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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITY AVAILABILITY AT RESETTLEMENT SCHEMES IN PARTS OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The sustainability of resettlement has one underlying goal of reinstating affected inhabitants quickly into their normal lives and if possible, more improved and lasting situations. Achieving this goal comes with implicit and explicit challenges that arise because of land acquisition, compensation and integrating resettled communities into their new homes through community participation. This paper compares infrastructure and facilities in resettlement schemes in Niger State and adopted quantitative and qualitative research techniques, and data acquired through structural questionnaire and personal physical observations. Data collected were subjected to descriptive statistical analyses that show that the majority of respondents, about 56%, are not satisfied with housing facilities they were resettled into, 32.1% are fairly satisfied with health facilities, 56% satisfied with both educational and water facilities. It was also discovered that infrastructure facilities were better in New Bussa compared to other resettlement sites of New Akere, New Gbajibo and New Muregi that in addition lack basic facilities such as schools, health and water. The study concludes that despite many challenges that the government experienced in this resettlement programmes, there are evidences that clearly show pockets of success of the programme in certain aspects. The current government-centred resettlement practices is in need of urgent revision to ensure equal participation by all the stakeholders - emphasizing that development interventions should be implemented together with the affected community. This participatory approach is needed to give more emphasis to developing integrative, flexible, people-centred, bottom-up, and less costly approaches to resettlement and overall development.

Keywords: Disasters, Infrastructure, Participation, Resettlement, Sustainable facilities

1.0 Introduction and issues

Sustainability is not only one of the principles of engagement in development planning process but also a challenge in most developing countries. In planning circles, the notion of development is often equated to sustainable development, which is development for the present without compromising that of the future generations (Bruntland, 2007; Brundtland *et al.*, no date; Cecchin *et al.*, 2021; Membrillo-Hernández, Lara-Prieto and Caratozzolo, 2021). This notion has guided the development of projects worldwide including large dams and the resettlement of affected persons. In Nigeria, issues of sustainability have also become an important language among development practitioners and a critical ingredient in planning, designing and executing development projects (Lu *et al.*, 2020; Potwarka and Wicker, 2021; Castán Broto *et al.*, 2022). The Sustainability of resettlement has one underlying goal of reinstating affected inhabitants quickly into their old and normal

lives (cultural, economic and physical), and if possible, more improvement and lasting situations to be provided also (Sichuan *et al.*, 2016; Rosli *et al.*, 2017). Achieving this goal comes with implicit and explicit challenges that arise because of land acquisition, compensation and integrating the resettled persons into their new homes and livelihood activities with minimal or acceptable changes. In the process, housing, community structures and systems, social networks, and social services can and have been shown to suffer severe disruptions (Raschid-Sally *et al.*, 2008; Nastiti *et al.*, 2017; Rivai, Rohman and Sumantri, 2023).

Resettlement scheme may be defined as a planned project or programme involving the transfer of people most probably through selection and control from one region to another. When resettlement schemes are considered, governments in developing countries, in general, and in Africa, in particular, make decisions as to when, where

and how reestablishment should take place (Cissé and Sèye, 2016; Rosli *et al.*, 2017). Resettlement of people can either be forced or voluntary; as natural and man-made disasters such as wars, floods and earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, among others, are some of the phenomenon that could force man to move out of an area that he is familiar with, to resettle in an entirely new area (Gyuse and Gyuse, 2016; Mahadevia, Bhatia and Bhatt, 2016; Sichuan *et al.*, 2016). The government acquisition of land for public development projects is another cause, and Nigeria is not an exception where it has been assessed that such government decisions often leave the affected populations with little room to manoeuvre and better adjust to living and livelihood activities in their new found places of aboard (Ajibola, 2009; Cissé and Sèye, 2016; Green *et al.*, 2016; Asia, 2021; Mazzocchi, Orsi and Sali, 2021; Richetta, 2022).

Although resettlement is increasingly seen in development theory as an important livelihood strategy for poor populations (Tan, 2008), implementing state-sponsored resettlement schemes and bringing about better livelihood changes has always been a complex process. Experience shows the fact that things can often go very wrong in resettlement operations unless managed with meticulous care (Abbute, 2003; De Wet, 2004). Any resettlement programme involving the movement of people over large distances has many risks and dangers, even if in principle it is a good idea, to move people from a less fertile area to new and more productive land. The question of how far in practice is a planned resettlement programme actually a good policy needs to be answered.

The study areas have witnessed series of devastating flood events in the past, however, those of year 2008, 2009, and 2012, have had widespread damage with equally large-scale displacement of people. These particular events resulted into varying devastating impacts on infrastructure, crops and farmlands, health facilities, educational structures, the environment and numerous livelihood activities with claims of lives and immeasurable loss of properties (NSEMA, 2013). This has caused the expenditure of

public funds in developing resettlement schemes for the hard-hit settlements of New Bussa, New Gbajibo, New Muregi and New Akare through the provision of infrastructure and facilities. However, the detailed assessment of the resettlement activities is largely ignored, in spite of the mounting need to do so (Cissé and Sèye, 2016; Lawanson and Agunbiade, 2018; Tsuji and Otsuki, 2023); in order to gauge the rate of success or otherwise of expenditures by governments and to ascertain the satisfaction of the beneficiaries. The post resettlement evaluation exercise can also establish if: the beneficiaries and the benefiting communities have actually moved away from the disaster-prone areas; if they have successfully adapted to the newly provided settlements; and, what changes have the adaptations brought to their lives and livelihoods activities between and within their respective living environments. These are necessary in order to document the differences of these phenomena with similar attempts in human-induced resettlement schemes necessitated by man-made projects like industrial layouts, large dam constructions, or those resulting from civil conflicts,

Scholars (Abiy, 2004; Belay, 2004; Hammond, 2008) argued that although the resettlement programmes are expected to be implemented voluntarily in consultation with the host communities to ensure bottom-up careful preparations (FDRE, 2003) and effective management of resources (Nicholls and Atherton, 2011; Gyuse and Gyuse, 2016; Lawanson and Agunbiade, 2018); it has been shown that in many places and in practical terms these principles are not appropriately implemented at certain instances (Baptist and Bolnick, 2012; Cissé and Sèye, 2016; Mahadevia, Bhatia and Bhatt, 2016). In such scenario, the affected persons were, in most instances, found to be hastily given options or even relocated without participating in the planning and execution of the resettlement exercise to where even the host communities hardly had any form of participation (Lawanson and Agunbiade, 2018 (Nicholls and Atherton, 2011; Slavko, Glavatskiy and Prokopenko, 2020; Muringa and Zvaita, 2022).

The phenomenal approach to natural events especially disaster mitigation, management and or preparedness in recent times (Paton, 2005; Tall, Patt and Fritz, 2013; Kafi *et al.*, 2019; Bhowmik, Irfanullah and Selim, 2021) have prompted the question of examining the extent at which the resettled victims of flood disasters in parts of Niger State have developed assets (physical, social, financial, human and natural) and secured their livelihoods in their various new locations. Answers to this and similar questions can showcase not just the direction, but, the sustainability of the exercise in line with local and international development agenda (Norris *et al.*, 2008; Bhowmik, Irfanullah and Selim, 2021). This paper examined the perception of the people and assessments of the resettlement scheme in Niger State using New Bussa, New Gbajibo, New Muregi and New Akare as case studies.

Concepts and elements of sustainable resettlement

Resettlement of people often accompanied large scale projects in order to create avenues for the execution, management and development of far-reaching activities that are in the interest of the general public. In many countries, such activities are backed by law for efficient and effective execution in order to limit negative consequences on the environment, people and their livelihoods (Nicholls and Atherton, 2011; Cissé and Sèye, 2016). Many private investments are also known to initiate resettlement programmes that also displace or significantly affect the indigenous, local or initial settlers in a place or region (Nicholls and Atherton, 2011; Lawanson and Fadare, 2015; Lawanson and Agunbiade, 2018). However, the social and economic benefits of such interventions, by both the private or public interests, usually outweigh the ensuing and or immediate and usually temporary discomfort. This has been the main motivational stance that made communities accept proposals that mandate them to leave their ancestral land for the promised future benefits (Rosli *et al.*, 2017).

Anticipated beneficiaries of resettlement projects arising from public and or private interventions are sometimes adjudged to be in a better position to negotiate through dialog,

however, this scenario is not offered to those visited by disasters. Most often when disasters become recurrent, especially at increasing rates of destruction, any intervention of resettling the victims to a safer place is seen as the most desirable thing to do. In many instances, such situations offer little or no room for negotiation, participatory planning, and execution of the relief exercises (Sivakumar *et al.*, 2014; Alsharif *et al.*, 2021; Quiliche *et al.*, 2021). However, in every situation, man always yearn for certain elements of comfort before ascertaining a phenomenon as been successful or not. Victims of disasters are also likely, if given the time, to assessed proposals for relief not only on its practicability, but also on the basis of its long-term sustainability of living and having and promoting dignified livelihood activities of today and the future.

In many instances, the sustainability of public or private projects is based on the concept of continuity, protection of the environment and the multifaceted forms of lives it supports (Rockström *et al.*, 2009, 2021; Abd'Razak and Ludin, 2013; Yami, 2022). However, populations visited by disasters; once passed the recovery phase, are likely to be in search of a different perspective of continuity. Those who faced spatial relocations in the wake of disasters are further burdened with the multitudes of uncertainties ranging from establishing the home environment to reliable access to livelihood opportunities that can once again bind their families together with strengthened resilience. To this aspect of sustainability, resettlement schemes can be assessed by the ability of the beneficiaries to build their homes and can effectively provide for their families. This conceptually aligns the exercise with the global agenda of Sustainable Development Goals especially the SDGs 9 and 10 which stressed 'industry, innovation and infrastructure' and having 'reduced inequality' respectively.

Victims of recurrent natural disasters usually seek succour in environments that enhance sociocultural and socioeconomic aspects of livelihood viewed through freedom from catastrophic events (Juma and Suhrke, no date; Sivakumar *et al.*, 2014; Alsharif *et al.*, 2021;

Quiliche *et al.*, 2021), and in addition, possesses factors that can lead to discernible growth and development at desirable paste (Musa *et al.*, 2015; Abah, 2020; Espey and Parnell, 2023; Hawksley and Georgeou, 2023; Robles and Mallinson, 2023). Only when viewed from this aspect of ‘Recovery – Reconstruction – Re-establishment’ can the resettlement of rural and largely agrarian populations be assessed appropriately in line with the expectations of the beneficiaries (Cissé and Sèye, 2016; Roman-alcalá and Roman-alcalá, 2020; Simula *et al.*, 2021). This approach of assessing resettlement schemes further engages more respondents and themes than the conventional enumeration of those that gained access to relief materials or infrastructure to gauge the success of resettlement projects. This is also in line with the global goal of creating opportunities for ‘industry, innovation and infrastructure’ to ‘reduce inequality’ (SDGs 9 and 10); and to have and maintain a high standard of living, quality of life and wellbeing for all citizens – as contained in Africa’s first goal on Agenda 2063 (Colombo, 2021; Duggal, Rangachari and Gupta, 2021; Bouzarovski, 2022; Guermond, 2022; Hawksley and Georgeou, 2023).

2.0 Study area, materials and analysis

The study area is in Niger State, north central Nigeria located between Latitudes 9⁰51’N to

10⁰57’N and Longitudes 4⁰20’E to 4⁰50’E and cut across Mokwa and Wushishi Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the State along Rivers Niger and Kaduna Confluence. Akare (9⁰54’N, 6⁰38’E), for example, is located 7km from Wushishi town, the headquarters of Wushishi Local Government Area of the State (Figure 1). Materials and analysis are empirical in nature and known to fashion out research analyses that pave ways for similar endeavours and generate policy issues germane to sustainability of resettlement schemes like those under study. Hence, information and field data were generated from and used to assess the phenomenon and the state of the residents of New Bussa, New Gbajibo, New Muregi and New Akare. Attention was drawn on provided opportunities, coping strategies, and the planning implications to achieve sustainable resettlement in this context and Nigeria in general. The analytical framework is focused on the context of resettlement, risks of relocation, livelihood assets of settlers, institutional influences in access to livelihood assets, livelihood strategies and livelihood outcomes. Furthermore, the analysis was based on before and after situation assessments that also incorporate spatial data comparisons using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 21) computer software for the ensuing descriptive and inferential analysis.

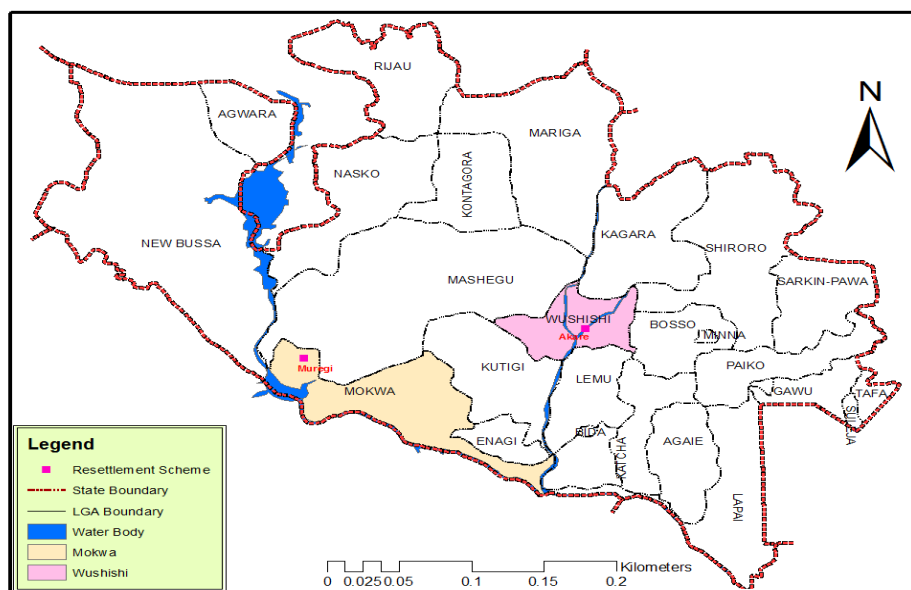


Figure 1: Study Area map

Source: Dept. of Geography, FUT, Minna

3.0 Results and Discussions

Facilities Provision

Availability and the provision of housing

Houses provided by the government in New Bussa consist of 256 low-cost units built for farmers, traders, and artisans on an average land area of about 3,600 square feet, surrounded by a six-foot wall. There are also those of rectangular huts - with one main hut, wives' quarters and toilets that are connected to water and sewage. The third housing type provided is made of hollow concrete blocks with a spray plaster to give a mud-like finish. Lastly, there is the twelve large residences built for the Emir's counselors, larger and higher than the low-cost units, but based on the same principles. The field survey observed that housing conditions in New Bussa were in good condition. These houses were provided by the government and some by individuals who stay and work in New Bussa – the settlement is characterized by the high presence of Federal Government ministries, agencies and schools having a constant inflow of workers from different parts of the country. As host to the nation's first Hydro Electricity Power Dam, it also attracts tourists from around the world, and, with a consistent supply of electricity, even retirees build houses in this fast-growing settlement.

In New Gbajibo, the government and individuals also provided houses at the resettlement sites to provide additional housing (Plate I). However, at New Muregi, only a few houses were available at the site and most of the houses at the site were provided by individuals. The only existing houses provided by the government in New Muregi is the district head house and office and those built by individuals as private developments. A similar situation was also observed in New Akere, where only district head's houses and few for residents were provided by the government and individuals. New Akere happens to have houses of the lowest quality due to limited interventions by the government.



Plate I: Residential Housing provided by Government in New Gbajibo

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2019

Provision of healthcare facilities

New Bussa has numerous healthcare facilities such as the General Hospital, Wawa BHC, Ahmadiyya Hospital, Garafini Hospital, Kali Hospital, Albarika Clinic, Hope Clinic and Maternity. It was discovered that 62% of the health facilities in New Bussa were provided by the government, 11% by private organizations and 27% by individuals (Plates II). However, Gbajibo resettlement site has only one basic healthcare facility and one private clinic; making over sixty-two percent (62%) of her residents dissatisfied with the health facilities which they also regarded as poor. Similarly, New Muregi and Akere possessed one Primary Health Care (PHC) each. The facility at New Muregi was provided as MDGs project while that of Akere was provided by the Niger State Government.



Plate I: Ahmadiyya Hospital at New Bussa

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2019

Provision of educational facilities

There are basic to tertiary level educational facilities in New Bussa that are provided by the government, individuals, organizations and societies. For example, the Borgu Secondary School, Federal Government Girls College, Federal College of Fresh Water, and Federal College of Wildlife Management, among others. This has made New Bussa the only settlement with adequate and diverse educational facilities whereas New Gbajibo has only one primary school, and New Muregi and New Akere have no functional educational facilities. This was attributed to the existence of various problems facing the provision of such facilities in the site like overcrowding and increasing pressure on the only available facilities. Inadequacy of educational facilities forces pupils to walk long distances to other nearby areas for primary school educational attainment.

Provision and availability of water and electricity services

Access to water is a critical element for sustaining resettlement sites. Households in these sites are reportedly collecting potable water from different sources. New Bussa, for example, has pipe-borne water provided by the Niger State Water Cooperation, water boreholes and hand-dug wells. New Gbajibo sources their domestic water from water boreholes and hand-dug wells. However, the entire New Muregi has only two functional water boreholes provided by the government just as New Akere has only one functional water borehole. It was observed that New Bussa has the most adequate electricity facilities among the four resettlement sites due to their locational proximity to the Kainji Hydrological Power Station which ensures there are available 24-hour electricity supplies. New Gbajibo also has electricity facilities supplied by Jebba Hydrological Power Station. Unfortunately, New Muregi and New Akere have no electricity power supply.

Provision of roads and physical access

New Bussa has access roads to other nearby towns and a network of functional township roads. Most of the township roads in New Bussa are tarred and with good road network. On the contrary, the only access road to New Gbajibo is rough and there is no adequate road network within the town itself. Similarly, New Muregi and New Akere possessed only rough roads that were also the main access to the resettlement sites. There is no efficient road network in the various resettlement sites, as most of the roads are not pliable during the wet season.

4.0 Discussions

Availability of infrastructures

Field findings on the provided infrastructure and facilities show low levels of service provision across the sites in the study area (Table 1). However, the ranking exercise shows differences in service provision with New Bussa having more of the provided infrastructure compared to the other resettlements and sites in aggregate terms. For example, New Bussa has the highest number, and beneficiaries' high assessment of infrastructure and services provided except hand-dug water well that it got only one. Whereas, New Muregi and New Akere only had a single of each infrastructure provided; it is only in the case of water provision through hand-dug wells and boreholes that they each had two and three respectively. This has also affected people's low assessment of the provision of these facilities. The discrepancies between infrastructure provisions that favour New Bussa and New Gbajibo, could be because these settlements are closer to urban areas and urban management authorities in their immediate sub-regions - with more accessible roads than the less favoured New Muregi and New Akere. Hence, physical distance matters in accessing interventions even in the case of resettlement scheme done to avoid or alleviate sufferings from natural disasters.

Table 1: Infrastructure at the resettlement sites

Infrastructure	Main indicators	Resettlement sites			
		New Bussa	New Gbajibo	New Muregi	New Akere
Housing	Building structures	3	2	1	1
Health service	Accessibility	3	2	1	1
	Physical condition	3	2	1	1
Education	Health facility	3	2	1	1
	School facility	3	1	1	1
Water	Physical condition	3	1	1	1
	Tap water	3	1	1	1
Road	Borehole	3	2	2	2
	Well	1	3	3	3
	Road construction	3	2	1	1
Total score		28	19	14	12

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2019

Shortage of these facilities can to a large extent derail the achievement of the main goal of the resettlement exercise, which is to provide better living areas and livelihood activities that are away from threats of any disaster or distress as much as possible. With inadequate provision of livelihood-enhancing facilities and infrastructure, the return of normal lifestyle and economic activities for the resettled individual families can hardly be achieved. This can also have negative effects on human and economic development as a holistic approach to the integration and assimilation of disaster victims.

Users’ Satisfaction

The resettled families lost shelter in addition to properties and livelihood amenities as a result of the resettlement scheme and the processes of providing infrastructure at the various

resettlement sites. Hence, only 13.5% rated the housing scheme, for instance, has been highly satisfactory, and over half (56%) are not satisfied. This was due to the fact that the possession of permanent houses has decreased immensely thereby lowering the social positions of the people and general quality of life for those beneficiaries who happen to get one. Further field data analysis also shows that only about a quarter (27.5%) of the respondents were highly satisfied with the health facility provided at the resettlement sites while 20.6% of the respondents were satisfied. However, over 51% were fairly satisfied or not satisfied at all with these facilities particularly those at New Gbajibo, New Muregi, and New Akere resettlement sites. Hence, it is only those at New Bussa that expressed the sense of satisfaction with the provided health facilities (Figure 2).

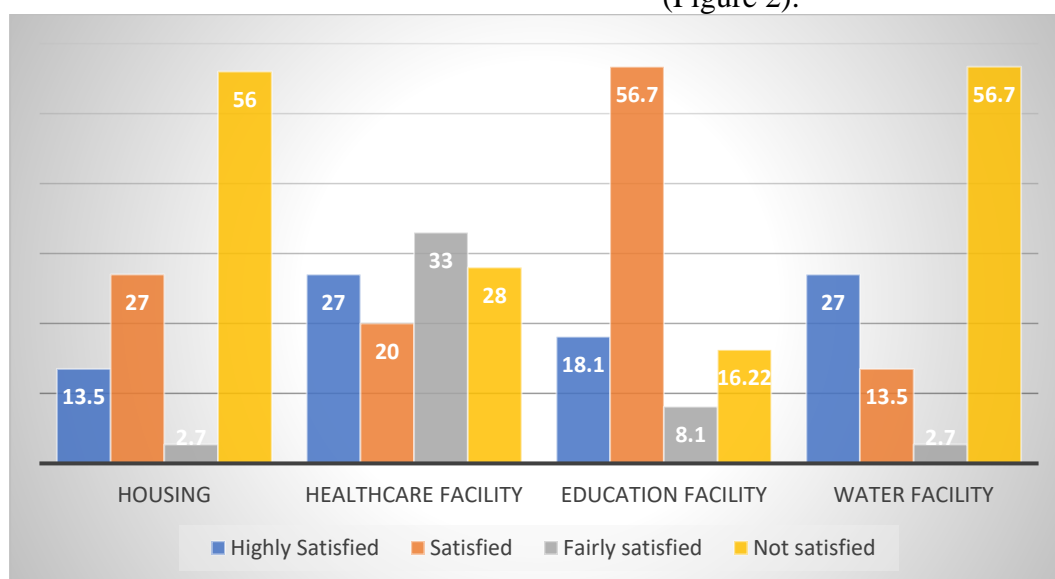


Figure 2: Levels of Satisfaction with the Provided Facilities

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2019

In regards to educational facilities, the satisfaction of the respondents at various resettlement sites is such that only 18.9% mostly from New Busa were highly satisfied, 56.7% were satisfied, 8.1% were fairly satisfied while 16.22% of the respondents were not satisfied (Figure 2). The analysis indicates that education facilities are also fair at the resettlement sites with over half (56.7%) of their beneficiaries and users being satisfied with the facilities. This same assessment goes for those provided with water facilities as the majority (56.7%) of the residents were not satisfied with water provision and management at the various resettlement areas.

Challenges to livelihood at the resettlement sites

Poor physical development of the resettlement sites is a major challenge facing the entire resettlement scheme. For example, a total of 56.2% of its beneficiaries complained of insecurity of life and property, while virtually all (98.4%) emphasized that lack of access to public infrastructure is a major challenge to life and livelihood in their new place of aboard. At the individual levels, it was also discovered that 86%, 56%, 47%, 46% and 82% of these beneficiaries identified lack of govt intervention, insecurity of life and property, inadequate or lack of accessibility to public infrastructure and Poor physical development respectively as the main challenges in New Gbajibo site (Figure 3).

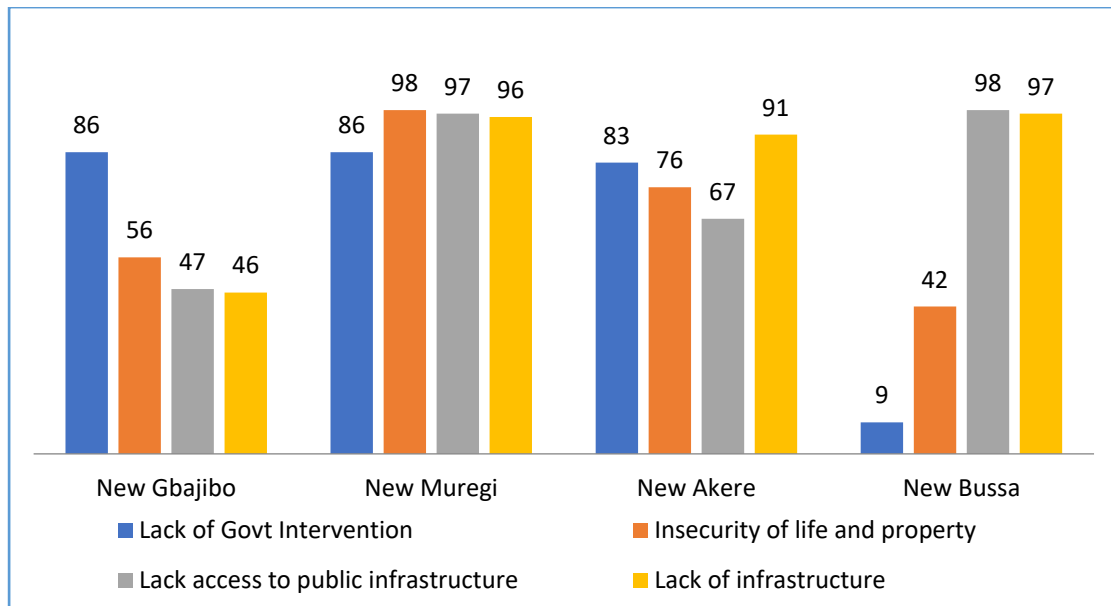


Figure 3: The Challenges of infrastructure at the Resettlement Sites

Source: Authors Field Survey, 2019

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Virtually all beneficiaries of the scheme agreed that lack of adequate interventions by the government especially, insecurity of life and property, limited public infrastructure, and Poor physical development were the main challenges faced in New Muregi and similar sites. Hence, it can be deduced that the study areas have continued to face a lack of or inadequate basic infrastructure needed for a convenient, safe, healthy, and aesthetically pleasing environment. Every resettled person lacks effective access to good and functional

healthcare facilities, thereby increasing weak control over any outbreak of diseases as hospitals and healthcare centres remain unprovided or ineffective where there is provision. Despite the many challenges the government and her agencies experienced in resettlement programmes, there are evidences that clearly shows the full actualization of several schemes of the entire programme. The planned state-led resettlement programme had brought relief to households facing flood hazards, raise the assets and incomes of the poor and the resettled households at least in the

short run. In general, the resettlement programme has helped many beneficiaries in gaining more income and thereby providing finance and security to their immediate and extended families. With this success, however, there were many challenges in the furtherance of resettlement programmes across the state and the nation in general.

- i. There should be wider participation. In the assessed resettlement programme, the government took almost the entire responsibility for planning, organising and implementing the relocation, rehabilitation, and development of those affected. The prospective beneficiaries received less call for participation and involvement.
- ii. Involve local and International NGOs. The private sector and civil society groups need to be involved in humanitarian services like resettlement schemes. There should be a policy framework that encourages all the willing stakeholders especially the prospective beneficiaries and their groups (where they are available) to fully participate in this large-scale resettlement programme.
- iii. There should be proper planning. The resettlement programme shows little evidence of proper planning and effective allocation of the necessary resources. For example, despite the statements about the needs for preparing sites prior to the resettlement and building of shelters, food provisions and setting up of infrastructure and services in advance, only food aid was provided. This shows the low-level of the needed preparations that would have ensured the achievement of success in many areas and facets of the programme.
- iv. Prevention of future disasters. Effective mechanisms should be put in place by all the stakeholders to prevent people from co-habiting in disaster-prone areas of our cities and towns. This way, a lot of environmental disasters and stress can be avoided altogether. This can be achieved through persistent prevention and

control of physical developments in such areas; regular enlightenment programmes on the dangers of living in disaster zones or areas.

- v. Extending the activities of government agencies. There is the need to extend the duties and responsibilities of certain agencies of government concerned with the protection, development and management of the physical environment and related activities. The operational field for these government agencies should go beyond the city where many of them are found presently.

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