



THE ROLE OF GENDER-SENSITIVE POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IN ADDRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: A DISCOURSE OF WOMEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME (WEP)

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Abstract

The thrust of this paper is on the role of gender-sensitive policies and programs in addressing environmental challenges in Nigeria. It focused on the Women Environmental Programme (WEP). The paper utilized secondary source of data to look into the activities of WEP in implementing a variety of programs and activities to support women's participation in environmental management, including climate change adaptation and mitigation. The paper observed issues faced by women in attaining a clean environment which includes climate change, deforestation, desertification, and water pollution and this has led a lot of women to live in poverty, which makes them more vulnerable to the impacts of environmental degradation. The paper adopted the Implementation Theory in explaining the reason why programs and policies on issues of gender sensitivity are stampered. The paper concluded that Gender-based policies have contributed to the slowdown in implementing environmental problems in Nigeria and WEP is one example of an organization that is working to promote gender equality and environmental sustainability through its programs and activities. The paper therefore recommends among others that Government should support women's participation in environmental decision-making.

Keywords: Policy, Environmental Management, Gender, Climate Change.

INTRODUCTION

In international politics, linking the interests of women and the environment with development is a new phenomenon. For example, in the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (Stockholm, 1972), women are not mentioned at all and the term “man” is consistently used in the general sense of “human being.” Even in the first Global Environmental Strategy (IUCN/UNEP/WWF, 1980), social problems were hardly discussed and women were only mentioned a few times, i.e. in connection with issues traditionally associated with them, such as illiteracy and population growth.

According to a review made by the United Nation (UN) 2014, Nigerian women and girls have significantly worse life chances than men compared to other societies of the world. Regardless of their educational qualification, they still occupy fewer than 30 per cent of all positions in the public sector, only 15 per cent of Nigeria’s 80.2 million women operate bank accounts and is 3 times less likely than a man to receive bank loan, 5 times less likely to own a land than a man (United Nation, 2014). This reveals the neglect of the Nigeria government in tackling the issues of gender inequality despite all attempts from various quarters to reduce its tenacity. The report also stated that women are Nigeria’s hidden resource. Yet over 80 per cent of them are unable to read compared to 54 per cent of their male counterpart. In some states; majority of women are illiterate especially in the Northern Nigeria, more than two-third of young girls are unable to read and write (Gender Statistics, 2010).

A workshop on the effects of the environmental crisis on women was organized by the Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations in 1985 in conjunction with the World Conference to Review and Evaluate the Results of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, and Peace in Nairobi. Following these workshops, an action plan was made to better support women's leadership in environmental management

and governance as well as to give women access to environmental information, training, and education (IUCN/UNEP/WWF, 1980).

However, the importance of women in protecting the environment and the various ways they participate in development processes were not mentioned in the official schedule when the first meeting to plan for the Earth Summit was held in 1990. The meetings held under the auspices of the UNEP in the four developing world regions of Africa (Harare, Zimbabwe, 1989), the Arab countries (Tunis, 1990), Asia (Bangkok, 1991), and Latin America and the Caribbean (Quito, 1991), where participants submitted the information then available on the main environmental problems of each region and their effects on the female population, were largely responsible for the subsequent incorporation of women into the program.

The Women's Environmental Program (WEP) is a Nigerian non-governmental organization committed to gender equality and environmental sustainability. The WEP implements a variety of programs and activities aimed at supporting women's participation in environmental management, including climate change adaptation and mitigation. WEP's work to address environmental challenges in Nigeria is based on the recognition that women and men have different roles, responsibilities, and access to resources when it comes to the environment. This means that environmental degradation and climate change often disproportionately affect women (United Nation Environmental Program, 2015).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Gender-sensitive policies and programs have played a key role in addressing environmental challenges in Nigeria by promoting women's participation in environmental decision-making. This is important because women have unique knowledge and perspectives on environmental issues and their participation in decision-making can help ensure that policies and programs are effective and equitable this has propel the state to ensure that women have access to the resources they need. Examples of such resources are access to drought-tolerant crops, clean water, and renewable energy technologies, as well as supporting women-led initiatives to address environmental challenges.

On the contrary, gender-sensitive policies and programs have been faced with serious threats in achieving sustainable development and human well-being. These challenges include climate change, deforestation, desertification, and water pollution. These challenges disproportionately affect women due to their gender roles and responsibilities as well as their limited access to resources and decision-making opportunities. In Nigeria, women who are often responsible for collecting water and firewood are therefore the most affected by drought and water scarcity. Women are also more likely to live in poverty, making them more vulnerable to the effects of environmental degradation.

In this view, WEP as a gender-responsive policy jeered to address environmental challenges was introduced to support women in advocating for environmental policies that protect the rights of women and girls; WEP has also supported women in developing and implementing climate-resilient agricultural practices. In carrying out this ordeal various programs were initiated under the policy like The Women Climate Change Adaptation Programme (WCCAP), The Women's Environmental Education Programme (WEEP) and The Women's Economic Empowerment Programme (WEEP); to easy the effect of gender disparity in ensuring women rights are protected in the hub of government policies.

Though these policies as enacted and jeered towards women right and protection but have been stamped by various factors which bores down to literacy level and poverty. Though various studies have been conducted on Literacy and poverty, but this study intend to look at the successes of these programs from the Administrative point of view i.e. The apparatus of Government

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to:

1. *Identify the key challenges and opportunities for WEP to further promote women's participation in environmental decision-making.*
2. *Determine how WEP has supported women-led initiatives to address environmental challenges in Nigeria.*
3. *Examining the key impacts of WEP's work on the lives and livelihoods of women in Nigeria.*
4. *Identify lessons learned from the WEP experience and provide recommendations on how other organizations and policymakers can promote gender-sensitive approaches to environmental management in Nigeria.*

Research Questions

1. *In line with the research objectives the following research question were formulated?*
2. *What are the key challenges and opportunities for the WEP to further promote women's participation in environmental decision-making?*
3. *How does WEP support women-led initiatives to address environmental challenges in Nigeria?*

4. What are the key impacts of WEP activities on the lives and livelihoods of women in Nigeria?

Review of Relevant Literature

The debate about women and the environment emerged in the mid-1970s. In the northern countries, it is associated with women's involvement in the environmental and pacifist movements and their criticism of feminists who had not yet taken a position on the environmental issue. This has led to problems in the forestry and agricultural sectors. On the one hand, the uncertainty about the supply and cost of oil caused by the energy crisis has led to calls to reduce the use of wood as an energy source and to launch programs specifically for women to both reduce daily energy consumption and use of alternative fuels and participate in reforestation projects. Boserup's (1970) highlighted a significant change in the perception of women's role in economic development and assert that rural programs are aimed at women who were not aware of the role they play in agriculture and this is the main cause of the environmental damage to which this sector is exposed.

A detailed breakdown of the projected financial needs per year is contained in the table below. The financial needs cover both activities and administrative costs covering the different pillars of work in the new plan for 10 years (Inter-American Development Bank, 1996).

Table 1: Adopted from Women Environmental Programme (WEP) (2017)

Name Of Organisation	Women Environmental Programme (WEP)									
Address	Block E, Flat 2, Anambra Court, Gaduwa Housing Estate Apo, After Legislative Quarters									
Title	Strategic Estimated Budget for the Next 10 Years									
Exchange Rate as at 12th December, 2017	1 Euro to NGN 360.25					1 USD to NGN 305.45				
Part 1. Estimated Budget in Different Currencies:										
Total in Euro:	EURO		Total in USD:	USD		Local Currency:				
Estimated Budget	€ 3,819,335.82		Estimated Budget	\$ 4,504,553.05		Budget in Local Currency: ₦ 1,375,915,729.39				
Part 2. Overview of Summary Budget in local currency										
Pillars	Estimated Budget Per Year (2018)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2019)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2020)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2021)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2022)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2023)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2024)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2025)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2026)	Estimated Budget Per Year (2027)
Environment	27,574,760	29,674,760	30,314,760	28,634,760	28,774,757	31,574,757	32,674,757	27,374,757	28,164,757	30,352,757
Governance	12,454,760	13,664,760	15,449,760	16,904,760	16,414,757	19,874,757	20,274,757	23,024,757	17,374,757	20,213,757
Peace and Security	45,058,520	43,644,520	43,154,820	42,198,520	41,614,014	40,558,514	37,558,514	39,638,514	42,838,514	38,783,314
Climate Change	7,258,527	8,558,527	10,228,527	11,098,527	13,058,224	13,598,524	16,498,524	15,798,524	16,498,524	15,998,524
Staff Cost/Personnel Cost	24,120,000	25,326,000	26,592,300	27,921,915	29,318,011	30,783,911	32,323,107	33,939,262	35,636,225	37,416,037
Overhead Cost/Administrative Cost	4,200,000	4,494,000	4,808,500	5,145,181	5,505,343	5,890,717	6,303,067	6,744,202	7,216,382	7,721,529
Grand Total NGN	120,666,567.00	125,362,567.00	130,548,747.00	131,903,662.00	134,683,105.99	142,381,180.56	145,632,726.33	146,520,096.40	147,729,159.26	150,487,917.26
Total Euro	€ 334,952.30	€ 347,987.69	€ 362,383.75	€ 366,144.80	€ 373,860.11	€ 395,228.81	€ 404,254.62	€ 406,717.82	€ 410,074.00	€ 417,731.90
Total USD	\$ 385,045.23	\$ 410,419.27	\$ 427,388.09	\$ 431,833.89	\$ 440,933.40	\$ 466,135.80	\$ 476,780.90	\$ 479,686.03	\$ 483,644.33	\$ 492,676.11

The table 1, above shows the detailed breakdown of the expected financial requirements for the year. The financial needs cover both the activities and administrative costs covering the different work pillars of the new ten-year plan. This study measures the success or failure of environmental management in Nigeria using the following indicators: management effectiveness; Policy Implementation; legislation and law enforcement; institutional effectiveness; and existing environmental management system. This is based on the fact that these indicators have been systematically validated as tools for effective environmental management in Nigeria (Matemilola and Elegbede, 2017).

Women and the Environment

The “Women and Environment” movement is part of the “Women in Development” stream of thought and action, which marked a phase of reflection and action in the field of development projects and programs that is still incomplete in present day (Rico, 1993). Here too, the “women and environment” perspective had a great influence on NGOs and can be found in the documents of the Forum of NGOs that took place on the occasion of the Global Review and Results Evaluation Conference in Nairobi. of the United Nations in 1985. United Nations Decade for Women, in which we find numerous hypotheses derived from this line of thought, which are then further developed by various authors.

The “women and environment” approach emphasizes the potential role of women as “everyday managers” of natural resources (Dankelman and Davidson, 1989), with analyses conducted primarily at the microsocial level. There is much talk about their vulnerability to environmental change due to their dependence on these resources, and emphasis on the need for sustainable development initiatives that support women's contribution to the management and protection of the environment (Collins, 1991). For example, some argue that women are most affected by the energy crisis and should therefore be considered best equipped to address and resolve this crisis (Dankelman, 1985).

This approach focuses on the specific characteristics of women as “guardians of the environment” while viewing them as “the most valuable and at the same time the most neglected resource” (Linggard and Moberg, 1990). This is the reason for paying particular attention to them in environmental projects and

programs since they represent an important environmental “tool” for the various organizational forms they have developed to respond to environmental changes and for the successful experiments that they conducted (Dankelman and Davidson, 1989). This also justifies the call for greater investment in these sectors and in particular in education, the main source of environmental improvements.

WEP's Gender-sensitive Approach to Environmental Management

WEP's work is particularly important in Nigeria, where women play a key role in environmental management. In Nigeria, for example, women are responsible for more than 60% of agricultural production. Women are also the primary caregivers of their families and therefore play a key role in ensuring access to clean water and food (Agrawal and Lemos, 2007; Roussel, 2007; Erhun, 2015).

The gender-sensitive WEP approach to environmental management focuses on Promoting women's participation in environmental decision-making. The WEP achieves this by strengthening the capacity of women's organizations and networks to engage in environmental policy and advocacy. In addition, the WEP is committed to promoting gender-sensitive environmental management structures. Ensure women have access to the resources they need to adapt to climate change. WEP helps women access climate-resilient technologies and practices, such as drought-tolerant plants and climate-friendly agriculture. WEP also works to promote access to renewable energy and clean water and supports women-led initiatives to address environmental challenges. The WEP provides financial and technical support to women's organizations and networks to implement projects that address environmental issues such as deforestation, land degradation, and pollution. The International Institute for Sustainable Development recognizes the environmental framework as an important indicator of sustainable development and pursues sustainable development through policy statements on sustainable natural resource management, measurement and evaluation, climate change and energy, economic policy, and international trade and investment. At the same time, there is increasing recognition that management has a significant influence on environmental decisions and actions. (Agrawal and Lemos, 2007; Roussel, 2007; Erhun, 2015).

Table 2: Adopted from Women Environmental Programme (WEP) (2017)

PILLAR 1: ENVIRONMENT

Name	PILLAR	SUB-PILLAR 1	SUB-PILLAR 2	SUB-PILLAR 3
	Environment	Natural resources management & biodiversity	Chemical & waste management	Water, sanitation & Hygiene
Description	This includes the three pillars of sustainable development-economic (profit), social (people including women youths) and environment (planet)	Flooding, Erosion, Drought, Desertification, Soil Regeneration, and Land Use	E-waste (Reduce, reuse, and recycling), Pollution, POPs, and Solid Waste	Menstrual Hygiene Management, Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), Hand Washing, Water Facilities and Potable Water
Strategy		Advocacy, Training, Community Engagement, Company Relations, Pilot Initiatives, Sensitization, Networking, Research & Publication, collection of gender disaggregated data on access and use of natural resources	Mobilization, Training, Advocacy, Pilot Initiatives, Consultancy, Networking, Research & Publication Monitoring implementation of chemicals conventions through production of shadow reports	Training, Advocacy, Sensitization, Mobilization, Pilot initiatives, Networking, Research & Publication, collection of gender disaggregated data on WASH, Monitoring implementation of WASH programmes and producing shadow reports
Verifiable indicators		No of trainings, workshops for stakeholders, no of advocacy visits, no of new initiatives used to mitigate, no of researches published, and no of media appearances	No of trainings, workshops for stakeholders, no of advocacy visits, no of new initiatives used to mitigate, no of researches published and no of media appearances	No of advocacy visits, No of educational materials, Workshops for stakeholders, No of water facilities maintained & managed, No of new initiatives Used to mitigate, No of researches published, and No of media appearances
Means of verification		Annual reports, media reports, pictures & videos films, and interviews	Annual reports, media reports, pictures & videos films, and interviews	Annual reports, media reports, pictures & videos films, and interviews
Assumptions		Human and material capacity of stakeholders, political will, cultural & religious issues, and	Human and material capacity of stakeholders, political will, cultural & religious issues, and	Human and material capacity of stakeholders, political will, cultural & religious issues, and

WEP's work has had a significant impact on addressing environmental challenges in Nigeria. For example, WEP has supported women's organizations to plant over 10 million trees in Nigeria.

WEP's gender-sensitive approach to environmental management is essential for ensuring that everyone in Nigeria has the opportunity to benefit from a healthy and sustainable environment.

Here are some specific examples of WEP's work in addressing environmental challenges in Nigeria:

WEP has supported women's organizations to plant over 10 million trees in Nigeria. This has helped to reduce deforestation and improve soil quality.

WEP has supported women in developing and implementing climate-resilient agricultural practices. This has helped women to cope with the persistent challenges of climate change, such as drought and erratic rainfall.

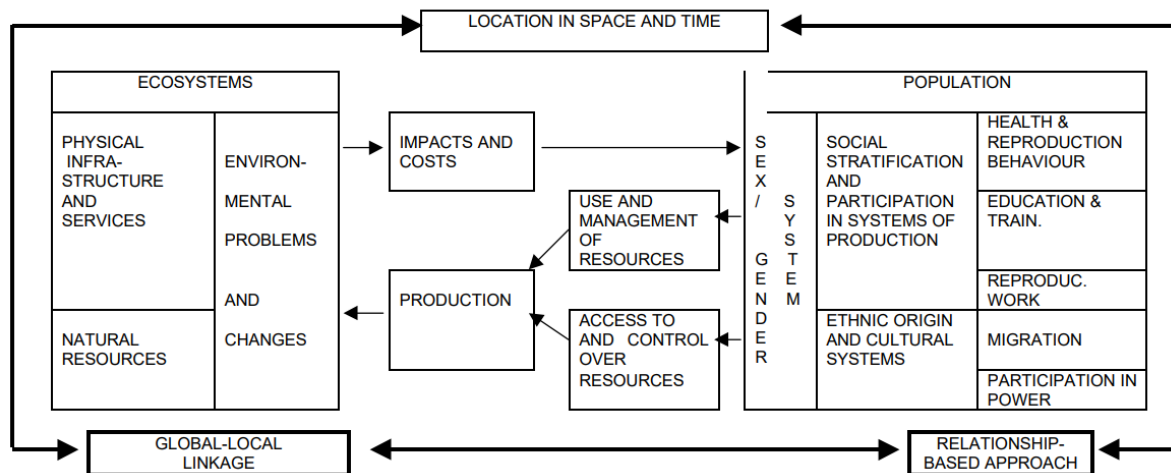
WEP has supported women in establishing and managing community forests. This has helped to protect forests and provide women with access to sustainable forest resources.

WEP has supported women in developing and implementing renewable energy projects. This has helped to reduce women's reliance on fossil fuels and improve access to clean energy.

WEP is helping to create a more sustainable future for all Nigerians. Interventions aimed at changing environmental-related activities, institutions, decision-making, knowledge, and behaviors are also included in the definition (Ayade, 2003).

Figure 1: Adopted from Women Environmental Programme (WEP) (2017)

Diagram of the gender-environment interrelationship



In determining the Global-local Linkage as stated in Figure 1, it is necessary to take into account the particular circumstances of a particular environment and how environmental problems arise at the local level, this analysis must also include the relationship that exists between the local situation and global environmental changes. This relationship needs to be analyzed in both directions: (i) the contribution of local processes to environmental problems affecting the whole world; and (ii) the impact of global processes on particular communities and spaces. Again, attention should be paid to national policies or “sustainable development strategies or plans” adopted by some countries in the region that cover a wide range of environmental, economic, and social objectives and their impacts on people. and natural resources of individual territorial units. In a relationship-based approach as stated in Figure 1, the relationships that people have with each other are influenced by various forms of cooperation, competition, solidarity, conflict, and power, which form a complex and diverse matrix in which both the individual's daily activities and the Models are anchored in political and development policy measures and work location by promoting or resisting the changes necessary to achieve equality. In this case, too, the relationships with nature and the environment established by human activity through the functioning of the productive and reproductive systems of social life give their character to relationship models that correspond to the implemented forms of development. The focus is therefore on the connection or relationship between human actions and the natural environment affected by those actions. One of the strategic aspects concerns gender constructions and relationships, which are integrated into management and action models for the benefit of the environment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical basis for this study is the work of Leonid Hurwicz in the 1970s, His assertion was on “implementation theory”, and his postulation simply relies on deciding empirically on works and developing checklists of factors that need to be taken into account during implementation. Implementation theory is a field of study in game theory that aims to determine whether it is possible to design a class of mechanisms (or institutions) whose equilibrium outcomes pursue a particular set of normative goals or welfare criteria. As Linder and Peters (1990) note, the criterion for an “implementation theory” seems clear when examining policy from the top down so that compliance can be ensured at all levels. In principle, however, flexibility and discretion seem to be the main criteria, so simplicity should be the focus when designing the policy.

In addition, the types of problems and challenges we encounter during implementation also depend on our specific implementation methods. Determinants were defined as factors that were hypothesized or empirically proven to influence implementation outcomes. Many terms are used to describe determinants, including barriers, impediments and facilitators. (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984). Suddenly, major implementation issues would be associated with compliance with program guidelines, leading to gaps in voucher utilization. This raises important questions when it comes to prioritizing common areas of public action to develop and implement gender-responsive environmental programs in the region. However, in this diverse and still little understood area, two problems that are directly related to the lack of equity and therefore threaten the sustainable development processes of the adopted development model can be considered central in all countries:

poverty, in which percent of people live of the population and the barriers to active participation in decision-making and governance faced by various sectors of society, particularly women. Those who coined this expression and successfully brought it to market are inextricably linked to the concept of sustainable development (Sneddon, Howarth, and Norgaard, 2006).

From a policy perspective aimed at generating knowledge and information on the relationships between gender and the environment, the main obstacles in the region lie in the following areas: (i) the limited use of information resources from censuses, household surveys and other statistical sources; (ii) the lack of communication and coordination between the institutions and organizations that conducted the research; (iii) the objectives are not strategically defined; (iv) lack of investment and available resources; (v) important information gaps and aspects that have not yet been investigated.

The Way Forward

To understand the situation and before they can develop strategies and use tools to reverse and prevent environmental damage, policymakers and planners need reliable information about the state of the environment, the pressures to which it is exposed, the causes of these pressures, and their effects on the environment and Population. The same applies to the situation of women and men when developing equality policies. A New Public Administration Law (NPM) is also expected to be passed, which promotes limiting the size of the state, decentralization, emphasis on results, service orientation, partnerships, and emphasis on market mechanisms. There is a need to embed key principles at all levels of government in adopting gender-sensitive policies and programs.

Conclusion

Gender-sensitive policies and programs play a key role in solving environmental problems in Nigeria. WEP is an example of an organization committed to promoting gender equality and environmental sustainability through its programs and activities. By investing in gender-sensitive approaches, the Nigerian government, development partners, and other stakeholders can help ensure that everyone can benefit from a healthy and sustainable environment.

Recommendations

The work of the WEP is a valuable example of how gender-sensitive policies and programs can be used to address environmental challenges in Nigeria. The government should support women's participation in environmental decision-making, ensure they have access to the resources they need to adapt to climate change and support women-led initiatives to address environmental challenges.

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