ADP Kano and our inability to bridge the communication gap between our target communities on these matters affected the project negatively (KII session with Head of Development, Youth and Gender for Fadama IIIAF, ADP Kano 2019).*

Lack of fund for implementation was a notable challenge for Fadama IIIAF project. In fact, the Quarter Progress Report (2014) affirm that Counterpart payment by State and Federal Government remains an impediment to project implementation. However, the

lack of objectivity on the part of the functionaries was fundamental in the overall difficulties that the project encountered. A notable aspect of the lack of objectivity in this case study is reflected in the inability of the facilitators to discuss this counterpart realities in detail with the beneficiaries during the participatory communication sessions. This counterpart challenge notwithstanding, the neglect on the part of the facilitators that greeted the query of the rural farmers is another aspect that is indicative of the lack of objectivity as Misbi et al points out. Even though the lack of fund was a circumstance by their control, their reaction is reflective of their inadequate understanding of the role of objectivity and how it works in development interventions. The KII response clarifies that;

*Our activities with farmers in the adopted communities were hampered in 2017 due to some unresolved issues at the federal level and this affected the implementation flow with the farmers in the communities of the state. As a facilitator, it was very difficult to interface with the farmers because I did not have the answers as to why this was happening. I was able to reach out them a year later but there was very little that we could do with them (KII session with ADP facilitator for Tsambaki community 2019).*

An understanding of the role objectivity suggests that frequent correspondence with the farmers on matter like this is one of the primary ways of keeping the dividends of participatory communication alive.

In fact, the demand of objectivity in the face of such challenge is robust correspondence that is basically fuelled by facilitators efforts to avoid keeping the target communities in the dark. The long time it took for the facilitators to engage the beneficiaries in follow-up interaction presented them as untruthful and bred distrust among their beneficiaries. When the projects promises are not delivered by agencies, beneficiaries would certainly blame it on a host of factors hence they would seek an interaction for clarity with the agency/project functionaries. However, if this correspondence is neglected as was the scenario in the case study, the cost of such neglected span into the future of the project, affecting the project in many ways. Buttressing on this cost this neglect, one of the Focus Group Discussant affirm that,

*Fadama Project IIIAF gave us some agrochemicals in this community when they came back in 2018 and provided use with some good advice to improve our farming but when they told us that we would have to pay some money before we can access this support, most of us were not willing and happy to pay. For me, I did not pay because I did not believe what they were saying (Paraphrased response from FGD participant in Tsambaki community, Bunkure LGA, Kano state).*

During my interaction with the farmers in the community under study, the behavioral disposition of the farmers was indicative of lack of trust, belief, and total loss interest which they attribution to lack of objectivity both in the communication and implementation of the project. Judging from this results and discussion, it can be deduced that utilizing participatory communication with neglect for objectivity can result in setbacks is not total failure of the development project. Hence participatory communication must be adequately interpreted and understand by facilitators if it will produce desired result during development intervention.

## Conclusion

Participatory Communication remains an apt approach in community intervention but deploying it places a responsibility on development facilitators. Objectivity is one of such responsibilities which might be neglected as is the case in this study. However, the finding of this study is prove that participatory communication that is devoid of objectivity would not only produce minimal impact on the overall intervention but will hinder active participation of stakeholders and target communities. Therefore, this paper serves as reminder and creates awareness about objectivity as an imperative component of participatory communication which must be taken into cognizance in communication, planning, and implementation of development projects.

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