

**COURSE
GUIDE**

**PAD 707
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION**

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INTRODUCTION

Local Government Administration is one- semester course for students offering PGD in Public Administration. It is a 2 credit units course consisting of 13 units. Each unit is supposed to be covered in two hours. It is also core a course.

The course consists of 3 modules and 13 units. The units are: theoretical basis of understating local governments, structures and functions of local government, financial management in local governments Local Government Finance and Decentralization. The Nature and Scope of Local Government, The Significant of Local Government, Evolution of Local Government, The 2003 Local Government Reforms, Local Government and Service Delivery in Nigeria, Local Government Administration and Grassroots Development in Nigeria. etc.

This course Guide tells you briefly what the course is all about, what course material you will be using and how you can work your way through these materials. It also highlights issues of timing for going through these units, and explains the Activities and Tutor-Marked Assignment. There are supposed to be tutorials attached to this course and taking advantage of this will bring you into contact with your teacher which will enhance your understanding of this course.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE

The overall aim of this course on Local Government Administration is to expose you to how public administration takes place in local government. This is done to broaden your perspective on public administration and stimulate your interest in local government. It is also to make you appreciate that local government may be small governments but its administration is a reflection of what takes place in higher government.

During this course, you will learn about the significance of local government and structure of local governments.

You will therefore learn about the philosophy behind local government, what they are really created to do and how they are structured to do it, how has local government evolved over time, what are their sources of finance, how do they manage finances and what development do they effect in grassroots development; knowledge of these will lead to the appreciation of the institution and the service they render.

COURSE AIMS

The main aim of this course is to abreast students with the composition of Local Government Administration as a third tier of government. This course will bring to the fore the understanding of local government as the closest level of government to the grassroots. The significance of local government is highlighted including the development and types of local government systems.

The specific aims of the course are as follows:

- a) For students to be introduced to the importance in having local government
- b) The dimensions and characteristics of local government
- c) Understanding local government as a platform for political and popular education
- d) Understand how local government promotes the spirit of liberty and equity
- e) How local government is an effective solution to local problems
- f) Undertake an x-ray of the local government system through the lenses of several constitutional reforms
- g) How the local government has evolved over time and the landmark changes occasioned by the evolution

COURSE OBJECTIVE

To successfully underscore the aims of the course as outlined above, the course set overall objectives. These objectives are contained at the beginning of each unit. It is expected that the student goes through the objectives of each unit as he/she reads along. These objectives at the beginning of every unit are intended to present a summary of the course unit to enhance the reader's understanding.

Some of the broad objectives of the course as a whole are indicated below;

On successful completion of the course, you should be able to;

- 1) Underscore the local government as a channel of communication between the people and the government.
- 2) Examine the contribution of the military to the growth of local government system in Nigeria.
- 3) Appraise the foundation of the local government as laid down by the colonialists.
- 4) Underscore the significance of electioneering at the local government level.
- 5) Examine the essence of financial management at the local government level.
- 6) Identify the role of local government in grassroots development
- 7) Underscore the basis of conflict between Association of Chairmen of Local Government (ALGON) and the Governors of the state, etc.

WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete this course you are required to read the study units and recommended textbooks and explore more current materials on the internet. You may also need to visit the local governments around you to observe practically some of the things conveyed in this course, for example, services delivered by local government. You could also have a chat with local government staff on a wide array of issues including the problems they face. Note also that local government is a living subject and there are developments daily about the organization especially in your country, so, you are advised to keep abreast of these in the newspapers and magazines and even the radio.

In this course, each unit consists of exercises or activities to test your understanding from time to time. At a point in your course, you are required to submit assignments for assessment purposes. At the end of the course is a final examination. Below you will find listed all the components of the course, what you have to do and how you should allocate time to each unit in order to complete the course successfully on time.

COURSE MATERIALS

Major component of the course are:

- a) Course Guide
- b) Study Units
- c) Further Readings
- d) Activities and Tutor-Marked Assignment

Everything is contained in each unit except the test books which you may have to prepare. You are advised to source current materials on the net and avail yourselves of newspapers and magazines and other publications on local government. You may contact your tutor where you run into problems about text books.

STUDY UNITS

There are thirteen units in this course as follows:

Module 1

- Unit 1 The Nature and Scope of Local Government
- Unit 2 The Significance of Local Government
- Unit 3 The Development of Local Government
- Unit 4 Types of Local Government Systems
- Unit 5 Functions and Problems of Local Government

Module 2

- Unit 1 Evolution of Local Government System in Nigeria
- Unit 2 Local Government Reform under the Babangida Era and the Introduction of Presidential System at the Local Government Level
- Unit 3 The Fourth Republic
- Unit 4 The 2003 Local Government Reforms

Module 3

- Unit 1 Local Government and Service Delivery in Nigeria
- Unit 2 Planning for Development at the Local Government Level
- Unit 3 Financial Management and Accountability at the Local Government Level
- Unit 4 Local Government Administration and Grassroots Development in Nigeria

Each module is representing a homogenous body of issues on Local Government Administration and Revenue Generation.

You must read each unit carefully. The basic knowledge on the topic is conveyed here. An update of the knowledge is in reference materials of currency. Supplementary reading is advised. As you work through each unit, the core of the units is at the 3.0 level. The conclusion (4.0) helps to round up what has been said far while “summary” (5.0) gives a brief summary of the major issues discussed. This is meant to assist you to remember the key issues and simplify the discussion at the end.

At the end of some issues discussed at the 3.0 level in the unit, you will come across “Activity”. These are meant to provide simple question to enable you comprehend or remind yourself of the things discussed before the Activity. Answers are directly provided in most cases.

Do not consult the answers until you have attempted the questions. You may sometimes observe that the answers provided give you more insight than may have been originally conveyed, (especially with the tutor-marked question. This is part of the characteristics of essay question).

TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

There is no compulsory textbook for this course. However, as you go through the course, you will observe that some textbooks are recommended often. This shows that it is crucial to a number of units. Please try and consult these. Moreover, each unit has its own assigned texts and document. You should also lay your hands on these for further understanding.

ASSIGNMENT FILE

The major assignment required of you is a tutor-marked assignment (TMA) which you are expected to complete at the end of each unit and mail to your tutor.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

Your assessment for this course is made up of two components:

- i) Tutor-marked assignment
- ii) Final examination

The practice exercises (or activity) are not part of your formal assessments but it is important to complete all of them. If you do the practice exercise, it will facilitate your understanding of the subject matter or topic and your tutor-marked assignments.

TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Each unit in this course has a TMA attached to it. You can only do this assignment after covering the materials and exercise in each unit. Normally the TMA are kept in a separate file. Your tutor will mark and comment on it. Pay attention to such feedback from your tutor and use it to improve your other assignments.

You can write the assignment by using materials from your study units and from textbooks or other sources. It is however preferable that as a graduate student, you should demonstrate evidence of wide reading especially from texts and other sources –something to show that you have researched more widely.

But do remember that copying from any sources without acknowledgment is plagiarism and is not acceptable. You make references properly when you refer to other people's work.

The assignments are in most cases essay questions. Examples from your own experience or environment are useful when you answer such questions. This allows you to apply theory to real life situation.

CONCLUSION

Local Government Administration and Revenue Generation is an interesting course. It provides you with theoretical, comparative and case study perspective in understanding the subject matter. It is designed to enable you understand the workings of local government and appreciate its usefulness as a tier of government. Perhaps those of you who have been ignorant about this institution will after this course start to take interest and start applying yourselves to this institution. Good Luck and enjoy the course.

**MAIN
COURSE**

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MODULE 1

Unit 1	The Nature and Scope of Local Government
Unit 2	The Significance of Local Government
Unit 3	The Development of Local Government
Unit 4	Types of Local Government Systems
Unit 5	Functions and Problems of Local Government

UNIT 1 THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT**CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	The Nature and Scope of Local Government
3.2	Importance of having Local Government
3.3	The Meaning of Local Government
3.4	The Dimensions of the Concept of Local Government
3.5	The Characteristics of Local Government
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is important that as a preamble to understanding the course, “Local Government Administration” we should first underscore the nature and scope of Local Government. That way, you shall originate a mind set on the place of Local Government in the whole activities of mankind. This preamble will provide an insight into why Local Governments are needed to drive development. Why can’t they be development at the grassroots except until Local Governments are created?

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Give at least five reasons why local government are necessary
- State categorically the importance of local government
- Identify the different dimensions of local government
- Identify the characteristics of local government

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Nature and Scope of Local Government

Local Government forms an indispensable part of governance and administration in any country. It is the closest tier of government to the people, therefore, it bridges the gap between the government and the governed.

Federalism shares powers and functions of government between the Federal, State and Local Government. This is the medium through which people can get to the people otherwise they will be alienated.

Local government's jurisdiction is limited to a specific area and its functions relate to the provision of civic amenities to the population being within its jurisdiction. A local government functions within the provision of the statute which has created it. it is subordinate to the state/provincial/regional government which exercises control and supervision over it. but the activities of the local government are not less numerous. Local government has been undertaking new activities which either regulated the conduct of the citizens or are in the nature of service such as provision of health care facilities, provision of markets, security, electricity, pipe borne water, public conveniences in public places, feeder roads, etc. In fact, the local government is the tier of government that the people can see, touch or feel. Therefore, the people expect the local government to possibly provide all of their needs.

3.2 Importance of Local Government

The importance of local government can be stated specifically thus,

- a) It is more democratic. This is so because it increases the scope for citizenship participation in the government of their locality.
- b) It provides valuable political education. it exposes the citizens to power and authority, power play, its uses, and challenges of power management

- c) The local government provides a training ground for future political leaders
- d) Provision of services. There are certain services for which the local government is the most efficient provider. Like caring for the Community's poor, the aged, handicapped and orphans etc. In John Stuart mills appreciation of the invaluable contribution of local government in this perspective, he observed that "if local government did not exist, it would have been created"
- e) Local knowledge is brought to bear on local government
- f) It is more sensitive and responsive to local opinion. The councillors and representatives are closer to the people and respond much easily to their demands or to be voted out.
- g) Promotion of political integration and national unity: local government has a way of promoting national unity through the opportunity it affords for popular political participation.
- h) Promotion of local freedom/autonomy: local government is the closest tier of government to the people, if the system of local government is truly local, it provides special opportunities for people to complain about the quality of services it renders and about the conduct of council official.
- i) Power is more widely dispersed which is a safeguard against tyranny. The local government system protects against this.
- j) Local variations and needs in service provision can better be handled by local government since it understands the needs of its own locality

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Having understood the importance of local government, in what way do you think the system of local government can be made to function more effectively than it is today?

3.3 The Meaning of Local Government

Local government is the third tier of government mandated by law to cater for the needs of people at the grassroots. It serves as a conveyor belt that takes the central government closer to the governed. It has been defined severally by scholars and organizations according to their backgrounds. We shall observe a few of those definitions.

Bello – Iman (2007) defines local government as:

The unit of administration with defined territory, powers and administration authority with relative autonomy which its administrative authority could be elected or appointed exclusively by the people. This means that, according to Bello-Imam, when a local body that claim to represent the people is not chosen by them it can only be a local form of administration.

According to D. Lockard, “Encyclopaedia of social sciences” defines local government as a public organization, authorized to decide and administer a limited range of public policies within relatively small territory which is a sub-division of a regional, or national government.”

According to P. Stones, Local government can be defined as “that part of the government of a country which deals with those matters which concern the people in a particular locality” he points out further that the local government acts as the communities housewife, in that it makes our surroundings fit to live in keeps the streets clean,, educate our children, builds our houses and does all those other similar jobs which enable us to lead a civilized life.

Vankata Rao (1965) opines that “local government is that part of the government which deals mainly with local affairs, administered by authorities subordinate to the state government but elected independently of the state authority by the qualified residents”

According to L. Golding, local government can be defined as “management of their own affairs by the people of a locality”

Jennings (1947) defines local government as “governmental organs having jurisdiction not over the whole of a country but over specific portion of it”.

The United Nations defines local government as;

A political sub-division of a nation (or in a federal system, a state) which is constituted by a law and has substantial control of local affairs including the power to impose taxes or to exert labour for prescribed purposes. The governing body of such an entity is elected or otherwise locally selected.

The Reform document (Nigeria 1976) defines local government as;
Government at the local level exercised by representatives council, established by law to exercise specific power within defied areas.

From the eight definitions above, certain features of local government stand out

- a. That local government is a subordinate system of government
- b. It has both legal and constitutional power to perform certain legislative, administrative and quasi judicial functions
- c. Has the power to make policies, prepare budgets and a measure of control over its own staff
- d. It has legal personality i.e can sue and be sued
- e. It exercise authority over a given territory or population

These definitions, point at local government as having government features within limited powers.

This can be further broken down more specifically as follows;

- a. Legal entity which can sue and be sued for wrong doing
- b. Power to make its own laws, policies, plans and budget on what to do, how, why, where, when, for who and at what cost.
- c. Legislative body called a council composed of elected councilors and a chairman to make laws and policies
- d. Executive body called the committee composed of appointed or elected officials and the chairman to formulate policies and laws.
- e. Administrative body called the local government service composed of career civil servants to assist in formulating and in implementing laws and polices
- f. Power to tap human, financial and material resources for public use within the geographical area
- g. Answerable to a higher level of government (National or state or regional) on certain power and functions it carries out (especially concurrent function) this is to say that a local government is not absolutely autonomous.

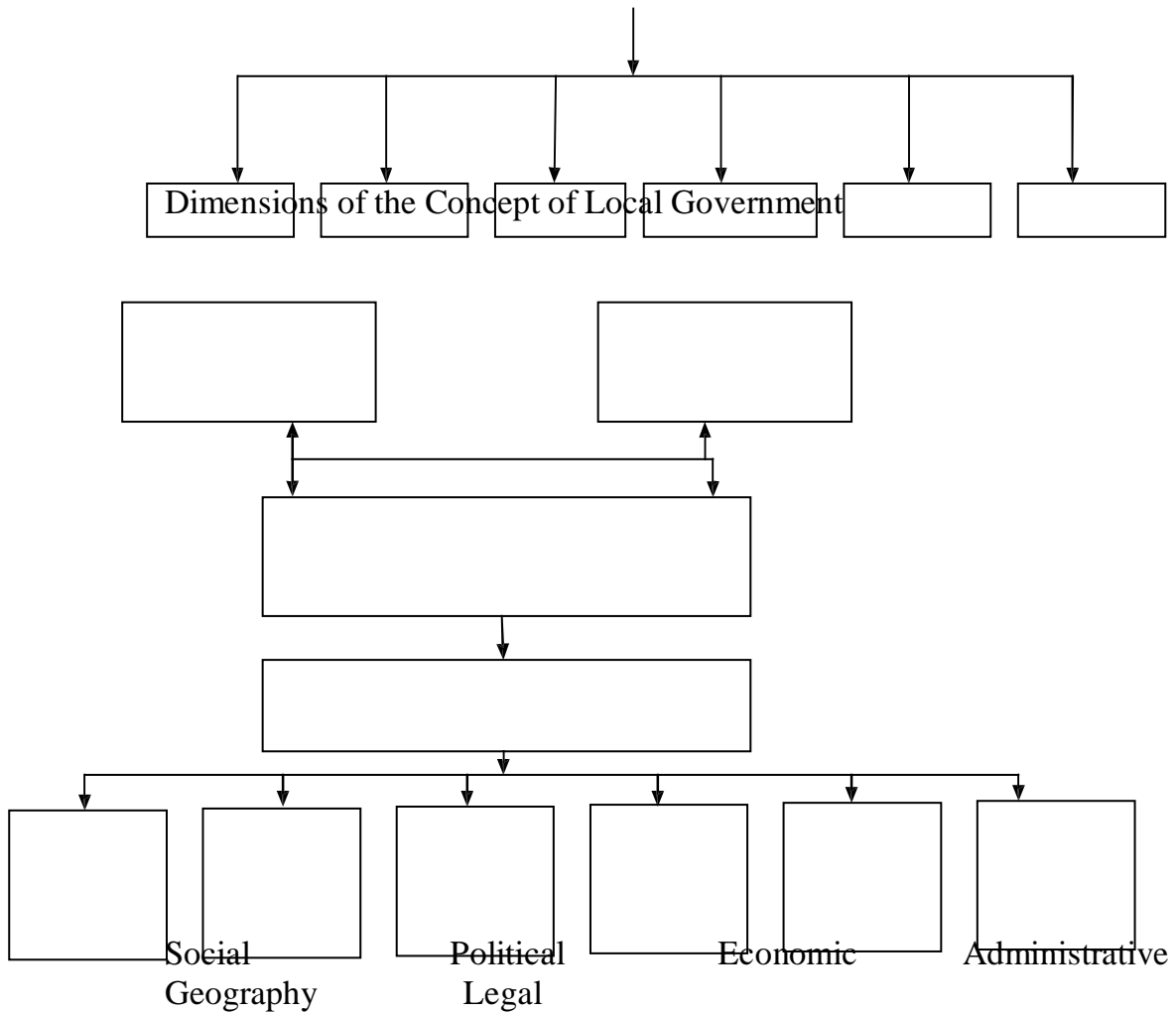
SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

From the features of local government, identify at least 5 features that makes local government a tier of government.

3.4 The Dimensions of the Concept of Local Government

The concept of local government thus is multi-dimensional. It has been pointed out that it is basically an organized social entity with a feeling of oneness. The local government is an integrant of the political mechanism for governance in a country. As a body corporate with juristic person, it represents a legal concept. Furthermore, the local

government is an administrative concept, not known to other levels of government, with its councilors involved in making, unmaking and remaking administrative decision in council and its committee with direct bearing on civil services to the local people and now in nation building activities. Similarly, geography and demography of a local area along with economic factors offer important dimensions in the conceptual articulation of local government. Not only has this, but also environment, contributed to its birth, growth and development with an object to have a comprehensive knowledge about the concept of local government, it would be worthwhile to discuss its various dimensions in some detail which are as follows:



A) Social

Local government is an organized social entity. This in turn develops into;

- Feelings convergence among people
- Feelings of divergence among local areas
- Provides a basis for firms of local government it rural, semi-urban, metropolitan, commercial, industrial and tribal.

The factors responsible for the various forms are identified as

Strengthen character of population
 Local financial resources
 Commercial and technical services
 Comm. facilities and other civil services
 Means of communication
 Banking

Some Examples:

- (i) A small group of human settlement with agriculture as a major profession of the people and inadequate means of communication is characterized as a rural local authority
- (ii) A human settlement with diverse professional in agriculturalists and non agriculturalists co-existing along with some means of communication is often classified in places like India as municipality

B) Political

The political dimension of local government presents to us the most important of its concepts, which is however, different from others; forms of public agencies, inspite of the fact that they have some common characteristics. Since the operational freedom to fulfill local needs and aspirations with necessary popular mandate is the hall mark of local government, it is thus a variant of democracy, inspite of its variance in form. To be more specific, because of its democratic character, it impacts political education on the local people.

C) Economic

The concept of local government has an economic dimension of much significance. A local body can prove to be efficient and effective without much effect if the locality is economically sound. It has been pointed out that the economic base of different classes of the community determines the local politics. In India, for instance, a rural local authority is dominated by the farmers, while an urban authority has professionally diversified composition. The economic dimension in nutshell highlights the facts of the local authorities: One, with a hearing on their very existence as units for self governance and their legitimate place in the national development. The cumulative effect can be in the form of partnership between government and local government so as to achieve the ultimate goal of good life.

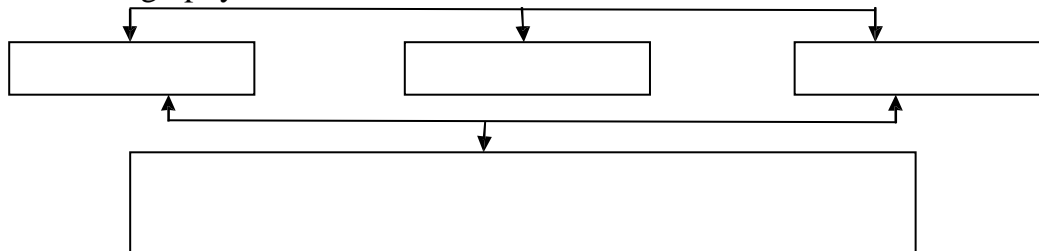
D) Administrative

In fact, the local government is operationally an administrative organization with the influence of politics, administration and technology. The local authorities have been placed in such a way that both as unit of local self-government and as agents of government, they may succeed in achieving the optimum results without sacrificing the basic norms of democracy. This is so because they conform to the two cardinal objectives of public administration; efficient performance and responsible performance. Initially, local government may face some problems, but with the attainment of maturity, local government may produce results that may combine the best of the two worlds, democratic and bureaucratic.

E) Geographical

With territorial jurisdiction over a particular human habitation, the local government may be conceptualized in geographical terms.

The Geography includes, the features like



Physical Demographic Economic

These features in turn affect the policy formulation, implementation and law pertaining to local governments

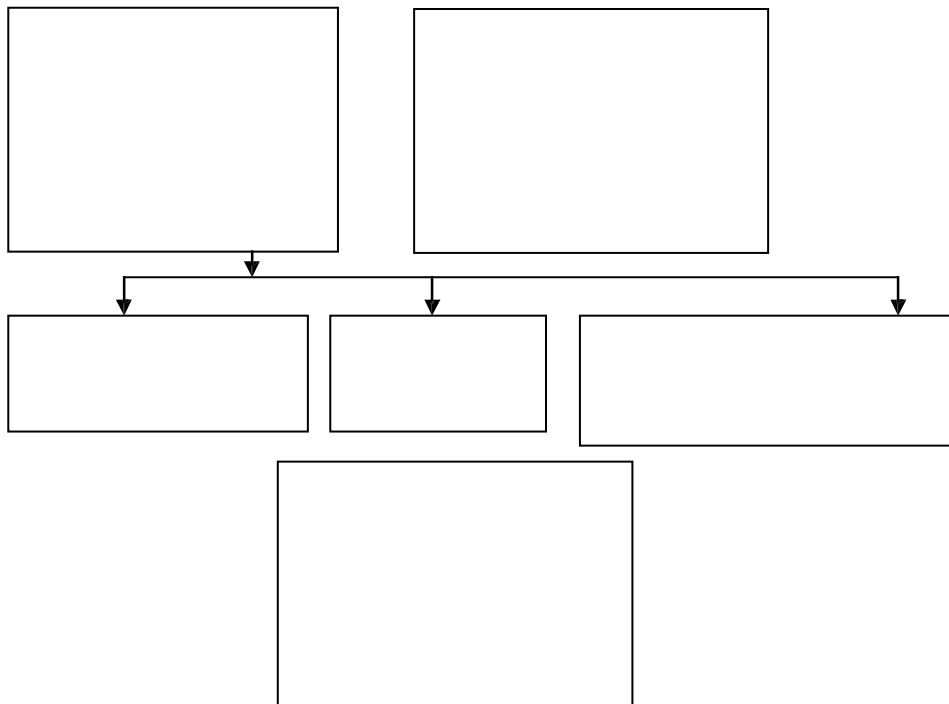
F) Legal

The legal dimension of the local government presents two things one, it is the agent of state and as much, represents public interest. In the capacity of the agent of state, it exercises a part of the sovereignty of the state delegated to it within its geographical boundaries. Two, it is a self-governing institution. In this capacity, it must exhibit three qualifications, which are explained as:

It must exist as an organized entity followed by some minimum powers in the form of

It must have character of a government

- (i) A an agency it must be chosen by the people
- (ii) It must be accountable



It must possess

- (i) The right to enter into contract
- (ii) It must have the right to purchase and dispose of property

Autonomy reality to raising the revenue Preparation of the budget
 Control and management of local resources i.e. human, fiscal and material

In a nutshell, it can be pointed out that legally, the local authorities can be described as creatures of government. Not only this, but, the contention that local self-government is an inherent right of local people is no longer held valid. The developing countries, that lack wrong traditions for grassroots democracy do not present a happy picture in India, the local bodies have been dissolved or superseded frequently. This shows the tendency of the higher level of government to destroy its own creatures. The need of the hour is to provide some constitutional safeguards until favourable democratic traditions strike roots.

3.5 The Characteristics of Local Government

The discussion regarding meaning of local government makes it clear that there are certain characteristics on which the systems of local government are based. Some of its important characteristics are as

follows:

- (i) **Local Areas:** A Local Government unit as far as its jurisdiction is concerned has a well defined area which is fixed by the concerned state government. This area can be termed as a city, a town or a village. The territorial limits of a local body unit are fixed by the state government subject to changes from time to time through legislation.
- (ii) **Local Authority:** The administration of a particular locality is run by an authority or body of persons who are elected directly by the people residing in that particular area. The authority which includes the elected representatives of the people is responsible for management of local affairs in that area.
- (iii) **Civil Amenities for Local Inhabitants:** The primary objective of local government is to provide certain civic amenities to the people at their door- steps. The provision of these civic amenities ensures the healthy living of local community. These services are specifically means for those inhabitants who are living in that restricted area for which the local government unit has been created. It has been rightly pointed out that all these amenities which make living better, physically, economically, socially and culturally should be assigned to the local inhabitants.
- (iv) **Local Finance:** In order to perform its functions effectively, it is necessary that every local government unit is provided with adequate finances. The services provided to the local inhabitants are largely financed out of finances raised locally. The local inhabitants are required to pay taxes imposed by the concerned local authority, it is the authority of local government. However, unlike other levels of government that accords it a unique position among corporate bodies, this authority has legal and constitutional basis. Infact, the local government possesses revenue raising and spending authority only to the extent that the state/central government grants it to them.
- (v) **Local Autonomy:** Local Autonomy means the freedom of the local government to decide and act in the sphere of activities and functions allotted to them by the statute under which they are created. Among other things, it implies the legal right of the inhabitants of a local area to choose their representatives to govern the locally concerned, according to the laws framed by the local council and to adopt the budget. It is however, to be understood that the authorities which have been

given the responsibility to run the local government are neither sovereign nor self-created entities and they will have to depend upon the higher levels of government for their creation, rank, powers and functions.

- (vi) **Local Participation:** The success or failure of developmental plans at the local level depends upon the active participation of local people for whom these plans are made. It is a local government which provides an opportunity to the local people to participate in administration. If the goals of development have to be achieved, people's participation is a prerequisite for it.
- (vii) **Local Leadership:** The people who come under the purview of local government, especially those living in rural areas, are generally illiterate, inexperienced, non-professional and unaware about the functioning of local bodies. Strong leadership therefore needs to be provided to those people. This leadership is provided to the people from the local area in the shape of elected representatives and elected bearers of the elected councils in regard to the policies and programmes of the government.
- (viii) **Local Accountability:** Local Government units which are created to provide civic amenities to the people are accountable to the local people. The residents of a local area keep a watch on local authorities to ensure effective performance of their functions. If a local body becomes inefficient and is not in a position to provide satisfactory services to the people, it faces severe criticism of local residents.

- (ix) **Local Development:** Local Government is concerned with the overall development of the people living within its area. Every activity of local government is therefore aimed at development.

It can be pointed out that in spite of the legal authority given to the local governments; the impoverished state of the finances of most authorities in the developing countries like Nigeria is a severe handicap to responsible local government because the backbone of local government is financial autonomy which Nigeria local government are lacking.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Against the backdrop of the foregoing, the local government represents the voice of the ordinary man. Apart from reducing the volume of work from the central government and bringing government closer to the governed, the local government is sensitive to local desires and aspirations and provides a veritable platform whereby such aspirations can be realized. The local government is subordinate to the state government subject to various measures of control. Local government becomes an indispensable tier of government because of what it represents to the rural communities and individuals. The whole essence of local government shall begin to unfold as we voyage into this course progressively.

5.0 SUMMARY

A flash back at some of the major issues raised in this first unit will help to refresh our memories.

Local governments are the closest tier of government to the grassroots. They possess the features of a responsible government mandated by law to carry out certain responsibilities in their jurisdiction they are subordinate to the higher levels of government thereby subject to some measures of control either financially or politically.

ANSWERS TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Contributions

- Local government requires financial autonomy to enable them carryout their enormous functions effectively.
- Reach out to communities under the local government jurisdiction beyond the headquarters of the local government.
- Exploit local initiatives through regular town hall meetings with the rural people
- Comment should participate in rural annual festivals to get close to feeling the pulse of the people about government

activities.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Contribution

- That the local government is a subordinate system of government
- The local government has both legal and constitutional power to perform certain legislative, administrative and quasi judicial function
- Has the power to make policies, prepare budgets and a measure of control over its own staff

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the view that local government is an indispensable tier of government to modern day democracy.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Platform for Political and Popular Education
 - 3.2 Promotes Spirit of Liberty and Equality
 - 3.3 Effective Solution to Local Problems
 - 3.4 Reduce the Burden of Work of State/Central Government
 - 3.5 Channel of Communication between the State Government and the Community
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we shall voyage into the significance of local government, why did J. S. Mill say that if local government did not exist it would have been created? It goes to explain what local government represents in the life of the individual, the community and of course the nation.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, the student should be able to;

- Identify the significance of local government to the community
Identify the importance of local government to political and popular education
- Analyse the usefulness of local government to leadership training
- Examine the contribution of local government to national development

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Platform for Political and Popular Education

Lord Ripon's Resolution of 1882 emphasized the need of political and popular education through local government. It is not primarily with a view to improvement in administration that their measure is put forward and supported. It is chiefly designed as an instrument of

political and popular education highlighting the significance of local government as an educational institution. Prof Laski says: “The institution of local government is education in perhaps a higher degree at least contingently, than any other part of government. And it must be remembered that there is no other way of bringing the mass of citizens into intimate contact with persons responsible for decision making. Local government is a system which ensures effective participation of citizens in administration and makes them realize their responsibilities towards the society.

3.2 Promotes Spirit of Liberty and Equality

The local assemblies of citizens says De Tocque Ville, add to the strength of free nations. “Town meetings are to liberty what primary schools are to science: they bring it within the people’s reach, they teach men how to use and how to enjoy it. A nation may establish a free government but without municipal institutions, it cannot have the spirit of liberty. The concept of equality has many meanings but in the context of local government it may enhance equality by providing access to political office and political activity for wider groups of people than are accommodated through national politics.

3.3 Effective Solution to Local Problems

All the problems are not supposed to be solved by the central and state governments. In fact, there are some problems which occur at the local level and need to be solved locally in accordance with local needs, atmosphere, environment and wishes of the people. To be acquainted with all these things, the government shall have to step down to the local level in order to solve local problems in an effective manner.

According to H. J. Laski “we cannot realize the full benefits of democratic government, unless we begin by the admission that all problems are not control problems, and that the results of problems in their incidence require decision at the place and by the persons, where and by whom the incidence is most deeply felt.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

List at least 4 reasons why local government is seen as a platform for political and popular education and effective solution to local problems.

3.4 Reduce the Burden of Work of State/Central Government

A large number of functions are performed by local government which otherwise would have been performed by central/state government. This, local government not only provides certain essential services to the people, but also reduces the burden of central/state government as well. If the central/state government is overloaded with work, it becomes incompetent, incapable and inefficient to perform its duties. Therefore, local government is necessary for the development of initiative and interest of local masses in government and responsibility. Local government is an invaluable socio-political laboratory for trying and testing on a small scale, various new proposals for government organization and socio-economic policies. It is the perseverance of local colours in the national life.

3.5 Channel of Communication between the State Government and the Community

Local government serves as a channel of communication between state government and the community. The demands made by the local community are on the one hand transmitted to the state government, the creator of local government and on the other hand, people living in far flung areas come to know about the government policies and programmes through local bodies. This, local government, ensures close relationship between the people and the higher level of governments through the device of communication.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

If local government did not exist, it would have been created. What is your take on this statement?

4.0 CONCLUSION

Local government means the administration of the affairs of a locality in urban and rural areas by the people through their elected representatives. It may be described as government by popularly elected bodies charged with the administration and executive duties in matters concerning the inhabitants of the particular district or place and vested with powers to make bye laws for their guidance. The urban local government operates in towns and cities through Municipal Corporations, Municipal Committees, Cantonment Boards, Town and Notified Area Communities.

5.0 SUMMARY

Although the significance of local government is inexhaustible, we have

explained significant aspect of local government that makes local government an indispensable tier of government in the architecture of administration. We can recap for instance, local government offers a platform for political education, promotes spirit of liberty and equality, effective solution to local problems, reduce the burden of work on state/central government and creates a channel of communication between the state government and the community.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Contribution

- The institution of local government is education in higher degree at least contingently
- It is the only way of bringing the mass of citizens into intimate contact with persons responsible for decisions making
- There are problems which occur at the local level that also require to be treated locally in accordance with the wishes of the people
- Government must step down to local level to be able to solve local problems.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- How would have been possible for government to harness local human and material resources of local government was not created?
- Charity they say begins at home. It is the local government that provides a veritable platform for that truism.
- Some problems are not control problems, and it is only local government that appreciates problems in accordance with their environmental peculiarities and needs.
- A training ground for future leaders
- Experimental laboratory for national development etc.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify at least 4 reasons advanced for the significance of local government.

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UNIT 3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Agitation for Reform of Local Administration from 1935-1950
 - 3.2 Regional Reform of Local Government in Nigeria (1950-1959)
 - 3.3 Local Government and Democratic Governance in Nigeria
 - 3.4 The Great Reforms of 1976
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The development of local government and the evolution of local government in Nigeria are inextricably interwoven. This is to the extent that one might consider them a repetition of each other. But for purposes of clarity we shall underscore the differences between the two areas. Whereas development of Local government has to do with the changes introduced into local government administration to enhance development beginning from nationalist agitation for reform of local administration to the great reform of 1976 when the unified local government was introduced in Nigeria to reposition local government as a third tier of government and the basis for national development, the evolution of local government underscores the gradual metamorphosis that enveloped the Nigeria local government system at certain stages in history till date. This shall be explained further in module 2.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, the students should be able to understand;

- The reform that took place in colonial administration between 1935 – 1950
- The major elements that were common to the reforms in the 3 regions
- Local government and democratic governance in Nigeria
- The major developments that came with the great reform of 1976

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Agitation for Reforms of Local Administration

Among the nationalist agitations for changes in colonial administration between 1935-1950, was the reform of Local Administration properly known as the Native Authority.

The argument by the agitators then was that the Native Authority was non-participatory and anti-development. There was too much emphasis on maintenance of law and order through the use of the police, the native courts and prisons.

Others are:

- a. The need to remove women from payment of poll tax
- b. Employment of educated Nigerians in the senior cadre of the Native Authority Service
- c. The election of councilors to participate in policy making
- d. The discontinuation of the Indirect Rule System of Local Administration.

This led to the regional reform of 1947 (Richards Constitution)

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What were the agitations of the nationalist against the Native Authority System?

3.2 Regional Reforms of Local Government in Nigeria 1950-1965

In response to the agitation of some nationalist to the policies of Native Authority System, the East, North and West were established in 1946 under the Richardson Constitution. By 1951 under the Macpherson Constitution, each of the three regions had a house of assembly that could legislate on regional matters including Local Government. The first region to pass the law on Local Government reform was the East in 1950, followed by the West in 1952 and then in the North in 1954.

The major elements that were common to the reforms in the 3 Regions were:

- i) Introduction of elected councils in all Native Authorities
- ii) Changes of names from Native Authority to Local Councils in the East and West
- iii) The introduction of multi-tier Local Government System in the East and West
- iv) The reduction of the role of the traditional rulers in policy making through the introduction of Chief in Council at Chief and Council.

Chief-in-Council means that the power of a traditional ruler to veto the decision of a Local Council; while Chief-at-Council is a situation whereby the decision of elected Councilors overwrite that of a traditional rulers. This part has greatly hindered the representativeness of the grassroots through their traditional rulers with its application in the Northern Region alone.

- v) The expansion of functions assigned to Local Government by the Regional Government to include provision of development programs.

Nigeria became an independent nation on October 1st 1960. The post Independent Regional Government maintained the features of the local reform of the 1950s. However, all was not well in terms of the relationship between the Regional Governments and Local Governments in the following areas:

- i) The election of Councilors on party basis whereby, the ruling party in each of the three regions later four rigged the election and therefore made nonsense of democracy at the local level.
- ii) The control of Local Government policy making process and policy decisions by the regional government. All policies made by the Local Government Councils were either vetoed or amended by the Regional Government.
- iii) The employment, promotion and discipline of Local Government staff were entirely and completely controlled by the Regional Government
- iv) The funding of the local government by the Regional Government was the biggest stick used by the latter to whip the former so much so that, the Local Government that failed to obey were starved of funds to carry out their service delivery functions at the grassroots.

The outcome of these and other punitive measures of the Regional Governments rendered Local Governments ineffective, unproductive

and non developmental to the extent that Local Government Service became unattractive to graduates and professionals.

3.3 Local Government and Democratic Governance in Nigeria

The independence was greeted with high expectations from Nigerians, particularly the desire for participatory democracy at the local government level. Unfortunately, the First Republic inherited the colonial local government structure and witnessed a setback in their administrative structure, finances and democratic activities. The setback in the democratic governance of the local government during the period were noted through two regional instruments as follows:

Firstly, Obi (2010) holds that local governments in Nigeria during this era were regionalized, and operated with different structure at different regions. The establishment of Provincial Administrative Law of 1962 by the Northern region crippled the powers of the local government in the region, as the Native Authority re-emerged with the traditional rulers doubling as the traditional rulers and regional political actors. In the Western region, Igbuzor (2009) states that the local government (amendment) Law of 1960 abolished most powers of the local government councils, and reduced their functions, with the Local Government Service Board as a supervising agent of the region. The Western region crisis of 1962-65, which resulted to anarchy and collapse of the administrative structure in the region, worsened the matter. The Eastern regions was not left out of the net, as the ministry of local government was used as a regional organ to regulate the activities of local government councils, and reduce the council to mere appendage of the region.

Secondly, the emergence of regional party politics and over politicization of the party in the local governments weakened the local government councils in Nigeria. The local government service board and ministry of local government as obtainable in different regions were serving as regional agents to regulate local government activities. These bodies were controlled by different political parties in power at the region - Action Group (AG) in the West, Northern People Congress (NPC) in the North, and National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons (NCNC) in the East. Obi (2010) opines that in most cases even when members of the councils were elected as in the Eastern and Western regions, and appointed in the Northern region, the members of the council were answerable to the political party in power in the region and not the local people. In the Western region, elected local government councils were dissolved by the ruling party - Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) in 1965 led by Samuel Ladoke Akintola due

to the Councils support for AG led by Obafemi Awolowo during the crisis of 1962-65, and replaced with care-taker committees made up of the supporters of then ruling party - NNDP (Meredith, 2005). Similarly, Nwosu (1992) opines that in the Eastern region where the political actors were not members of the party in power at the regional level, such local governments were deprived of their statutory functions, as the issue of NCNC government at the regional level led by Dr. Okpara against Dr. Okezie's Republican Party at Umuahia Ibekwu Local Government Area in the region was a good example. In the Northern region, Onor (2005) adds that as an attempt to destabilize democracy in the local government councils, the councils were used to manipulate the electoral process in favour of the ruling party - NPC.

Indeed, it is important to state that over politization of the regional political parties and regionalization of the local governments weakened the democratic governance of the local governments within the period under review. Thus, leading to the argument that there was no functional local government council in Nigeria within this period, rather what was in operation was local administration.

Within this period, local governments witnessed fundamental changes in their structures, functions, revenue allocations, and democratic activities.

The emergence of military rule in Nigerian politics on 15th January, 1967 via the coup d'etat led by Major Chukuma Nzeogwu brought General Johnson Thomas Unonakwo Aguyi-Ironsi as the first military Head of State. Obi (2010) holds that on assumption of office, the military government dissolved the existing local government councils and replaced them with care-taker committees to run the affairs of the councils in the country. Egurube (1991) adds that the local government political actors were answerable to the state military governors, and not the rural people. The implication is that local government councils lost their democratic structures and functions, thereby leading to deprivation of democracy in the local government administration. The local people were deprived of democratic activities, as they had no say on who rules them and how they were ruled.

Authority flows from the military governor and the local people were forced to comply.

3.4 Great Reforms of 1976

In 1976, the General Obasanjo led military government embarked on a more significant local government reforms in Nigeria. The reforms were based on the observation of the Federal Military Government that the local governments had over the years suffered severe deprivation of its democratic powers by other governments (FRN,

1976). Upon the above, on 19th August, 1976, the federal military government instituted the local government reforms committee, under the headship of Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki. After the tour of the country for due consultation, the committee submitted her report tagged "Guidelines for Local Government Reforms, 1976". The guidelines were approved by the federal military government. The reforms had several objectives aimed at repositioning local government for effective service delivery and participatory democracy in the local areas.

Significantly, the 1976 local government reforms made some provisions and impact on local government democratic governance in Nigeria as stated below:

- The introduction of widely accepted definition of local government in Nigeria as stated by FRN (1976) as follows:

"Government at the local level exercised through representative Council established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas. These powers should give the council substantial control over local affairs; as well as the staff and institutional and financial powers to initiate and direct the provision of services, and to determine and implement projects, so as to complement the activities of the state and federal government in their areas, and to ensure through devolution of these functions to these council and through active participation of the people and their traditional institutions, that local initiative and response to local needs and conditions are maximized".

By this definition, local government became recognized as a third tier government at the local level in Nigeria. It marks the end of provinces, districts, native authority and administration, and the beginning of democratic government at the local level in Nigeria.

- The reform brought for the first time in the history of Nigeria a unified local government system with defined functions and structure to achieve democratic governance irrespective of the state in Nigeria.
- The reform resulted in the creation of 301 local governments for the first time in Nigeria to exercise democratic activities at the local level.
- The provision for elections of the political actors of the local government through secret ballot system on a non-party basis

gave hope for participatory democracy of the local people in politics of Nigeria. The local people are to participate and determine who rules them at what point, with the actors to be answerable to the people.

- The reforms provided for 5% federation allocation to the local government to enhance local government financial independence and viability for democratic activities in Nigeria.
- The reform resulted in the introduction of nationwide election guidelines for the conduct of both direct and indirect elections in the councils. The effect was that by January, 1977 councils were constituted based on the secret ballot elections, which was manifestation of the local people participating in the election of their leaders.
- Structurally, Wapmuk (2005) opines that the reform provided for the political control of the local government to be vested on the council, and exercised through the councilors known as the supervisory councilors. This is a step towards political development and democratic growth of the local government in Nigeria.
- However, there was a contradiction to democratic development and stability in the reforms , by providing for local government as a third tier of government in one hand , and providing for local government service commission (LGSC) as an agent of the state to regulate local government personnel services on the other hand. The challenge is that the local government staff, who are charged with the responsibilities of enforcing the local government policies could be manipulated or frustrated by the LGSC on event of policy disagreement between the state and local governments, thereby depriving the local government the opportunity of achieving effective implementation of democratic policies in the area.
- Remarkably, the reform created an opportunity for discussion of local government democracy and development in the 1977-78 Constituent Assembly, and further enshrined in the 1979 Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria. Obike and Nwaodu (2010) added that this is the very first time local government appeared in Nigerian Constitution , with defined status and functions as a third tier government, as contained in Section 7 (1) of the 1979 Constitution as:

"The system of democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed and accordingly, the government of every state shall ensure their existence under law, which provides for the establishment, structure, composition finance and function of

such councils."

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What significant changes were brought about by the great reforms of 1976?

4.0 CONCLUSION

The colonial administration through the Native Authority Systems was dysfunctional hence the Nationalists agitations that they were non-participatory and anti-development. The colonial native authority system was implemented separately by the regions. Although elected councils were introduced in all the native authorities, change of names from Native Authority to local councils took place in the East and West. There was also an introduction of multi-tier local government system in the East and West. There was no democratic practice at the Local government level until 1976. The 1976 reforms brought for the first time in Nigeria a unified local government system with defined functions and structure to achieve democratic governance in all states in Nigeria.

5.0 SUMMARY

The development of local government beginning from the colonial administration native authority system was directed at making the local government functional and responsive to the aspirations of the people at the grassroots. The idea was to reposition the local government system in order that it can be more participatory and development oriented. This reform resulted in the introduction of nationwide election guidelines for the conduct of both direct and indirect elections in the councils. The reform also provided for the political control of the local government to be vested on the council and exercised through the councilors known as supervisory councilors. This was the first step towards political development and democratic growth of the local government in Nigeria.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

The Native Authority System emphasized more on the maintenance of law and order rather than development.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- The introduction of a unified local government system with defined functions and structures to achieve democratic governance irrespective of the state in Nigeria.

- The provision for elections of the political actors of the local government through secret ballot system on a non-party basis which gave hope for participatory democracy.
- The reform introduced nationwide election guidelines for the conduct of both direct and indirect elections in the councils.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the significance of the provision of section 7 (1) of the 1979 constitution to the local government system in Nigeria.

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UNIT 4 TYPES/FORMS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Type of Local Government Systems
 - 3.1.1 Single Tier System
 - 3.1.2 Multi-Tier System
 - 3.2 Forms of Local Government System
 - 3.2.1 The Mayoral Model
 - 3.2.2 The Conciliar System
 - 3.2.3 The Managerial Model
 - 3.3 Decentralization
 - 3.3.1 Devolution
 - 3.3.2 Deconcentration
 - 3.3.3 Delegation
 - 3.3.4 Privatization
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In this part of the course, you shall be introduced to various types or forms that the local government takes in different parts of the world. First and foremost, you must understand that local government is the third tier of government especially in a federation, whereas it is a second tier of government in a unitary state. It is important to note however that every government be it Federal, Unitary, Confederal or as the case may be, makes use of local government system as a veritable medium of communication between the central government and the people at the grassroots.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Identify the various types of local government
- Explain the various forms that local government can take in some parts of the world
- Identify and discuss the various forms of decentralization
- Examine the essence of devolution of power to the local system

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Types of Local Government Systems

A local government system is usually organized either as:

- (i) A single-tier local government, or
- (ii) A multi-tier local government

Under the single-tier arrangement, one local government council performs all the functions assigned a local government within its area of jurisdiction. This is the structure in Nigeria today where each local government plans, executes and manages all local services within its area. The merits of this model includes easy coordination of available resources and activities, reduced overhead costs since fewer personnel is employed and easy identification of officials that are responsible for particular services by the local population. However, in cases where a single-tier local council cover a large area or a multiplicity of ethnic groups, remote areas and minority groups may suffer neglect.

The multi-tier structure is one under which two or more local councils share responsibility for local services within a given local territory. For instance, in the old Western Region, a local government consisted of the divisional council within which there were a number of district councils, each of which, in turn, was composed of many local councils. This system has the advantages of bringing government closer to the people of providing more opportunities for leadership to the people and of allowing each zone within the council to develop at its own pace. The multi-tier system has the demerit of constant conflict among the different levels usually over funds. Often the lower tiers in this system are too poor to attract expert personnel and to execute meaningful projects.

3.2 Forms of Local Government System

Three broad forms of local government internal management arrangements have been identified. They include:

- (i) The mayoral model
- (ii) The conciliar system and
- (iii) The managerial arrangement

The mayoral or mayor-council model is identical to the presidential system of government. This is the system that is currently in use in Nigeria. Under it, both the chief executive (mayor or chairman) and the

legislature (the council) are independently elected by the people for fixed terms of office. There are two forms of the mayoral system: the “weak mayor” or “strong mayor” models. The weak mayor is one which, in spite of his position as the main political leader of his council, the mayor does not have the sole power to appoint, remove and supervise his council’s administrative staff, some of whom are elected by the people. Under the strong mayor pattern, the mayor is the only elected executive official and he has the power to appoint and dismiss department heads and he shares policy-making functions with the council.

Under the conciliar system, the council which is directly elected by the people selects a presiding officer usually from among its members but occasionally from outside. The whole council acts as a legislature while the work of administrative supervision is performed either by the mayor or the cabinet of the council to guide policy formulation and implementation. Forms of the conciliar system are used in France, Britain, Germany and other European countries.

The managerial or council-manager pattern is one in which an elected council sets broad policy but hires a manager to serve as the Chief Executive. The manager is vested with responsibility for supervising administration. He is expected to be a professional and to work full time and at the pleasure of the council the managerial model is the pattern in use in most American cities.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. What is the difference between single-tier and multi-tier system of local government?
2. In which form of local government system that the Mayor is given the power to appoint and dismiss departmental heads?

3.3 Decentralization

Models of Decentralization

Four types or degrees of decentralization have been identified. These are

- (i) Deconcentration
- (ii) Delegation
- (iii) Devolution and
- (iv) Privatization

(i) **Deconcentration:** This involves the reduction of authority and responsibility among different levels within the central government. It may take the form of shifting of workload from central government ministry headquarters to staff outside of the national capital. In another form, deconcentration may be by way of field administration under which decision-making discretion is granted to field staff. Another form of deconcentration is local administration under which subordinate levels of government such as provincial and local government are agents of the central government.

(ii) **Delegation:** Under this form of decentralization, the central government transfers responsibility for decision-making and the administration of functions to semi-autonomous organizations such as public corporations, housing authorities, and agricultural development authorities. These agencies are granted broad powers to plan and implement programmes over specific activities under the indirect control of central government ministries. Examples of delegated decentralization in Nigeria include the Nigerian Airways, National Electric Power Authority, NEPA, the Federal Housing Authority etc.

(iii) **Devolution:** This form of decentralization requires the creation of independent sub-national levels of government that are outside the control of the central government. Effective devolution implies the transfer of responsibility for specified local services to autonomous local government units that are elected by the local population and are granted the power to raise their own revenues and to decide policy directions.

(iv) **Privatization:** Under privatization, permission is granted to community groups, cooperatives, voluntary associations, business and other non-governmental organizations to provide services either alone or in partnership with public agencies.

The four models of decentralization which we have just discussed deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatization are

collectively called administrative decentralization. A close examination will indicate that administrative decentralization concerns the redistribution of decision-making authority, responsibility and financial resources for providing public services among different levels of government and between the public and private sectors. The other broad form of decentralization apart from administration decentralization is spatial decentralization. This entails the distribution of central government investments in services, facilities and infrastructures in a way that will strengthen the economies of secondary cities and towns throughout the country. In Nigeria, spatial decentralization is achieved through the principle of federal character which requires the federal government to locate projects in different parts of the country.

It is important to observe that the different forms of decentralization are not mutually exclusive. Each is suitable for a particular purpose. Countries often adopt a combination of the models so as to promote efficiency in the provision of services and to strike appropriate balance between centralization and decentralization.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Which form of local government system is best suited for your country?
2. How is the Conciliar system better than the managerial model?

4.0 CONCLUSION

We have narrated the types and forms of local government systems as they operate in different parts of the world. The various types and forms of local government systems only explain the magnitude of importance attached to this level of government. The local government is seen as a platform where the citizens can develop political culture, appreciate the efforts of the various states and federal government. It is difficult if not impossible for any state to administer successfully all functions of government through the central organs of the state.

The communist countries tried to exercise central rule over all localities of the state but met with either resistance or failure. Since 1936, having learnt from experience, the former U.S.S.R officially recognized the need to administer a wide range of functions on a local basis, albeit with rigorous control by the central power and through the communist party machinery. Hence, the central government cannot effectively carry out detailed local administration and cannot give full weight to local preferences and prejudices in every issue.

5.0 SUMMARY

Having gone through this unit, we can summarize the key issues as follows:

Under the single tier arrangement, one local government council performs all the functions assigned a local government within its area of jurisdiction. This is the structure in Nigeria today

The Multi-tier structure is one under which two or more local councils share responsibility for local services within a given local territory

The Mayoral or mayor council model is identical to the presidential system of government. This is the system that is currently in use in Nigeria.

Under the Conciliar system, the council which is directly elected by the people selects a presiding officer usually from among its members but occasionally from outside.

The managerial or council manager is one in which an elected council sets broad policy but hires a manager to serve as the Chief Executive

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

1. Under the single-tier arrangement one local government council performs all the functions assigned a local government within its area of jurisdiction. This model deals with easy coordination of available resources and activities, reduced overhead costs since fewer personnel is employed, and there is easy identification of officials that are responsible for particular services by the local population.
2. The multi-tier structure on the other hand is one where two or more local councils share responsibility for local services within a given local territory. This system has the advantages of bringing government closer to the people; of providing more opportunities for leadership to the people, and of allowing each zone within the council to develop at its own pace.
3. Under the strong mayoral model the mayor is given the power to appoint and dismiss departmental heads. And he also shares policy making functions with the council

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

1. The form of local government system that is best suited for my country (Nigeria) is the strong mayoral model. That is because the strong mayoral model carries with it the true semblance of a presidential system that Nigeria copied from the United States of America.
2. Under the conciliar system, the council which is directly elected by the people selects a presiding officer usually from among its members but occasionally from outside. Whereas, the managerial model hires a manager to serve as a Chief Executive. This hiring of Chief Executive might lead to misunderstanding because the hired man is not part of the elected council and therefore may be pursuing a different ideology from the elected council.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Why do we have local government as a third tier of government.

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UNIT 5 FUNCTIONS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Principles
 - 3.2 Comparative Perspective
 - 3.3 The Nigeria Example
 - 3.4 Challenges and Problems of Local Government in Nigeria
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

By now, you are supposed to be familiar with the concept and role of local government. Whatever way you look at local government, it is the functions they perform and how much of it they perform efficiently at a given point in time that matters. In this unit, you will be taken through what these functions are, how these functions are allocated and a comparative experiences as to the classification and nature of these functions in a few advanced and developing countries. The function of Nigerian local government is also presented in full. Some of the problems associated with these functions are briefly highlighted.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Identify three principles governing the assigning of functional responsibilities to local government
- Differentiate between the various classification of functions in three countries
- List the various functions of local government in Nigeria under two classifications.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Principles

There are certain principles to consider while allocating functions to local government

- The nature of such local government – urban or rural. The functions of rural local government are more mundane and simple than urban ones.
- Viability of the local government. The question here is whether the local government has the capacity (human and material and financial resources) to discharge these functions.
- The local government will be subjected to the standards required by the central government especially in efficiently services and planning.

In general, the functions which local governments should perform are these:

1. Which require detailed local knowledge for efficient performance;
2. In which success depends on community responsiveness with participation;
3. Which are of personal nature requiring provision close to where the individual affected live;
4. In which significant use of discretion or understanding of individuals is needed.

3.2 Comparative Perspective

Local government at the lowest tier of government performs primary functions.

This is deliberate since the central governments control more funds and has better competence and expertise to handle more secondary or gigantic programmes.

However, city governments, borough and urban or municipal councils take up greater and more urban rural councils

Most constitution or Acts, established functional areas that local governments can engage in. In such an exercise, some functions are concurrent between the local government and the state or governments while others are exclusive to local governments.

The Nigerian constitution makes this distinction. While exclusive functions include planning, revenue generating related functions, welfare like services like cemeteries, roads, street lighting, the concurrent ones include agriculture, health, education (especially primary education) and many other functions prescribed from time to time by the State House of Assembly. (Constitution 1999 – Schedule IV).

In Britain, local authorities perform three broad functions: (i) Environmental (ii) Protective and (iii) Personal.

Environmental functions concerns the citizens immediately physical surrounding – road construction, provision and maintenance of street lighting, water supplies, recreation grounds, street cleaning and refuse disposal.

Protective functions are those that deal with safety of citizens i.e, police and fire services. Personal services – deal with individual well being such as housing, education, libraries and museum, schools and health services. It should be noted that in Britain today, the most significant complex and cumbersome function of local authorities is Housing. However, not all local governments can perform these functions. In Rural Districts, Parish Councils have limited control in matters of local interest such as allotments, burial grounds, lighting, and provision and amenities, such as recreation grounds, bus shelters and Parish halls.

Local authorities can in addition acquire further power through delegated legislation or bye-law. They also have general powers to acquire land by agreement by means of purchase, lease or exchange. In the United State, special districts are created to carry on specific functions or projects. The most numerous of such is the school with its main functions as management of the public school system.

Other functions performed by local government in the US are police and fire protection, public works, libraries and recreation, public utilities, city planning, public health, airports, harbour and housing. These are indeed gigantic functions which municipal especially city governments can take on.

In India, the functions of the Panchayati Raj (i.e. local government) Perform follow a similar pattern like the above except for police and the gigantic function of harbours and airports. Functions here are similar to the Nigerian situation. Briefly the functions can also be classified as obligatory and discretionary. Such functions include agricultural programmes, animal husbandry, buildings and communications, education administration, fishery, forestry, small scale industries,

irrigation, medical services, etc.

The Urban councils could perform obligatory functions like conservation, street lighting drainage and construction and maintenance of roads. Larger ones could also engage in water supply, street cleaning refuse and disposal, fire service and primary schools.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Urban local government performs more complex functions than rural ones. Please list 5 of such function.

3.3 The Nigerian Example

To celebrate on this functional responsibility of local government a rundown of the functions of local government in Nigeria is done below as contained in the 1999 constitution (fourth Schedule)

FUNCTIONS OF A LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL

The Local Government system, composed of democratically elected Local Government Councils, is guaranteed under the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, section 7. Based on this section 7, the 1999 Nigerian Constitution provides for the functions of a Local Government Council under its Fourth Schedule. This schedule tends to derive mainly from the Basic and Constitutional Transition Provisions (Decree 15 of 1987). Thus, functions of Local Governments are categorised into;

i. The Exclusive list; and ii. The Concurrent list.

The exclusive list of functions is those functions that are solely performed by Local Governments, while the concurrent list of functions are those that the Local Government performs in collaboration with State and Federal Governments. The State and/or Federal Government can also perform these functions on behalf of Local Governments until Local Governments are in a position to perform such functions. According to the Fourth Schedule 1 of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution.

The main functions of local government councils are as follows:

- a) The consideration and the making of recommendations to a state commission on economic planning or any similar body on - the economic development of the state, particularly in so far as the area of authority of the council and of the state are affected, and proposals made by the said commission or body;

- b) Collection of rate, radio and television licenses;
- c) Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
- d) Licensing of bicycle, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks) canoe, wheel barrow and carts;
- e) Establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs markets, motor parks and public conveniences;
- f) Construction and maintenance of roads, street, street lightings, drains and other public highways, parks, gardens, open spaces, or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of a State.
- g) Naming of road and street and numbering of houses;
- h) Provision and maintenance of public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal;
- i) Registration of all births, deaths and marriages;
- j) Assessment of privately-owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of a State; and
- k) Control and regulation of:
 - a) Out-door advertising and hoarding
 - b) Movement and keeping of pets of all description,
 - c) shops and kiosks,
 - d) Restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of food to the public,
 - e) Laundries, and
- f) Licensing regulation and control of the sale of liquor,
- l) The functions of a local government council shall include participation of such councils in the Government of a State in respects of the following matters-
 - The provision and maintenance of primary – adult and vocational education;
 - The development of agriculture and natural resources, other than minerals resources
 - The provision and maintenance of the health services, and
 - Such other functions as may be conferred on a local government council by the House of Assembly of the State.

Local government administration also carries out informative functions such as enlightenment, development projects, administration, democratic and leadership initiative and maintenance of peace, law and order in the locality (Awotokun 2005). In addition to the above, the local government administration also provides the following functions:

- I. Inspection of meat and abattoirs;
- II. Provision of nursery, primary and adult education
- III. Provision of scholarship and bursaries award

- IV. Provision of public libraries and reading rooms;
- V. Agricultural and animal health extension services and veterinary clinics, fire service
- VI. Lighting and drainage

3.4 Challenges and Problems of Local Government in Nigeria

1. Corruption

One of the fundamental problems of contemporary Nigeria is corruption. It has thrived, progressed and flourished unabated. Corruption has been institutionalized to the point of accepting it as a part of our system. Albeit corruption is ubiquitous, it is found all over the world, but the degree of its manifestation varies from system to system (Lawal and Oladunjoye, 2010: 232). Corruption is the greatest bane of local government administration in Nigeria. At the grassroots level, corruption has been canonically accommodated, entertained, and celebrated within the system. In the local government setting corruption is misnomerlabelled and euphemistically referred to as “Egunje” (a slogan which means “illegal offer” in Nigeria) and a major hindrance to good government.

It has been identified as one of the problems confronting effective local government administration in Nigeria, also non-adherence to provisions of the financial memorandum (FM), conspicuous consumption of the part of the local officials, lifestyles that are not commensurate with official sources of income, imposition of leaders on the local government through corrupted political process and low wages of local government officials (Ali, 2008). Some of the areas where corruption thrives in local government in Nigeria include the following:

- a) Inflation of prices of bought items;
- b) Over estimation of cost of projects;
- c) The ghost worker syndrome;
- d) Poor financial base and limited revenue
- e) Award of contracts and subsequent abandonment;
- f) Payment of huge sums of money to political godfathers;
- g) The age-long belief by the officials that people are ignorant, illiterate and unenlightened;
- h) Lack of accountability

2. Lack of Autonomy

Autonomy simply refers to freedom, independent, free from external and remote control but in Nigeria the reverse is the case, Local Government are totally independent, they are managed by the federal and state governments who dominate over the local government administration through the state government offices of local

government affairs, the ministry of local government, and the local government service commission. All these government agencies are denying the autonomy of self-dependent administration of Local Government in Nigeria.

3. Leadership problem

In most states in Nigeria, the ruling party appoints and blesses the candidate who must run for election at the local government level. Without their blessings, such candidates cannot win an election. The various state governments also appoint caretaker chairmen for the Local Government Council, who are mostly stooges and appendages of the state governor. Even when elections are held, the ruling party in the state and the state government, in particular, rigs and manipulates the election process to favour their preferred candidates. It is a clear case of who pays the piper dictates the tune. This again creates inefficiency of administrative performance and diversion of local government functions, as well as oriented programs for the local people.

4. Unskilled Workers

Local government in Nigeria are faced with the problem of inadequate skilled workers such as engineers, accountants, medical doctors, town planners, statisticians, etc. Reasons for this unfortunate development are that, there is a very low image of local government in the minds of these professionals. Again, there is lack of job satisfaction that can keep them in the local government. Most skilled and qualified personnel's and professionals prepare to gamble their luck either in private organisations or establish their own firms rather than risk staying at the local government where there are no incentives, and they may be wasted away. This has forced local governments to depend on unskilled labour. For example, some are diploma and certificate holders who cannot defend the certificates they hold. These circumstances are a great challenge to local government efficiency. People who don't know their left from their right in what they do can hardly be productive and effective.

5. Inadequate and Poor Budgetary Allocation

Local governments in Nigeria are known to suffer from inadequate and poor budgetary allocation. This is done by deliberate cut-offs of budgetary allocation to the local government by some States Governors either for political reasons or absolute corruption. The siphoning of funds through frivolous activities and fictitious contracts to their party members and friends greatly affects the financial needs of local governments. This is one of the major reasons why local government in Nigeria usually performs below expectation, thereby making the third tiers of government meaningless and lacking the diffidence of democracy.

6. Administrative Inefficiency

Local governments in Nigeria suffer from administrative inefficiency and ineffectiveness resulting from low educational qualifications of staff, poor motivation, autocratic leadership, poor work environment, etc. The management and control of finances is a central factor in the management of local governments. The quality and promptness/effectiveness of local government services depend on the quality and quantity of workers in the system.

Politically, politicians divert from their campaign promises through scheming of ways to remain in office and swell their private financial bank accounts with public funds from the local government. They abandon principles of good governance and democratic ideals that are fundamental in promoting administrative efficiency in order to satisfy their selfish desires.

7. Lack of provision of Basic Social Amenities

The decline in delivery of social services for the people at the grassroots is perhaps, felt more by common people. This revealed that the local government administration has failed in meeting the basic needs of the people – good roads, metro-transport, potable water, regular electricity supply, sanitations and rehabilitation of local road under their local jurisdiction, qualitative healthcare delivery and education. Close on the heels of this is poor or non-maintenance of existing social services. Local Governments appear to have failed in this respect thereby leading to strong voice for the cancelation or eradication of the third tiers of government which is Local Government Administration in Nigeria.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

List 5 mandatory and 3 concurrent functions of local government in Nigeria.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Local Government can be seen to be saddled with a lot of functions from the trivial to the gigantic. The problem in performing these functions is with the resources available to do this. Such resources may include financial and manpower. In the advanced countries, these worries are not as acute as developing countries. Most developing countries depend on grant from the central governments to run these function. To reduce such problem of funding, a lot of functions especially the exclusive or mandatory functions have revenue attached to them, In lot cases these functions can be referred to as extractive functions because in performing them, local government is indirectly raising revenue for it services.

In Nigeria, the experience has been that the tax base of the rural

community is very low and therefore local government experiences great difficulty in performing this function. At times it neglects such extractive functions and wait for grants to carry out the other functions.

The implication had been low viability and low level of autonomy since these units are largely dependent on statutory allocation to function. This issue is raised again in subsequent unit under local government finance and Problems of Local Government.

5.0 SUMMARY

You have come across different types of functions local government perform. On the one hand, they have been classified as (extraordinary) and concurrent. The India to classification of Obligation and discretionary is similar to the Nigeria classification above.

In Britain, the classification is on the bases of environmental, protective and personal. The US classification is close to this. Some of the sections irrespective of countries are mundane while others are complex (e.g harbour, airports etc.)

Performance of functions requires lots of money. In developing countries, functions that ought to generate funds for local government are not as attractive as the advanced countries because of the low taxable capacity of individuals, communities and their economies. However, the best way to judge a local government is through its functional performance.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- a) Water supplies
- b) Police services
- c) Fire services
- d) Libraries and museums
- e) Airports

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Please check the list under 3.3.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What do you understand by Executive (mandatory) and concurrent functions of local government (in Nigeria) and why are they so classified?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 2

Unit 1	Evolution of Local Government System in Nigeria
Unit 2	Local Government Reform under the Babangida Era and the Introduction of Presidential System at the Local Government Level
Unit 3	The Fourth Republic
Unit 4	The 2003 Local Government Reforms

UNIT 1 EVOLUTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	The Colonial and Post Colonial Era
3.2	The Early Military Era 1966-1976
3.3	The Late Military Era 1976-1979
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Readings

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Local governments as a tier of government have generated much interest globally.

This global interest in the local governments as agents of mass mobilization and development has also-given rise to series of scholarly postulations. One interesting aspect of these postulations is that each scholar sees and defines the local government according to his perception and purposes.

Incidentally, these numerous definitions have not succeeded in distorting peoples perception of what it stands for. In order to buttress our assertions we would look at how some scholars and practitioners have defined the local government.

According to Orewa and Adewumi (1992) "Local government is a system of local communities and towns which are organized to maintain law and order; provide some limited range of social services and co-

operation of the inhabitants in joint endeavours towards the improvements of their conditions of living". Going further they asserted that the "local government provides the community with a formal organisational framework which enables them to conduct their affairs effectively and regulates the actions of their members for the general public".

Akinyele (1988) defines it as "a political submission of a law which is constituted by law and has substantial control of local affairs". While the Federal Republic of Nigeria Guidelines for local government reforms (1976) defined local councils as "governments exercised through representative councils established by law to exercise specific powers within defined areas".

From the above definitions, we can surely conclude that all the authors have almost the same ideas about what the local government is and what it is supposed to achieve.

On the other hand there are those who believe that the local government system is not useful and as such should either be scrapped or reformed.

It was from this angle that some have argued that the local government system like constitutions transported into developing countries did not suit the political culture of the areas and therefore proved functionally unsatisfactory. They therefore called for a reform of the present system in order to make them suitable for the political culture of the people and more responsive to their yearnings and aspirations. They believed that this present structure cannot achieve its set objective hence the loud calls for its reformations.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Identify the evolution of local government during colonial, post-colonial and early military era in Nigeria.
- Underscore the rationale behind the retention of the native authority system during the post-colonial era
- Identify some of the functions performed by the native authority system
- Underscore how the native authority system assisted the British to penetrate the vast territory called Nigeria

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Colonial and Post Colonial Era

The Colonial Period

This period marks the beginning of the modern local government system in the country. Prior to this period, traditional institutions were at liberty to practice any system of administration that suited their environment and peculiar circumstances. However with the advent of colonialism at the turn of the century, the natural development process of the people was arrested. The colonial policy of exploitation took root and the indirect rule system was introduced to help the British penetrate the vast territory that is Nigeria.

The colonial local government system was known as the Native Administration system or simply native authorities. In this system the structure was described by Oyediran (1988) as "Characterized by a military - like chain of responsibility extending from the Governor and lieutenant Governor down to the Resident; District officer, Chief or Emir, District Head or Chief and town or village head".

The system of Administration which allowed the traditional authorities to flourish under the close supervision of the Resident became the hallmark of indirect rule. It must however be pointed out that: the traditional institutions were inferior to the colonial authorities for as Alex Gboyega (1989) remarked "the values of the colonial system did not admit of parity of status between the Chief, that is the traditional ruler and the Resident".

The local government at this period was seen purely as been instrumental. It was this a tool for colonial exploitation of the colonies for the- benefit of the metropolis. Whatever changes that were made on the traditional institutions already in existence were, .done ostensibly to further the exploitative agenda of colonial rule. Ikime and Crowther (1970) in advancing this argument stated that:

The use of indigenous political institutions for the purpose of local government was contingent on certain modifications. These modifications fell .into two categories: Modifications of aspects of traditional government that was repugnant to European ideas of what constituted good government, and modifications of the colonised country

The Native Authorities though very conservative in outlook due to its illiterate- traditional orientation still performed some of the functions of modern local government. Their functions were legislative, executive and judicial in nature.

At this point it is pertinent to point out that the system was highly centralised and excluded the emerging educated elites. It was from this group that agitations for reformations of the authorities emanated and with time these reforms changed the face of the local government system in the country.

The Post-Colonial Era.

This era marked the regionalisation of local governments in Nigeria. Local governments were essentially the responsibility of the regions. Thus there existed far-reaching disparities in their structures, functions and composition. This also reflected on their power and influence in the three regions.

In the Northern region, the Native authority system which existed under colonial rule was continued. This was not surprising because most of the political actors in the region at this time were products or beneficiaries of the Native Authority system. They therefore felt very comfortable with and well disposed to the system. The influence of the Emirs was also, another factor. The Aristocratic and near Feudal Theocratic system which operated in the region tied the Northern peoples congress which was in control of the region, to its apron strings and as such made sure that they were in control of the political compass of the region; The local government was essentially part of this agenda, thus they made sure that the Native Authority system which granted them enormous powers, influence and prestige was retained.

The Native authorities also served as a breeding ground and veritable institution for the training and recruitment of regional political actors. This in part explained the symbiotic relationship that developed between this two tiers of government.

The East established a two tiered District and local 'Council' system in the rural areas, and a three tiered system composed of an all purpose municipal, urban County and County councils. At this time members of the various councils were mostly elected. Though these councils are supposed to be autonomous since the members were elected representatives of the people, the party in power still exercised a strong control over them through the ministry for local government, the local government inspectorate and the local government service Board.

In the Western Region, a three tiered structure was in operation. However the crises which engulfed the region after independence

and which led to the 1962 state of emergency had terrible consequences for the local governments.

The reasons for this was because prior to the crises, the A.G. which was the government .in power in the region,- was also the dominant force in the councils. However after the state of emergency, the new party in control of the region tried to establish themselves at the grassroot through the local governments. The councils were (but seen and used as avenues for planting the coalitions surrogates at the grassroots. Like "the Eastern region, they also tried to control the councils through the instrumentality of the local government Inspectorate as well as the local government Service Board.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Identify some of the Functions performed by the Native Authority System

3.2 The Early Military ERA 1966-1976

This era- was a period of great political instability in the country. As expected all efforts were geared towards maintaining stability and combating the Biafran threat of secession. The entry of the military did witness some changes in the councils as the local government administrations were dissolved and new care-taker or administrators imposed on them. It must also be pointed but that the nature of military regimes which are usually centralised and authoritarian affected the councils since the various regional governments made no pretence of allowing the councils a semblance of autonomy.

As observed by Egurube (1991) "To the extent that local government policy actors, derived their legitimacy not from the people but from state governors during this period the conclusion that these served more as watch dogs for their military bosses at the State level can 'hardly be faulted. Local government institutions were thus' from all intents and purposes governed by predominantly instrumental and penetrative objectives"

In conclusion we would say that despite the structural changes that were made during this period, nothing really remarkable happened at the local government level during the early military era.

3.3 The Late Military ERA 1976-1979

This period was a watershed in the annals of the historical evolution of local governments in Nigeria. This was the period when

the most remarkable reform of the local government system in Nigeria was carried out. The main thrust of the reform was a standardisation of the councils nationwide.

The reform had as its objectives:

- To bring about even and rapid development at local levels throughout the country;
- To appropriate, serious and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiative by developing or delegating them to local representative bodies;
- To facilitate the exercise of democratic self-government close to the local levels of our society, and to encourage initiative and leadership potentials;
- To mobilise human and natural resources through the involvement of members of the public in their local development; and
- To provide a two way channel of communication between the local communities and the government. (Guidelines for Local Government Reforms 1976)

In order to maintain a uniform standard in the size of the councils, a demographic size of 150,000 to 800,000 people was stipulated as the minimum and maximum population of any council in Nigeria. Local political actors were also to be chosen by elections. This reform had a very profound effect in the North where the old Native authority system was still in practice albeit in a camouflaged form, Nwatu (1995) has stated that "in no other period did the local government gain prominence as was the military era". However some scholars have argued that the changes induced by the reforms were not as far-reaching as it ought to be. To this group the changes were more apparent than real. Egurube (1991) - stated that "the reform was more symbolic than real, and that the changes it introduced were more cosmetic than a decentralist logic,

While not going into the logic of this argument, we believe that the reforms had a positive impact on the system and set the tone and standard for other reforms of the local government system in Nigeria.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

List at least five objectives of the reform that took place between 1976-1979

4.0 CONCLUSION

Local government reforms in Nigeria was not unprecedented. It follows that the system was introduced into the Nigeria political culture without recourse to Nigeria's political milieu and antecedence. It became a matter of trial and error hence the numerous reforms. The structures that came with the local government system could not achieve the stated objective of local government which led to several calls for reformation. There was the need to make the local councils more responsive to the yearnings of the people and make them real agents for the mobilization of the masses while putting them in a position to contribute their own quota towards national development that the various reforms have been initiated.

5.0 SUMMARY

The Colonial period marks the beginning of the modern local government system in the country. Prior to this period, traditional institutions were at liberty to practice any system of administration that suited their environment and peculiar circumstances.

The post colonial era marked the regionalization of local governments in Nigeria. Local governments were essentially the responsibility of the regions. Thus there existed far reaching disparities in their structures, functions and composition. This also reflected on their power and influence in the three regions. In the Northern region the Native Authority system which existed under colonial rule was continued. The people of the North were comfortable with and well disposed to the system. The Native Authority system also served as breeding ground and veritable institution for the training and recruitment of regional political actors.

The East established a two tiered district and local council system in the rural areas, and a three tiered system composed of an all purpose municipal, urban county and country councils. At this time members of the various councils were mostly elected.

In the Western Region, a three tiered structure was in operation, however the crises which engulfed the region after independence and which led to the 1962 state of emergency has terrible consequences for

the local government. Thereafter there was a military interregnum in 1966 and the local government was influenced by the new regime up to the period of 1979 when the military ushered in a second Republic in Nigeria. Whether military or civilian, the transformation of the local government system has continued till date. The National Assembly in 2017 is debating strongly in support of full autonomy for the local government in Nigeria. The debate has been taken to the state Houses of Assembly. If this goes through, then we shall be having 2017 Local Government Reforms. Reforms of the local government system, one can say, has no end.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

The Native Authority System apart from maintaining law and order, they also performed legislative, executive and judicial functions.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

The objectives of the reforms that took place between 1976 –1979 are as follows:

- To bring about even and rapid development at local levels throughout the country
- To appropriate, serious and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiative by developing or delegating them to local representatives bodies
- To facilitate the representatives bodies
- To facilitate the exercise of democratic self-government close to the local levels of our society and to encourage initiative and leadership potentials.
- To mobilize human and natural resources through the involvement of members of the public in their local development and
- To provide a two way channel of communication between the local communities and the government (Guidelines for Local Government Reforms, 1976)

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Why are local government reforms necessary?

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UNIT 2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS UNDER THE IBB ERA AND THE INTRODUCTION OF PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Constitutional Reforms
 - 3.2 1988 Reforms and Dotun Philips Committee
 - 3.3 The Introduction of the Presidential System
 - 3.4 Statutory Checks on the Powers of Local Government Chairmen
 - 3.5 Problems arising from the Introduction of Presidential System
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The inadequacies in the Nigeria Local Government System and the arbitrary powers of the state governments over the local government councils made Nigerians to embark upon a search for a better system of local government that would stand the test of time. Based on the Political Bureau and Dasuki Reports of 1987, the Federal Government created sub-ordinate units out of the 301 multi- purpose units called local governments. Each local government council was structured into a pyramidal format with the village constituting the primary unit, the Development Area Office constituting the intermediate unit while the local government council constituted the apex unit. The purpose of this was to achieve the decentralization of services provided by the local government. The villages were to become the target of state and local government programmes and activities. This reform would enable the people themselves to be involved in the supervision, control and guiding local government and other government functionaries deployed to the field. It also envisaged that the people would be more directly involved in the provision of services for their common good. The sum total was that the people would be more meaningfully mobilized for production and community development.

Under this reform exercise, state military governors appointed Caretaker Committees consisting of chairman, vice-chairman, supervisors and a

secretary to the local government council. Later in 1987 elections were conducted on non-party bases to run the affairs of the local government councils. This was a prelude to the return of democratic rule to Nigeria. Most of the recommendations of the Dasuki report were implemented by the Babangida regime in its local government reform exercise.

General Babangida set up the Constituent Assembly which came out with far-reaching resolutions which were later entrenched in the 1989 Constitution. The Dasuki Report and the provisions of the 1989 Constitution of Nigeria formed the basis of the local government reform carried out by General Babangida from 1985 and 1993.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you should be able to;

- Underscore the constitutional reforms that took place in the local government during the “golden era”
- Understand the implementation guidelines to effectuate the provisions of Decree No. 10 of 1991
- Examine the introduction of the presidential system at the local government level
- Explain the problems that erupted as a result of the introduction of the presidential system.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Constitutional Reforms

The local government in Nigeria witnessed what can be classified as the “golden era” during the Babangida administration (1985-1993). He introduced measures to enhance the economic viability of the local governments and also ensured more constitutional autonomy for them. Highlights of the local reforms under Babangida include:

- a. The direct remittance of local government funds from the Federation Accounts as well as at source deductions of states 10% internal revenue direct to the local government councils.
- b. Increase in the local government share of the Federal Account from 10-15 percent in 1991 and from 15-20% in 1992.
- c. The 1989 Constitution made local governments truly autonomous; hence the

Ministries for Local Government throughout the country were abolished on 1st October 1991.

- d. Presidential system was introduced at the local government level in 1991.

The chairmen and his appointed supervisors formed the executive arm while the elected councilors constituted the legislative arm. This brought about incessant conflicts between the two arms of government and general instability in the local government.

The 1989 Constitution gave the local government councils the status of a third tier system with considerable autonomy. The intension of the framers of this constitution was to erode all past anomalies associated with the subordinate existence of local government councils to the State Government. On 1st October 1991, General Ibrahim Babangida in his budget speech announced the abolition of the Ministries of Local Government throughout the country because of the suffocating control, which the states exercised over Local Governments. The 1989 Constitution recognized 449 Local Governments with the provision for creating more and adjusting the boundaries of the existing ones. Section 7(1) of 1989 Constitution provided for democratically elected Local Government Council, but at the same time, the States were charged with the responsibility for bringing them into being, thus, subordinating the Local Governments to the State Governments.

In April 1991, the Vice-President Augustus Aikhomu, in a nation-wide broadcast announced a two-tier system of local Government i.e. the executive and legislative arms and issued implementation (presidential) guidelines to effectuate the provisions of Degree, No. 10 of 1991. These guidelines were:

- i. The executive arm of the Local Government consists of the Chairmen, Vice- Chairmen, Supervisors and the Secretary to the Local Government
- ii. The Councils became the legislative arm with the elected councilors performing legislature functions. The legislators have to elect from among themselves a leader and a deputy leader;
- iii. There was head of Personnel Management Department who was designated as a Council Clerk, who keeps proper records of council proceedings.

The 1989 Constitution made provision for the functions of the Local Government Councils headed by the Executive Chairmen, which include exclusive and concurrent functions which were to be performed by both the states and local governments.

The functions of the legislative arm were spelt out as shown below:

- i. Law making, debating and passing Local Government legislation;
- ii. Debating, approving and possibly amending Local Government annual Budget, subject to the Chairman's veto which could be overridden by two- third majority of council members.
- iii. Vetting and monitoring the implementation of projects and

- programmes in the Local Government annual budgets;
- iv. Examining and debating monthly statements of income and expenditure of the local government;
- v. Impeaching the Local Government Chairman who has committed an impeachable offence in accordance with the 1989 Constitution.
- vi. Advising, consulting and liaising with the local government Chairman;
- vii. Performing such other functions as may be assigned to it from time to time by the State House of Assembly.

By this act the presidential system was effectively extended to the local government level in Nigeria by the Babangida regime with several consequences. The provisions earlier listed had far reaching consequences for the running of the affairs of the Nigerian Local Government System. The reform introduced checks and balances into the administration of the local government. However, the council chairmen were so powerful that the elected councilors could not act as effective checks on them. This resulted in all kinds of crimes committed against the local governments. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Babangida local government reform was initially successful. It was in the later part of his administration that the situation painted above manifested itself. To worsen the already ugly trend, the 1988 Civil Service Reform in Nigeria and its application to the local government has done a lot of damage to this tier of government. The combined effects of all the above is the entrenchment of indiscipline, corruption, gross mismanagement, phenomenon of “sharing” and the consequent neglect of rural development in Nigeria.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Identify the constitutional changes that marked the “golden era” of Nigeria local government system

3.2 1988 Local Government Reforms

Even though the reforms were highlighted under the constitutional changes, a recap is necessary at this juncture. The 1988 local government reforms by the Babangida administration is a milestone in the local government practice in Nigeria. Like the 1976 Reforms, it introduced some radical changes to the system.

The Babangida regime set up an 11-man Committee headed by Dotun Philips to recommend appropriate changes in the Civil Service of the three levels of government in the country. To this effect, the committee came up with the following local government reforms:

- a. The chairman of the local government became the Chief

Executive and Accounting Officer of the Council provided his role as accounting officer shall exclude signing vouchers and cheques. This provision was an essential element of democracy because it allowed for checks and balances. This equally implies that the chairman was the leader of the council who had overall control over all resources including men, material and money.

This resolved the earlier friction between the chairman and secretary in the administration of the council.

- b. The position of the Council Secretary was made a political appointee whose tenure correspondingly ended with the administration that appointed him/her. The secretary therefore ceased to be a career position.
- c. Establishment of operational departments in each local government. It provided for a minimum of four and maximum of eight operational departments including: personnel, planning, research and statistics, finance and supplies, works and others.
- d. Professionalization of Local Government Service: Local government civil service employees were required to spend all their career in one particular department which they were posted to on assumption of duty based on qualification and area of specialization of employee. This was done to promote efficiency.
- e. Establishment of Audit Alarm Committee to alert the necessary quarters when there were clear indications of misappropriation and embezzlement of council funds. This was part of the mechanism to check corrupt practices and to enhance accountability. It was a preventive arrangement to check fraud by council officials.
- f. Junior Staff Management Committee: The reform provided for a junior staff management for officers on grade level 01-05, and also established a senior management committee for personnel/management functions such as promotion, discipline and confirmation of staff.

3.3 The Introduction of Presidential System at the Local Government Level

The operations of the Local Government Councils in the present dispensation are guided by the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It recognizes 774 LGAs as defined by First Schedule Part 1. Section 7(1) of the constitution provides that:

The system of Local Government by democratically elected Local Government Councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the

Government of every state shall, subject to section 8 of this constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils.

The implication of this provision is that the local government councils are to be democratically elected but the State Houses of Assembly are invested with the „power“ of making laws for the detailed operations of the councils i.e. functions, structure, composition, finance etc, as deemed appropriate for their states. This implies that the unified system of local government in practice since 1976 has ceased to be. Each state is therefore; free to enact their own laws for the administration of the respective local government in their states. Consequent upon this, the various State Houses of Assembly in the country introduced the presidential system at the local government level through their enabling laws. The same problems associated with the Babangida reforms persisted and have even worsened.

In June 2002, when the tenure of the councils elected in 1999 nationwide expired, the various State Governments did not conduct elections into these councils for over two years. Rather, as in 1979-1983 during Shehu Shagari era, the states resorted to the appointment of transition committees or caretaker committees or by whatever name called which was clearly at variance with the constitution and norms of democracy. Thus, the people at the grassroots were once again denied participation in choosing their leaders and the governance of their own localities. The local government chairmen under this dispensation were very powerful and adjudged by many to be very corrupt. One important trend to observe is that from Babangida era in 1990-1993 and the subsequent regimes to date, the rate and depth of corruption, mismanagement and lack of grassroots development has been on the increase, even in spite of state control of the local governments.

In furtherance of the 1999 Constitution provision on local government, the Benue State House of Assembly for instance, enacted the Benue State Local Government Council Law No. 25 (Establishment Law, 2000) which provides for the Executive and Legislative arms of the Local Government. The executive arm consists of the chairman, Vice-chairman, Supervisors and Secretary to the Local Government who is head of service. The legislative arm consists of the leader, deputy-leader and Councilors. There is also a Clerk of the Legislative Council appointed by the Local Government Services Commission.

The main functions of the Local Government Councils i.e. executive arm include (See Part VII. Sections 45 and 46 of Benue State Local Government Law 2000).

- The formulation of economic plans and development schemes for the local government areas.
- Collection of rates and issuance of radio and television licenses.
- Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
- Licensing of bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks) canoes, wheel barrows and carts.
- Establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor parks, and public conveniences;
- Construction and maintenance of roads, street lights, drains, parks, gardens chief's palace, open spaces or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the House of Assembly of the state;
- Naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses.
- Provision and maintenance of public conveniences, sewage and refuse disposal.
- Assessment of privately owned house or tenement for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of the state;
- Registration of all births, deaths and marriages; control and regulation of
 - i. Out-door advertising and hoarding
 - ii. Movement and keeping of pets of all description.

Functions of a local government Council shall include participation of such council in the Government of a State as respects the following matters.

- a. The provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education;
- b. The development of agriculture and natural resources, other than the exploitation of minerals.
- c. The provision and maintenance of health services; and
- d. Such other functions as may be conferred on a Local Government by the House of Assembly of the state.

The main functions of the Legislative arm are contained in Part VII, Section 47 (a- d) of the Benue State Local Government (Establishment) Law 2000. These are:

- a. Debating, approving or amending the annual budget of the Local government subject to the Chairman's veto, which may be set aside by two- third majority of members of the Local Government Legislative Council;
- b. Vetting and monitoring the implementation of projects and programmes in the annual budget of the Local Government from time to time;
- c. Examining and debating the monthly statement of income and expenditure rendered to it by the chairman of the Local government;
- d. Impeachment of Local Government Chairman who commits impeachment offence in accordance with the constitution.
- e. Advising, consulting and liaising with the chairman of the Local Government, and performing such other function as may be assigned to it from time to time by any law of the state.

The introduction of the 1991 Presidential System as well as the 1999 constitutional provision on local government was to achieve the following objectives:

- Strengthen the local government system and enhance its status and autonomy by giving it a parity of treatment with higher tiers of government, thus enabling it to fully fulfill its assigned roles as the third tier of government in the Federation.
- Streamline the practice at the local government level with what obtains at higher tiers of government, thus facilitating the internationalization of the principle and practice of presidential system at the local government level. This is bound to serve as significant training ground for leadership at the higher tiers of government.
- Strengthen the system of checks and balances by the establishment of the Office of the Auditor General of Local Governments, the process of Audit alarm and the principle of

recall. There was also the need to check the excesses and abuses pertaining to the management and application of public funds and resources (Oyelakin, 1992)

3.4 Statutory Checks on the Powers of Local Government Chairmen

In view of the enormous powers and functions of the chairmen and their executives there was likelihood of corruption of power and hence the need to make laws that will control their activities. The following laws were made in this respect:

- i. The Chairmen and Vice Chairmen of Local Governments can be removed from office by the president under section 34 and 292 of decree No. 15 of 1989 and the 1989 Constitution respectively for gross mismanagement.
- ii. Further more section 23 and 304 of decree No. 15 of 1989 and the 1989 Constitution respectively provided for the recall of the Chairman and other members of the council which operate in the nature of vote of no confidence passed on the effected member by his own people who voted him.
- iii. Again, there is Local Government Service Commission established by section 29 and 195 of decree No. 15 of 1989 and 1989 Constitution respectively. The primary function of the Commission includes to serve as a review body for all petitions from the local governments in respect of appointments, promotions, and discipline.
- iv. The Chairmen and other members of the council were compelled to observe and conform to the code of conduct under the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Decree of 1989 and 1989 Constitution respectively.
- v. In case of financial control the office of the Auditor General of Local Government was established and was charged with the responsibility of auditing of all accounts of the local governments without direction from any other authority or person.
- vi. The legislative arms of the local government can exercise legislative powers by enacting bye-laws on any matter but can only become law when assented to by the chairman and is also not contrary to the provisions of the state law and the constitution of Nigeria.
- vii. The general functions of the legislative arm of the local government are a further check on the power of the executive arm of the local government.
- viii. Power of House of Assembly to suspend or remove local government chairmen. Under section 6 of the Benue State Local (Establishment) law, 2000, the House of Assembly has

powers under section 128 and 129 of the 1999 Constitution to suspend any Chairman or council to enable proper investigation and determination of allegations against such chairmen or council. If such allegations are proved, this could lead to removal of the chairman or dissolution of the council.

- ix. The Anti Corruption Law (ICPC) of the Federal Government is a further check on the powers of chairmen, their executives and the legislative arms of the local government.

3.5 Problems Arising from the Introduction of Presidential System

There are a number of problems that have arisen from the introduction and practice of the presidential system at the local government level. Some of these problems include the following:

- i. Problem of inter-governmental relationship: By the introduction of the presidential system at the local government level, one presupposes the existence of local government autonomy. But under the 1989 and 1999 Constitutions, there is no autonomy for local government because there has been many instances of interference by both the state and federal governments. Also there are possibilities of role conflicts over functions as a result of overlapping responsibilities. The local governments are usually the greatest loser in the equation.
- ii. Conflict between the legislative and executive arms of the local government because of the separation of powers and functions:
 - a. The tendency of the legislative arm to misuse the impeachment clause as a result of many grievances, real or imagined;
 - b. The non participation of elected councilors in the administration of the local government like contract awards, staff recruitment, postings etc are sources of their grievances.
 - c. The councilors became part-time legislators to “meet at least once in a month” contrary to their expectations. Worst still, there was not much to legislate upon, so they have become redundant most of the time.
 - d. The Secretaries, Supervisors and other aides appointed by the chairmen took over their places as executors of local government programme with much advantage accruing to them at the detriment of the councilors.
 - e. Corruption and misapplication of funds as a result of the constant threats of impeachment by the legislators. Very often the chairmen use this opportunity to

- misappropriate and mismanage local government funds.
- f. Constant instability in the local government system as a result of ranglings and squabbles between the legislative and executive arms of the local government over the spoils of office.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Identify the problems arising from the introduction of the presidential system in Nigeria local government.

4.0 CONCLUSION

It can be observed that the Nigerian local government system has witnessed significant reforms in the past nearly sixty years, beginning from 1951. The reforms redefined local governments and changed their orientation from field administrations of the state governments to being semi-autonomous local government structures that were responsible to their electorates. One of the important aspects of the reforms was the policy that local governments are now entitled to a proportion of the funds from the federal account. Increased allocation of resources into local government system has ensured that local governments have access to substantial revenues to enable them to execute the range of responsibilities allocated to them by the reforms and subsequently by the constitution. Another important innovation of the reform was/is the policy decision to provide training at all levels to all categories of local government officials in three Nigerian Universities; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

The progress made in the local government reforms in the 1970s were virtually eclipsed in the early 1980s when the authority vested by the 1979 Constitution in the states to create local government led to a proliferation of local governments which over-stretched the limited capacity of governance at the local government level. This situation was halted after the fall of the 1979-1983 civilian administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari in the 1983 coup d'tat led by the Buhari/Idiagbon.

The creation of states in Nigeria has always led to the creation of more local governments by the military. The number of local governments rose from 229 in 1970 to 301 in 1979 and to a peak of 781 when state governments were given authority by the constitution to create local governments. After the overthrow of the civilian administration in 1983, the number was again reduced to 301 and later raised to 449 in 1987, 589 in 1991 and 774 since 1996. The urge to create more Local

Government Areas has been rejected by the federal government. This issue was a subject of litigation between the states and the federal government, which the latter won. This situation led to the withholding of the funds meant for the local government councils in Lagos State during President Obasanjo's era.

However, this action was voided by the Supreme Court. Therefore, all the local government areas created by the state governments then have been reverted to development areas.

During the Babangida era, from 1988, the federal government strengthened local government institutions by abolishing the Ministries of local governments, paying federal allocations directly to the local governments, granting local governments authority to prepare and approve their own budgets and taxes independently, transferring primary education and primary healthcare and all related issues and increasing the local government share of federation account.

From 1999, the fates of local governments have declined. The 1999 Constitution has placed local government directly under the state's control, Ministries of local government have been reestablished in many states, and no more direct funding of local governments and the practice of presidentialism at the local government level is now in place in many states of the federation. Today, however, local governments remain the key institution in local governance. It is the basic unit of the country's political system, the primary level of grassroots political mobilization, and a major reference point in the distribution by government of certain economic and social goods and services (Otobo E. "Nigeria", in Adamolekun L. (ed) 2002).

5.0 SUMMARY

The first schedule part 1 section 7 (1) of the 1999 constitution provides that:

The system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the government of every state shall, subject to section 8 of this constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils.

The implication of this provision is that the local government councils are to be democratically elected but the State Houses of Assembly are invested with the powers of making laws for the detailed operations of the councils ie functions, structure, composition, finance etc as deemed appropriate for their respective states. Therefore the unified system of local government in practice since 1976 has ceased to be as each state is free to enact their own laws for the administration of the respective local governments in their states.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- The remittance of local government funds from the federation accounts as well as at source deductions of states 10% internal revenue direct to the local government council.
- Increase in the local government share of the federal account from 10-15 percent in 1991 and from 15-20% in 1992.
- The 1989 constitution made local government truly autonomous; hence the ministries for local government throughout the country were abolished on 1st October, 1991.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- Problem of inter-governmental relationship;
- Conflict between the legislative and executive arms of the local government
- The tendency of the legislative arm to misuse the impeachment clause
- The councilors became part time legislators to meet at least once in a month contrary to their expectations etc

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Compare and contrast the 1976 local government reforms and the 1988/89 reforms in Nigeria

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Enyi John Egbe (2014) Native Authorities and Local Government Reforms in Nigeria Since 1914 Journal of Humanities and Social Science Vol. 19, Issue 3, pp. 113-127

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UNIT 3 THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
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 - 3.2 ALGON Versus State Governors on tenure Elongation
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Local government reforms under the Babangida administration made some significant landmarks in the practice of local government as a third tier of government. However, there were some short comings in the reforms, first staff of local governments were not prepared for reforms as there were no induction courses to familiarize them with the new system. Secondly, most local governments lacked financial base to sustain the autonomy as many of them could not generate more than 5-10% of their needed funds from local revenue sources, there was too much dependence on the direct subvention from the federal government for their financial survival (Minna, 1993) it became obvious therefore that there is still much to be done at that level. The third-tier of government drew so much attention in this republic, not mainly for performance but on issues arising from tenure and postponed elections.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Identify the shortcomings of the so called golden era of the local government system
- Explain the complications arising from Decree 36 of 1998
- Underscore the ALGON versus state Governors saga
- Examine the role of INEC in the 2002 Local Government Elections

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Issues arising from the Provisions of Decree 36 of 1998 Constitution

The council chairman and their councilors were voted into office via (the Basic Constitutional and Transitional Provisions) Decree 36 of 1998. The Decree specified a three year tenure for them which ought to expire on the 29th of May 2003 or as the Decree puts it “A local government council or an Area Council in respect of Abuja shall stand dissolved at the expiration of 3 years commencing from the date of the first sitting of the council”.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What were the issues that arose from the provisions of Decree 36 of 1998?

3.2 ALGON Versus State Governors on Tenure Elongation

The council chairman however, felt that what was good for the goose would equally be good for the gander by demanding a four year tenure. They presented a united front under the aegis of the Association of Local Government Chairmen of Nigeria (ALGON). ALGON was able to lobby the National Assembly for a one year extension of their tenure. The extension which was contained in the Electoral Act 2001, was challenged at the apex court by the state governors.

The states in going to court believed that the National Assembly not only exceeded its limits, it also usurped their functions. Their belief was hinged on section 7(1) of the 1999 constitution which states that:

The system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the government of every state shall, subject to section 8 of the constitution, ensure their existence under a law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils.

On the 28th of March 2002, the Supreme Court ruled on the matter. It stated that:

No law by the National Assembly can validly increase or alter the tenure of elected officers of local governments; the National Assembly has no power, except in relation to the federal capital territory to make any law or division of councils for election purposes, qualification of candidates and date of elections among others; the National Assembly has no power to make laws to qualify or disqualify candidates for election under the 1999 constitution. The National Assembly can only make laws on registration of voters and procedure regulating election of a local government council, it is the House of Assembly that has power to make laws on elections for the posts of chairman, vice chairman or councilors of local government; sections 15-73, 110-122 excluding section 16, 26-73, 115, 97, 117 ad 118 (1-8) of the Electoral Act 2001, are inconsistent with provisions of the 1999 constitution and are accordingly null and void and inoperative.

The judgment which was hailed nationally as a landmark judgment was a big blow to council bosses that were preparing to spend one more year in office. The Governors, thereafter started making arrangements for council polls.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What was the bone of contention between ALGON and State Governors?

3.3 The Local Government Elections of 2002

The council polls could not hold in 2002 despite the fact that it was first fixed for April 13 2002, later May 18 2002 and then August 10.

There were the speculations that it would hold first in September, later November and even December 2002 but it still did not hold. The two factors that prevented the conduct of the elections in 2002 was the inability of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to provide the electoral register, and the registration of new parties. Though it was then felt that the council polls would hold immediately after the April/May General Elections of 2003, no concrete reasons were adduced why democracy is being denied at the grassroots. The

setting up of the Technical Committee on Local Government Reforms by President Obasanjo in June 2003 put paid to the conduct of the Elections until the president and his men so decide.

It is quite instructive here to point out that the 1999 constitution actually set the stage for the confusion and intrigue that has bedeviled the local governments since 1999.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The third-tier of government drew so much attention during the fourth republic, not mainly in terms of performance but on issues arising from tenure elongation and postponement of council polls. In a nutshell however, the Babangida era that ascribed golden era for the local government had some obvious loop holds that exposed the third tier of government to ridicule. How could the tenure of local governments be put at three years by the 1998 reforms as against the four years of Governors in the states? The local government chairmen under the aegis of Association of Local Government Chairmen of Nigeria (ALGON) lobbied their way through the National Assembly to get an extra one year to make their four year tenure like the state governors but lost the case at the apex court. For the state governors to have gone to the apex court to challenge the four year bidding of local government chairman is a clear indication that the governors are in agreement to the second place status of the local government councils to the state government. There is nowhere in Nigeria where a State Governor has called for local government election immediately after the three year tenure of their local government regime. Instead, they appoint a caretaker committee for that one year period until another election is conducted. In most cases, there will be no elections at the local government especially if the government is not sure of another tenure. They use this period to siphon local government allocations.

5.0 SUMMARY

What appeared as golden era for the local government in Nigeria was not without its shortcomings. The third tier of government suffered constitutional harassment ranging from tenure of the local government chairmen and council elections. Decree 36 of 1998 gave the local government chairmen a three year tenure instead of four like the State Governors. Although the Electoral Act of 2011 contained the four year tenure for the council chairmen, the State Governors went to the Supreme Court to challenge the provisions of the Electoral Act, 2001. The Judgement at the apex was in favour of the State Governors and it became a big blow to the council bosses that were preparing to

spend another one year in office.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- i. The issue of 3 year tenure for local government chairmen instead of 4 year tenure
- ii. An area council stands dissolved at the expiration of 3 years commencing from the date of the first sitting.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- i. Tenure elongation to 4 years by the local government chairman was opposed by the State Governors to the extent of seeking redress at the Supreme Court

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What is the implication of the Supreme Court Judgment that endorses 3 year tenure for Council Chairmen to the performance of their constitutional responsibilities.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Enyi John Egbe (2014) Native Authorities and Local Government Reforms in Nigeria Since 1914 *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* Vol. 19, Issue 3, pp. 113-127

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UNIT 4 THE 2003 LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORMS

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Reasons that necessitated the 2003 Reforms
 - 3.2 Sanda Ndayako Technical Committee
 - 3.3 Aftermath of the 2003 Reforms
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2003 Local Government Reforms did not come as a surprise especially with the saga that occasioned the 2002 council polls. The 2002 council polls could not hold despite the fact that it was fixed for April 13, 2002. It was obvious that democracy was being denied at the grassroots. The Obasanjo led administration sprang into action by setting up a technical committee on Local Government Reforms headed by the Etsu Nupe Alhaji Sanda Ndayako.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit, you shall be able to;

- Identify the reasons that necessitated the 2003 Local Government Reforms
- Underscore the Sanda Ndayako led technical committee and the philosophy for setting up the committee
- Examine the aftermath of the 2003 reforms against the backdrop of the third tier level of government.

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Reasons that Necessitated the 2003 Reforms

The president in a nationwide broadcast on the 18th of June 2003 informed the nation that the Council of State (made up of the President, his vice, the 36 state governors, all past presidents and the leadership of the National Assembly) has agreed on a reform of the Nations Local Government System.

The president said the review was necessitated by “three disturbing trends among others, which had been identified with the recent inception

of democratic dispensation in the country:

- i. The non-performance or gross under-performance of the local governments
- ii. The high cost of government and near-prohibitive cost of electioneering campaigns to individual political contestants in Nigeria, and
- iii. Atomization and continual fragmentation of local government councils including impractical division of towns and cities into unworkable mini- local governments.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What were the reasons that necessitated the reforms of 2003?

3.2 Sanda Ndayako Technical Committee

Arising from the above, the council decided to set up a Technical Committee. The Technical Committee of experts in local government affairs drawn from all the geo-political zones have as their terms of reference to:

- i. Examine the problem of inefficiency and high cost of government with a view to reducing cost and wastage at the three tiers of government;
- ii. Review the performance of local government within the last four years and consider the desirability or otherwise of retaining the local government as the third tier of government in that regard consider, among other options the adoption of a modified version of the pre-1976 local government system of government.
- iii. Examine the high cost of electioneering campaign in the country and consider among other options, the desirability of whether political parties rather than individual office seekers should canvass for votes in elections and consider any other matter, which in the opinion of the technical committee are germane to the goal of efficient structure of government in Nigeria.

The Technical Committee which had Alhaji Sanda Ndayako, the Etsu Nupe as chairman was inaugurated on June 25 2003. Unfortunately the Etsu died on duty and was replaced by Mallam Liman Ciroma.

The committee submitted it's report to the president on Thursday November 23, 2003. The report which was presented by the Deputy Chairman Prof. Akin Mabogunge on behalf of the chairman, submitted that "the federal, state and local government have failed in meeting the

aspiration of the people. The Deputy Chairman said that the committee's recommendations include the need to grant the local government third tier status, a shift from the presidential to the parliamentary system at the local government level in the interest of economy, the retention of the 774 constitutionally recognized local government councils, and the abolishing of the state joint local government account among others".

3.3 Aftermath of the 2003 Reforms

It must be pointed out that the setting up of the technical committee elicited a lot of criticisms especially from opposition parties. They felt that the President lacked the powers under the law to set up the committee. As a matter of fact, the terms of reference handed to the technical committee demonstrated a display of ignorance on the part of the Obasanjo led administration. For instance, the technical committee among other things, were to,

Review the performance of the local governments within the last four years and consider the desirability or otherwise of retaining the local government as the third tier of government in that regard, consider among other options the adoption of a modified version of the pre-1976 local government system.

Two things stand clear from thisterms of reference that place the administration's idea under scrutiny.

- Whether or not to retain local government as a third tier of government
- Considering a reversion to the local government system that existed before 1976

First of all, no civilized country in the world today operates without local government. That is because the local government is the closest tier of government to the people much more than the state or federal government. Where the state government or federal government trace their origin to certain constitutional developments like the Richards constitution that brought about regionalism in Nigeria, these regions have transformed to states and the Oliver Lytelton's Constitution of 1954 that ushered in a federation in Nigeria which gave prominence to the Federal Government of today, there is no colonial constitution that can lay claim to the creation of local government because local government has been there right from when God created man. When God created the first man and woman, he mandated the man to take charge of every other thing around him as a government. All that the local government has gone through is reforms upon reforms as a modification to suit the change in time and space. Therefore, no

administration, whether civilian or military has the moral justification to consider retention or otherwise of a natural tier of government.

The second lacuna of that terms of reference was the consideration of reversal to the system of local government that existed before 1976 which occasioned the rationalist resistance because the system was adjudged by the nationalist as non- developmental and non-participatory.

If any tier of government should be considered whether to be or not to be, it is the state government. By the peculiarity of the Nigerian state, we do not need the state government because their existence has led to the failure of the local government in Nigeria. A three tier structure of federal, local government and community councils is better for Nigeria especially given the present circumstances.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What were the terms of reference give to the technical committee on Local Government Reforms, 2003?

4.0 CONCLUSION

The local government more that any other tier of government has come under scrutiny in the form of reforms. This is not as a result of their non-desirability as the 2003 local government reform would claim, but because of the need to reposition the third tier of government in a manner that will better address the aspirations of the people at the grassroots.

5.0 SUMMARY

By way of summary, three things necessitated the 2003 Local Government Reforms, they are:

- i. The non-performance or gross under-performance of the local governments
- ii. The high cost of government and near prohibitive cost of electioneering campaigns to individual political contestants in Nigeria, and
- iii. Atomization and continual fragmentation of local government councils including impractical divisions of towns and cities into unworkable mini- local governments.

The terms of reference handed to the technical committee included among other things, the examination of the problem of inefficiency and

high cost of government with a view to reducing cost and wastage at the three tiers of government.

The technical committee recommended that the local government be granted third tier status, and the retention of the 774 constitutionally recognized local government councils and the abolition of the state joint local government accounts, etc.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- Non-performance or gross under-performance of the local government
- The high cost of governance and near prohibitive cost of electioneering campaigns. etc.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- To examine the problem of inefficiency and high cost of governance
- To consider the desirability or otherwise of the retention of local government as a third tier of government etc.

6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Examine the terms of reference handed to the technical committee on 2003 local government reform against the backdrop of the significance of local government to national development.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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MODULE 3

Unit 1	Local Government and Service Delivery in Nigeria
Unit 2	Planning for Development at the Local Government Level
Unit 3	Financial Management and Accountability at the Local Government Level
Unit 4	Local Government Administration and Grassroots Development in Nigeria

UNIT 1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In all emergent states, local government has become the main fundamental instrument for the acceleration and sustenance of development. Local government is widely acknowledged as a viable instrument for development and for the delivery of social services to the people. It is believed that this third tier of government is strategically placed to fulfil this condition as a result of its proximity to the rural people, which enhances its ability to easily articulate and aggregate the demands of the people (Ugwu, 2008). As observed by Agagu (2004), the need to catalyze balanced development, maximize citizens' participation, and stimulate government responsive service delivery necessitates the creation of the local government. The local government serves as a form of political and administrative structure facilitating decentralization, national integration, efficiency in governance, and a sense of belonging at the grassroots. The local government is a unit of administration all over the world.

The Local Government is the closest tier of government to the people in Nigeria, yet the resident population is denied the benefits of its existence. This is evident in the environmental state, deteriorating public school buildings, poor market facilities and lack of health care centres. The failure of the Local governments in the area of service delivery has made the citizens to lose trust in government as an institution. In some areas, council officials are better known for the harassment of citizens than service delivery (Olusola, 2011). The major concern here is the extent to which goods and services are delivered to local citizens in the right quantity and at the right time.

The constitution assigns service delivery responsibilities to the three tiers of government with the states and local governments playing the most significant role in the delivery of basic services such as education, health, housing, water, and waste disposal services. Given the Millennium Development Goals and the huge resources that have accrued to the various levels of government, it is pertinent to review the performance of service delivery since the country's return to democratic rule in 1999.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you are expected to;

- Identify at least five services expected of local government to deliver to its people
- Identify the challenges to effective service delivery at the grassroots level in Nigeria
- Examine the way forward to meet the challenges to service delivery

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Overview of Local Government and Service Delivery in Nigeria

The local government is essentially created as a viable political and administrative organ for the transformation of all communities and for delivery of essential services to the citizens. Local government plays a central role in enabling the achievement of development at the grassroot level. Governments should therefore continuously seek new and better ways to build service institutions that have the capacity to champion and advance the course of development. Local government must create an appropriate and conducive environment for the people at the local level through efficient and effective service delivery. It is responsible for the creation of an appropriate and conducive environment in

which all sectors of the economy can perform optimally, and it is this catalytic role of local government that propelled governments all over the world to search continuously for better ways to deliver their services (Aluko, 2011).

By law, local governments are mandated to provide the following public goods and services:

- i. Establishment and maintenance of roads within the towns of the district, including sidewalks, street lights, and street drainage system,
- ii. Construction of water reservoirs in towns and villages,
- iii. Construction and management of primary schools.

Other essential functions include:

- The construction and management of centres for the care of the mother and the child,
- Physical planning of the settlements of the districts and registration of the immovable property,
- Solid waste collection and disposal,
- Food and livestock markets,
- Slaughterhouses,
- Management of self help projects,
- Registration and maintenance of civil register, and
- Issuing business licenses, among others.

A key purpose of local government is to promote the well-being and quality of life of citizens and communities through effective and accountable representation and efficient performance of functions and delivery of services. Local authorities have certain advantages over more centralised organisations. The constitution assigns service delivery responsibilities to the three tiers of government with the states and local governments playing the most significant role in the delivery of basic services such as education, health, housing, water, and waste disposal services. Local government's commitment to the principles of quality customer service have been illustrated in recent years through a variety of practical developments, such as extending opening hours of operation, improving facilities, providing more accessible services, e-government initiatives, and published service standards, in many cases through public customer charters and customer service actions plans.

In Nigeria, government's services are described as inefficient, ineffective, and never meeting clients' demand on time. When the present government came into power, it had vowed to change the lives of the citizens of the country for the better. It became necessary to

change the methods of delivering services to the people. For the government to be able to bring this ideal to reality, it was then urgent to move away from the conventional approaches to public service delivery where government was the sole provider of services to the public and seek alternative, cost effective and efficient ways of delivering services to the public in a manner prescribed by the Constitution.

Nyamukachi (2009) describes three ways in which government failure to deliver services through local government can be interpreted: inability to achieve the goals that government has planned and budgeted for; failure to deliver on unplanned and unbudgeted goals; this becomes difficult to achieve as government's plans are linked to the budget. If not planned for, it means it is not budgeted for and therefore it will not be realised during that time. This, however, reflects on the government's planning process and the level of community involvement. The inability to render quality service is evident by the number of poor quality of services, the number of clinics that are not properly equipped and the quality of roads that are constructed.

Poor service delivery and governance remains an overwhelming challenge in most local government in Nigeria. Of major concern is the degree of corruption, institutional capacity constraints relating to appropriate skills and staff, lack of transparency, dysfunctional of ward committees, lack of accountability by councillors and municipal officials, lack of public participation in issues of governance, failure to comply with municipal legislation and other by-laws, failure to prioritize community needs and budgeting processes not aligned, tensions between the political and administrative sections of the municipalities and weak financial viability of local governments.

The present 1999 Nigeria Constitution recognises the local Government as the third tier system of government. However, nearly all the local governments in Nigeria are either crippled by the force of the state or wilfully not performing to people's expectation in the country. One then ask these among many questions: what is the role of the local government and what is the role of the state and how can it improve the frame work within which local government operates in line with the new public-private partnership of the Federal Government?

Describing the requirements of the access principle for effective public service delivery, Batho (2006) explains that all citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled. The openness and transparency principle has it that citizens should be told how national and provincial (states, local governments) departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.

3.2 Challenges to Effective Service Delivery at the Grassroots Level in Nigeria

It is an irony of fate that the military induced reforms in the Nigerian Local Government has its attendant contradictions since the military structure is essentially hierarchical, thus the operation of Local Government cannot be isolated from such contradictions that characterized military hegemony. Adeyemo (1996) opined that the Nigerian Federalism remains a formidable problem is evident in the various contradictions of military rule and the decrees they have spurned. One of the greatest challenges is that of limited capacity. Although their strength and capacity have grown steadily since independence, local governments are still not able to perform their roles and discharge their functions much as expected. Their autonomy is limited and they remain unable to manage essential functions without assistance from central government.

One of the most serious problems currently militating against local government is on the exact status of local government under 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The problem according to Adeyeye (2001) arises out of the various provisions in the constitution, which tend to contradict or impair one another. Similarly, some of these provisions are blatantly ambiguous, and if stretched, could easily result into operational or functional stolidity. Similarly, the continuous overbearing role being exercised by the states poses a tremendous threat to the autonomy of Local Government. These can be seen within the realm of various contradictory rules, instructions, and supervisory powers passed down to the local councils, some of which are outside the constitutional jurisdictions of the Local Governments. Local government authority in Nigeria lacks the requisite financial autonomy desirable and necessary for effective management of their financial resources. The much touted local government autonomy envisaged by the theory and practise of fiscal federalism in Nigeria is more or less a political gimmick. That is precisely why it is a myth rather than reality (Akindele & Olaopa, 2002).

To talk of absence of effective service delivery in local government is to talk of the presence of corruption in the local government system in Nigeria. Local governments have become vineyard of corruption where council political officers sit to share the statutory allocation from the federation account. Instead of being used for public good, the allocations are diverted to personal use. Indeed, since the advent of local government in Nigeria in the 1950s, Odion-Akhaine (2009), noted that

the social problem of corruption has dogged it. To be sure, local government is no longer local government but local corruption. It has thrived, progressed, and flourished unabated in Nigeria. Corruption has taken the central stage in most local governments. This tendency is obviously a national malady. Most internally generated revenues do not go to the local government account. It is viewed by patrons of ruling parties and their clients as political reward for 'faithfully enabling the party to win or remain in office'. The sources of these revenues are regarded as "Cash Point" for daily reimbursement of 'operators'. At the end of the day, the local governments are worst off financially. Little wonder, they now depend on the federal and state governments for funds to at least, pay the monthly salaries and wages of their workers. It may not be off the mark to suggest that what most local governments do in recent times is merely source for money to pay their workers salaries and wages. All other developmental projects and programmes are put on hold 'until the financial condition of the council improves', the local authorities would refrain.

Corruption has been institutionalized to the point of accepting it as part of our system. Albeit, corruption is ubiquitous; it is found all over the world, but the degree of its manifestation varies from system to system. At the grassroots level, corruption has been canonically accommodated, entertained, and celebrated within the system. In the local government setting, corruption is misnomer labelled and euphemistically referred to as "*EGUNJE*" (a slogan which means "illegal offer" in Nigeria). Kolawole (2006) laments this situation when he opines that "in spite of the establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC), corruption still thrives in our society." In his analysis, Kolawole was of the view that the lack of funds was no more a constraint on local government performance, but a mismanagement and misappropriation of the funds accruable to it.

Adedeji (1970) blames the ineffectiveness of local administration on the following reasons: lack of mission or lack of comprehensive functional role; lack of proper structure (i.e. the role of local governments in the development process was not known); low quality of staff; and low funding. According to him, these problems lead the local governments into a vicious circle of poverty because inadequate functions and powers lead to inadequate funding which result in the employment of low skilled and poorly paid staff.

Another problem of local government in Nigeria is inadequate finance to carry out its statutory responsibilities. Local governments do not possess viable sources of generating funds especially the rural based ones. They therefore depend heavily on fund allocations from the federation account for the purpose of carrying out their basic responsibilities. This problem from the viewpoint of Enemu (1999)

arises from their incapacity to raise funds internally and insufficient transfers from the central governments. Local governments in the country lack the required finance to make their impact felt in every community under their jurisdiction. This has greatly affected the effectiveness and performance of local government in Nigeria.

Local level political leadership has a significant role in strengthening local government. Local level leadership has grown since independence but the capacity of many councillors leaves much to be desired. The grassroots organizations such as Community Development Associations need to be more active, and community participation strengthened. Productivity of local level organizations remains another challenge despite various productivity enhancing measures such as work improvement teams and performance management systems. Declining standards of integrity are also a matter of concern (Sharma 1998). The administrative machinery's accountability to the people needs to be strengthened, and administration needs to become more responsible, responsive and sensitive to peoples' needs and expectations.

It is common knowledge that some staff members of local government councils are not recruited solely on the basis of the possession of requisite knowledge and experience. Political considerations and patronage in most cases take over their recruitment policies, thus making lack of qualified staff to manage the books of the local governments a grave problem.

Employment at local government level in Nigeria is based on favouritism, nepotism, ethnic and political consideration and other extraneous factors that replaced and displaced competence, qualification, experience and performance. Entrance into the local government staff forum is usually through junior staff cadre as it is the compensatory tool of the chairman as necessitate by spoils system and prebendalism. This grade level 01-06 whose payment status is as low as N24,000.00 (US\$150) at most is naturally not suitable for any skilled worker. A graduate of any field, all things being equal, will not listen to such pronouncement let alone accepting the offer. If he does, thanks to unabating unemployment, he must, as a matter of necessity, device another means of adding up to his salary, which ordinarily cannot meet his physiological needs. Therefore, the local government suffers (Emeh, *et al* 2009). Onyishi (2002) blamed the problems of personnel department of the local government on overcentralization hence lumping seldom makes staff assessment efficient. Onah (2002) pointed at political interference from the states and the influence of ethnicity, favouritism and nepotism. Majorly, irregular payment of staff salaries and total absence of fringe benefits and physical working conditions which are usually very poor are all awful conditions

impacting negatively on the personnel management of local government councils.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

List at least four challenges to effective service delivery at the grassroots level in Nigeria

3.3 Key Issues in the Quest for Effective Service Delivery

What are the mechanisms required to ensure that local governments are transparent and accountable to local communities? How can the lack of skilled human resources be tackled? And how can a harmonious relationship be created between urban local governments and residents, so that they can be responsive to one another, working together to improve living conditions through effective service delivery?

In a sense, the problem of service delivery is best defined in terms of characteristics of the delivery system. Most local-government reforms in Nigeria have focused on 'strong/ local governments, giving them financial resources commensurate with their functions. Given the antecedents in terms of poor performance, the objective of any such reforms should place the emphasis not on 'strong local governments' but on an efficient and responsive system of service delivery.

The relationship between urban local governments and residents needs to be reoriented in order to make meaningful headway in terms of service delivery. Governance of the cities has to be creative, integrating urban residents and grassroots organisations in policy implementation. As observed by Akin (1995: 11):

A unified management system in which the strong society is, as it were, harnessed by the state must be encouraged. To achieve this outcome requires an appreciation of the critical importance of radicalizing traditional quarters or neighbourhood organizations in these cities. If the majority of urban residents are more conversant with the adaptive institutional structures which their societies have created to cope with the urbanization process, and are either unaware of the formal urban structures of colonial origin or find the bureaucratic hassle of relating to them discouraging, then to involve them in the prevailing urban management processes would entail three steps.

First, the adaptive institutions that have emerged to deal with particular problems must be officially and legally recognized. Second, these institutions must be integrated into the normal processes of urban management. Third, efforts must be made to progressively change the rules and procedures of these institutions to gradually align them with the existing modern urban management system.

More effective urban administration should be based on identifying all the city neighbourhoods, analysing the nature of their organisation, appreciating their leadership, and making efforts to harness and mobilise these organisations for the overall administration of the urban area. This may or may not involve providing each neighbourhood with a pool of resources to operate more effectively. It may or may not entail giving the local leadership special designation (as distinct from that of elected councillors). Neighbourhood leadership depends on individuals through whom information can flow from the local governments to local residents and *vice versa*. To reduce the level of alienation in the urban areas, people need to know more about what is going on in their cities. They must also appreciate what their own responsibilities are, both financial and otherwise. Any serious reform of urban administration must closely examine the structures of governance at the neighbourhood level within each municipality and try to integrate them with the local authorities. It must also enhance their capacity to function effectively within the context of a modern municipality. Enhancement of capacity may take the form of seminars, lectures, and short-term courses, not only for neighbourhood leaders but also for the heads of voluntary organisations, women's societies, and youth groups. All of this will serve both to mobilise the urban population and to reinforce the foundation of a transparent and participatory system of urban governance for effective service delivery.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What are the key issues to Effective Service Delivery?

4.0 CONCLUSION

- Effective service delivery must be tailored to the circumstances of the location.
- This requires credible evidence based measures and sound economic reasoning. The best way to make effective policy is to make sure that its guiding principles are evidence based, learned from experience elsewhere, in addition to pragmatic mechanism to expand the evidence base for Africa.

Efforts to strengthen service delivery should therefore be directed at building the capacity of local government organizations. This requires clarity of policy and a commitment to its implementation. People have to be taken on board and policies *for* them have to be made *with* them. The local authorities must ensure that their finances are not mismanaged and standards of integrity and accountability are maintained. There has to be zero tolerance for corruption and mechanisms of control and accountability have to be strengthened. The performance of local level political leaders could be strengthened through organization of workshops, seminars and published material which could enhance their knowledge and understanding of their expected roles.

Accountability and transparency must be encouraged and promoted in the local government system so as to attain good governance for effective development at the grassroots level. Corruption must be deterred and punished in the local government system to enhance efficient and effective service delivery at the grassroots level. There is need for a change of political values by the dominant political elite, to accord local governments the needed autonomy to carry out their responsibilities. There is no doubt that Nigeria has come a long way with the constitutional inclusion of local government as a third level of government not solely dependent on the whims and caprices of the states. While the motive of the constitutional recognition of local governments which in the main is to ensure local government autonomy may not have been fully realized in Nigeria due to the obvious failure of the higher level governments especially state governments to respect the provisions.

Local governments in Nigeria need adequate autonomy that can facilitate their operations and development of their localities. This should emanate from institutionalized democratic process of elections for representative local government councils as and when due. This should be in line with what obtains at the State and Federal government levels where elections are timely conducted. Adequate autonomy should be manifestly accorded local governments in other areas such as finance, revenue generation and expenditure, personnel administration and development matters. The State Joint Local Government account should be abolished. As a way forward, a leaf could be borrowed from the way the federal government tried to tackle the issue in 1988. There should be capacity building for local councils to take advantage of modern tools of local governance that are being developed worldwide. This must combine the political and administrative cadre of the councils.

Local governments need to have adequate and sustained sources of

revenue, so that they can be responsive to the needs of their communities. Revenues are not presently collected in an efficient manner, though resistance from tax payers cannot be ruled out. Financial management practices employed at the local governments was, until recently, quite primitive. Councillors and local government staff should realize that, by law, they are mandated to provide services to the communities in their localities; hence, greater service delivery must be planned and budgeted. Specifically, the systematic collection and proper disposal of garbage should be given utmost attention, as it grossly affects the health and well-being of the society.

In ensuring effective local government administration in Nigeria, it is important that the local government should rationalize its expenditure patterns so as to, at least, achieve optimum performance. It is indisputable that in Nigeria the local government even though it might have gone through several stages of development has come to stay as the third tier of government. Also, from conception till date, the relevance of local government areas in the scheme of governance in Nigeria has not been in doubt. It is seen as a channel through which governance and development at the federal level can quickly reach the people at the grassroot. Local governments should also capitalize on the willingness of the local communities and systematically plan and finance quick impact projects that are sustainable and beneficial to all. The recent practice of local governments in enhancing service delivery capacity should therefore be sustained and strengthened.

5.0 SUMMARY

We have categorically highlighted the mandate given to local government to provide such services as establishment and maintenance of roads, construction of water reservoirs in towns and villages, construction and management of primary schools, etc against the backdrop of challenges to effective service delivery in Nigeria among which include the following;

- Problem of inadequate fund
- Absence/undeveloped revenue sources
- Problem of corruption
- Political interference
- Instability in council leadership
- The status of local government as distorted by the 1999 constitution
- Absence of accountability

We have however advocated that to overcome these challenges efforts should be geared towards strengthening capacity of local

government organizations. The local authorities must ensure that their finances are not mismanaged and standards of integrity and accountability are maintained.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

Challenges;

- Corruption
- Problem of inadequate fund
- Undeveloped revenue
- Instability in council leadership

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- Encourage the unified management system and the adaptive institutions that have emerged to deal with particular problems must be officially and legally recognized
- These institutions must be integrated into the normal processes city, town or urban management
- Efforts must be made to progressively change the rules and procedures of these institutions to gradually align with the existing modern management system.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What can possibly be done to ensure effective service delivery in the local government?

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 2 PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 The Principal Aims of Local Government
 - 3.2 What Planning is all About
 - 3.3 Planning Process and Techniques
 - 3.4 Problems Associated with Planning at the Local Government Level
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- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
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- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The centrality of local governments in national development cannot be overemphasised. It is the responsibility of local governments to take development to the grassroots level where about 80 percent of Nigerians live. Due to the recognition of their importance in the development process, local government have been assigned many roles some of which include provision of markets, motor parks, slaughter houses and other many economic activities, which have direct bearing on the lives and, livelihood of people at the grassroots level. These functions call for the need for local governments to order the sequence of their development. Because of scarcity of resources, the need for local governments to plan becomes imperative.

Ever since the Macpherson Constitution of 1951 provided for reform at the local government level, planning for development at the local government level has become a routine in Nigeria.

It is a fact that local governments became involved in development planning with the introduction of the 1976 reform, which placed local governments' representative council. Following these reforms, local governments throughout the country became agents of development. Many of them have embarked on various development projects such as expansion of primary school facilities, basic health facilities, rural water supply, provision of markets, etc. Furthermore, since 1976 more resources have been flowing into the coffers of the

local governments, culminating in, 20 percent of the consolidated revenue going to them. Besides statutory allocation, local governments also generate revenue from commercial ventures, user charges and loans hence the need for them to embark on comprehensive plans for the development of the grassroots level

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to;

- Underscore the principal aims of local government
- Underscore what planning is all about
- Examine planning processes and techniques
- Identify problems associated with planning at the local government level

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 The Principal Aims of Local Government

The principal aims of local governments were to:

- (i) Make appropriate services and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiatives by devolving or delegating them to local representative bodies;
- (ii) Facilitate the exercise of democratic self-government close to the local levels of society, and encourage initiative and leadership potential;
- (iii) Mobilise human and material resources through the involvement of members of the public in their local development; and
- (iv) Provide a two-way channel of communication between local communities and government (both state and federal).

Subsequent administrative measures in the 1980s enhanced the importance and autonomy of local governments. Such measures included an increase in their share of federal revenue, direct disbursement of such revenues to them, abolition of some political and fiscal controls exercised over them by state governments, extension of the presidential system of governance to the local government system, entrenchment of the local government areas (LGAs) in the constitution and the simultaneous of these areas as state and federal electoral constituencies. Also, local governments have increased in number from 301 in 1979 to 774 in 1998 (Aiyedun, 2001).

According to the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,

the system of local government by democratically elected local government councils is under this constitution guaranteed; and accordingly, the Government of every State shall, subject to section 8 of this Constitution, ensure their existence under a Law which provides for the establishment, structure, composition, finance and functions of such councils. The person authorised by law to prescribe the area over which a local government council may exercise authority shall define such area as clearly as practicable and ensure to the extent to which it may be reasonably justifiable that in defining such area, regard is paid to the common interest in the community in the area, the traditional association of the community, and administrative convenience.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the principal aims of local government?

3.2 What Planning is All About

In trying to understand planning as a concept, several approaches are possible. One way is simply to enumerate the variety of forms of planning. This approach could more appropriately, be described as a classification of planning. Accordingly, there can be wartime planning, town and country planning, anti-cyclical planning, development planning, national planning and regional planning. Another classification, is determined by the duration of plans. Here, one can distinguish between long-term or tactical planning, and of course medium-range planning. This approach is useful as it may only tell us what has been done (the product), not how planning is done (the process). We must bear this in mind as we approach planning from a second angle.

The second approach regards planning as a technique for making decisions that guide future action for the achievement of desired objectives. In that event, planning becomes technical and, rational in the sense that it ensures that the right decisions and subsequent actions are undertaken. Usually, the techniques are often quantitative, mathematical, or statistical. Subjects and models such as econometric, input-output models, simulation techniques, operations research, game theory and computation techniques facilitate planning. Planning is, therefore, the technique of provoking the occurrence of certain results by means of deliberate intervention in the economic process and

orientation in accordance with a plan. This second approach appears to deal more with the processes of planning as opposed to the end product. Therefore, it may serve our purpose better.

A third approach is what for lack of a more appropriate term, one would like to call a common sense or dictionary approach to defining planning. Although, majority of existing definitions come under this category, their major weakness lies in not establishing planning as a technique and as a process. They do not, therefore, hold much operational value.

Planning, therefore, is "the determination of anything in advance of action." It is the process of preparing a set of decisions action in the future, directed at achieving goals by preferable means. And to Mecca *etal*, "planning is a process that is continual and dynamic... that is based on present information." Planning could also be "a systematised method of thinking ahead about what is to be achieved, how, when and by whom."

For Irving Swerdlow:

Planning is a major part of the process of determining how much and what is produced by the economic system. It is the exercise of total government... and it determines societal transformation... It is no exaggeration to assert that in economic planning, political and social decisions are often more relevant than economic decisions. However, since the end always justify the means, at the ultimate, economic decisions prevail over other decisions.

A more operational and practical definition is that of Griffin and Enos. According to them:

Economically, planning is the economic constitution... in which the goals of an economy are spelt out. Just as a constitution defines the organs of government by which democracy or theocracy or dictatorship is to be served, so plans define the means by which economic welfare is to be improved.

Further, Griffin and Enos define planning as purposeful human activity and for developing countries specifically as "the construction and authorisation of economic, social and political programmes in the underdeveloped countries."

The above definition outlines the elements of the construction process as involving:

- Situation analysis;
- Determination of aims and goals and involvement of relevant people;
- Enumeration of available resources;
- Consideration of alternative ways of the resources utilisation, data collection and selection of preferred alternative. Plan implementation;
- Consistency checks to ensure that goals can be achieved with the resources; and
- Periodic revisions to allow for unexpected events, through monitoring and evaluation.

The authorisation of the plan, on the other hand, is the process of concretising and formalising the plan without which the plan is no more than a wish. This process involves:

- Transforming plans into programmes or projects;
- Designating prerogatives and responsibilities setting of specific targets;
- Provision of financial and human resources; and
- Establishment of communication networks to convey information and commands.

The above definition by Griffin and Enos gives us not just what has been done (product) but also the steps involved in the planning (the process). Waterston, on the other hand, has defined planning "as an organised attempt to select the best available alternatives to achieve specific goals." He further characterized planning as the:

rational application of human knowledge to the process of reaching decisions which are to serve as the basis of human action... The central core of the meaning remains the establishment of relationship between means and ends with the object of achieving the latter by the most efficient use of the former.

Finally, planning can be defined as "deciding what to do, that is, establishing goals or objectives and stating the steps to be taken to achieve them," Thus planning bridges where we are, where we want to go, those involved, when to get to the various stages, and resources needed to get there.

3.3 Planning Process and Techniques

For this section however, we find most useful Helio Jaguaribe's description of the planning process. He begins by defining planning as "the technique of provoking the occurrence of certain results by means of deliberate intervention in the economic process and orientation in accordance with a plan." Hereafter, the process of planning is outlined by Jaguaribe in rather illuminating details as consisting of the following stages:

(i) *Plan preparation or formulation*

This stage consists of three (3) elements.

(a) *The study and analysis of the environment of planning.*

For effective planning, feasibility studies should be carried out to know the circumstances of that environment (prevailing conditions) such elements as the size, shape and human composition. Unforeseen circumstances such as natural disasters should also be carefully studied including external relations. Lastly, studies of available resources needed to carry out the programme should also be made. Experts can analyse the technical elements of the situation in a rational way, while the prevailing opinion in the community should determine the less technical matters.

At the pre-planning phase, that is, when the planner is involved in situation analysis, the unforeseen circumstances such as natural disasters, external relations are carefully studied. Studies of available resources needed to carry out the programme should be made. While the planner can analyse the technical elements of the situation in a rational way, the prevailing opinion in the community should be sourced and incorporated in the planning: exercise. It is important that adequate consultation be made with intended beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders. Their buying-in and becoming part owners of the project or programme can enhance proper formulation and implementation. It is usually advisable to employ local labour around the location of major projects.

(b) *The choice of plan objectives*

An objective represents an image of a future state of affairs towards which actions are directed. In choosing objectives, there is need to consider the means at the disposal of the society or organisation and the relationship between ends and the means available when choosing among objectives for there are never means enough to attain all the objectives. The objectives should be well thought of and clarified. Incompatible objectives must be reconciled made intrinsically valid because failure to do

so makes it difficult to formulate policies and programme, which are appropriate for the plan's implementation.

The choice of plan objectives can be done in two ways. Firstly, where the choice "regarded as a technical corollary of diagnosis of the situation, it can be entrusted to those experts who undertook this diagnosis." The second option is to entrust the choice to the leaders of such a community, or the community exercises the choice either through its legislature or by plebiscite.

(c) *The selection of means*

The means enable the achievement of chosen objectives. The means can also be "thought of as consisting of certain physical quantities of resources and the manner in which they can be employed. The means are comprised of the inputs and their relationship, technical and institutional between the inputs and outputs." The process of selection from alternative means is divided into three:

- The identification of available alternatives consistent with the chosen objective;
- The weighing of the alternatives; and
- The choice of the best and most suitable of them.

(ii) *Plan or programme execution*

In this stage, the decision made towards achieving defined objectives is put into action. This stage consists of two elements, namely:

- (a) *Establishment of required Legal and Administrative Mechanisms:* After the choice of objectives and the means for achieving them, there is need for proper assessment of the existing institutions and to restructure them to meet the plan's demands, or to establish new ones where none ever existed.
- (b) *Operation of the institutions:* The establishment or restructuring of institutions would not in itself guarantee proper implementation, hence there is need to make these institutions functional by equipping them with the human, material and financial resources needed.

The project must be ranked with other projects competing for resources and found to scale the hurdle. Once a project has passed these tests and has funds properly allocated, approved and released for it, then it is ready for implementation. It is a common complaint in Nigeria that plans are usually well formulated but they fail to achieve their goals

due to poor implementation. In order to properly embark on project implementation, the following preconditions must be met:

- The project officers must ensure that there is indeed a project to be executed and not just a project idea or concept.
- If there is an identified project with a feasibility study, the project must be further appraised or the appraisal study revalidated depending on how long ago the study was conducted.

Jaguaribes model of the planning process ends with stage two above, it is therefore considered rather incomplete. A third stage is that of evaluation of plan implementation. It is proposed that this be added for-completeness

(iii) *Monitoring and Evaluation of Plan Implementation*

Monitoring is a very important aspect of project implementation. Before embarking on project monitoring, there must be a clear perception of:

- The objective of the exercise and what the results would be used for;
- The kind of information and data to be sought for or generated;
- How to analyse, store and retrieve such data and build time series there from as necessary;
- Those to be involved in the exercise;
- Timing of visits;
- Alerting those whose projects will be monitored and providing advance questionnaire for completion, as necessary;
- Logistic support "such as transportation, funds,, accommodation, report preparation, etc.

Monitoring must not be regarded as a causal exercise, whereby one simply goes to a project site, looks at it and returns to the restaurant for refreshment. It requires careful planning and execution to be effective and meaningful. Monitoring may be done by project consultants who monitor and sign certificates of performance, as well as certificate of completion. Such certificates provide the basis for payments. Monitoring can also be done by local government officials other than the technical staff. Monitoring may be undertaken to enable performance certificates to be raised to support payment vouchers; to keep contractors on their toes; to check on the quality of work done; to suggest mid-stream solutions to problems encountered during execution; and to ensure that implementation is on track in terms of structure, technical quality and timeliness.

Lack of proper arrangement for project execution often leads to project failure. At times also, plan/budget indiscipline meaning Implementation of projects not included in the plan or the budget while neglecting or abandoning those in the plan/budget leads to project underfunding. The National Assembly and the anti- corruption Act, however, frown on this appropriately:

Plan evaluation involves essentially three (3) steps or measures

- (a) Devising procedures to collect, monitor, and measure actual performance against predetermined standards
- (b) Action to identify and analyse significant deviations from the standards; and
- (c) Taking the necessary remedial action indicated by the control procedures.

There are also three instruments for exercising effective plan evaluation and control:

First is auditing - this is employed for the purpose of monitoring and recording actual performance against the plan targets.

Second is budgeting - employed for short-term, routine and, formalised controls. The budget in turn serves two other functions. It provides the objectives, targets and plans of the organization/community in quantitative, primarily financial terms and monitors actual performances against predetermined standards.

Third is information and coordination. These serve the purpose of evaluating performances against plans to decide what corrective measures, if any, need to be taken.

3.4 Problems Associated with Planning at the Local Government Level

Some common problems associated with planning at the local government level are as follows:

- (a) In some cases, the individuals who are the beneficiaries ' and end-users of projects do not contribute to problem identification. In addition, sufficient need assessment is not done before planning is embarked upon. The consequence is that energy is wasted on programmes that are not related to the people's problems and on programmes that cannot be sustained;
- (b) Necessary data for planning are largely lacking at the local government.

These include baseline data, ethnographic information, demographic profile, etc. Absence or insufficient data affect planning;

- (c) Planning is a continuous process. Indeed it runs in a cycle, therefore, requires trained hands. The situation on the ground is that there are few planning officers in the local government. And even the ones available are not properly trained;
- (d) The general lack of financial resources, unpredictability of fund flow, especially for the highly unviable local governments are problems both for planning at the local government.

The Ayida Review Panel on the Civil Service Reforms (1995) on Planning Structure for Civil Service is a source of worry on the certainty of the very existence of the Department of Planning, Research and Statistics (DPRS). The report recognised the relevance of the DPRS functions and the need for a data bank for the storage, processing, retrieval and dissemination of data.

The civil service, which is the primary instrument of government to implement its policies and programmes, is still deficient structurally and in terms of certain competencies. Because of the absence of appropriate competencies and inadequacy in planning, as noted by the Doom Philips Study Team in 1985, policies could not be translated into projects and implemented fully. Thus, one of the major recommendations of the Study Team on the structure, staffing and operations of the Nigerian Civil Service (1985) was the creation of the department of planning, research and statistics.

One need not deny the fact that the DPRS has not been able to operate as designed. Indeed, a study carried out in 1992 to determine the degree of implementation of the Civil Service Reforms identified the establishment and operationalisation of the civil service, DPRS as one of the major areas in which very little implementation had been done. A decade after the study, information available on the performance of the department did not suggest appreciable realisation of the designers' expectations. Most of the functions assigned to the department have largely remained daydreams as it has failed to carry out either sectoral or internal research; it has not been able to offer in-house management consultancy services to the government; and has not succeeded in developing a database, nor develops modern management information system. The limited success or unimpressive performance could be due to some problems the department faced even at inception. The department had been poorly staffed, thus the competencies required to operate the divisions, branches and sections of the department were

lacking. The limited support the department enjoyed from the top leadership of each tier of government frustrated all efforts to secure appropriate staff training and working tools/facilities for the staff of the department. Until recently, many of the qualified first degree holders in Economics and allied fields who have the capacity of working in the DPRS considered it irrational to take up civil service job especially at local government level when the banks and other financial institutions were offering them salaries that were multiples of those of their civil servant counterparts. With the collapse of several banks and the associated retrenchments, newly qualified graduates are finding it reasonable to source for civil service job. It is, therefore, expected that the shortage of competent graduates interested in and capable of conducting research should abate somewhat in the foreseeable future.

Another major feature of the contemporary Nigerian research environment is the relatively low quality of graduates of many universities. This could be due to the lack of the latest teaching materials. Nigerian academics are not encouraged to write textbooks based on local knowledge and research because most publishers are not interested in such texts due to low effective demand for them. On the other hand, owing to the massive exchange rate depreciation and the pervasive low purchasing power of the people, very few students can afford imported textbooks and learned journals or got hooked to Internet. The abysmally low level of funding of the universities and research institutes over the last two decades made it difficult for them to provide these facilities for graduate students-. For the same reason, research grants are not only small in size but have dried up in several institutions. Consequently, research outputs of Nigerian academics are far below their potential (Aiyedun, 2002).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

What are the problems associated with planning at the local government?

3.5 Suggestions for Improving Planning at the Local Government Level

The following are ways of improving planning at the grassroots

- a. The people at the grassroots should contribute significantly in determining their needs and identifying their problems on which plans must be hinged. The implication of this is that projects should not be imposed on communities; rather, projects should be generated from them;
- b. There should be an established planning, research and statistics (PRS) unit in all local governments in the federation. This would

- make for adequate data generation and storage. In addition, it will lead to greater proficiency of staff and facilitate continuity of planning;
- c. The local governments should endeavour to accelerate the incidence of training for their staff to enable them appreciate and participate in cycle of planning;
 - d. All planned projects should be within the resources of the local government. Projects should not be started if the sources of funds are uncertain;
 - e. There should be more constitutional provision for local government autonomy in terms of revenue sourcing, in line with expected expenditure and viability of the local government. Unviable local governments should be restructured to make them viable;
 - f. Since the local government's internally generated revenue comes from minor sources, and must therefore, be supplemented with federal allocations to enhance effective discharge of local government functions, a function-based approach to revenue allocation should be adopted whereby each tier of government receives allocation commensurate with its relative basic local resources endowment;
 - g. Some local governments are worse off than others in revenue mobilisation and utilisation, and so may need to be assisted, supervised, directed, and/or controlled by higher levels of government more than others. Such local governments include those which are newly created and those in rural areas both of which face critical development challenges but lack adequate revenue mobilisation and utilisation capacity. This is a pragmatic suggestion which acknowledges diversity rather than uniformity, and not a theoretical negation of the need for local government autonomy.

To this effect, funding mechanisms (formula) should be revised to take account of the need for special consideration or compensation for existing inequalities in the distribution of resources, especially revenue, bearing in mind the differences between urban and rural local governments in the yield of internal revenue sources. There should be a more effective approach towards improving their internally generated revenue as well as adoption of measures to curb corruption and instill transparency, honesty, discipline and accountability in local government management. Attainment of these objectives can come through conscious efforts to enlist community participation in their activities - from design and implementation to monitoring and evaluation.

4.0 CONCLUSION

Planning is closely related to the activities that constitute the bedrock of resource management and control in the local government. Planning is not only central to the traditional functions of management but occupies primary position in management. But planning is directed towards finding effective ways of harnessing available resources; making rational decisions and choices; and achievement of goals.

Planning is essential for all management activities especially development activities. Planning at the local government level is associated with many problems including lack of funds and inadequate training of staff. Consequently, we have recommended, among others, that all local governments should establish a functional department of planning, research and statistics (PRS) to make planning a continuous affair. In addition, adequate funds should be made available to the local governments to enable them make deliberate and result-oriented planning.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we saw the principal aims of local government as follows:

- To make appropriate services and development activities responsive to local wishes and initiatives by developing or delegating them to local representative bodies
- To mobilize human and material resources through the involvement of members of the public in their local government etc

We also analysed the processes and techniques of planning as follows:

- To study and analyze the environment of planning
- To make a choice of plan objectives
- To select means, and
- Programme execution

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the significance of monitoring and evaluation of programme planning

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 3 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY AT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 What is Financial Management?
 - 3.2 Accountability Conceptualized
 - 3.3 Measures for Ensuring Efficient Financial Management and Accountability in Local Government
 - 3.4 Problems of Accountability in Local Government
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Public money ought to be touched with the most scrupulous consciousness of honour. It is not the product of riches only but of the hard earnings of labour and poverty. It is drawn even from the bitterness of want and misery. Not a beggar passes or perishes in the streets whose mite is not that mass.

The desirability for prudent and judicious management of public funds cannot be overemphasised. Public funds are public trust in the hand of local government officers, as such; they should be efficiently utilised and properly accounted for. This is what has given birth to the issue of financial management and accountability, the various provisions for ensuring efficient and effective financial management and accountability at the local government level.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you are expected to;

- Explain what financial management is all about
- Identify the scope of financial management
- Identify the main functions of financial management
- Identify the elements of financial accountability
- Identify the problems of accountability in local government

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 What is Financial Management?

Financial management is "that part of the total management function concerned with the effective and efficient raising and use of funds" (Brockington). Two important issues can be noted from the definition, i.e., the requirement of efficiency and effectiveness. Financial management is therefore not limited to raising and spending of funds but concerned with efficiency and effectiveness in the utilisation of such funds.

Generally, financial management is concerned with the following:

- (1) Defining funds requirements in an organisation and how it will be generated as economically as possible.
- (2) The spending of funds in a way that it meets the demands of competing claimants and yet maximises the public interest.
- (3) The execution of programmes in an efficient and cost effective manner.
- (4) Providing safeguards to ensure that community resources are lawfully used to accomplish public ends.
- (5) Giving a proper stewardship for funds obtained and utilised.

From the above, it can be seen that the purpose of financial management in the public sector is to ensure efficiency of economy and effectiveness in the generation and utilisation of public resources. At the local government level, the main functions of financial management are to ensure

- (i) Control
- (ii) Accountability
- (iii) Resource allocation, and
- (iv) Revenue generation. These are important functions, which require the involvement of all local government employees, both political and career.

3.2 Accountability Conceptualized

Accountability has today become a very popular concept in our political and administrative vocabulary. This is not surprising since 'accountability' lies at the heart of representative government. It is in this regard that governments the world over endeavour to ensure that necessary constitutional, administrative and institutional machineries are installed to make those elected or appointed to manage public affairs account for their actions while in office. The global concern with the issue of accountability has been well articulated by Devy and Klein According to these writers:

Accountability is one of the fashionable words of our time... over the past decades, new institutions and new techniques have been developed in the service of accountability. (This) mirrors wider concerns in the modern welfare state which is also a service delivery state. Its development has compounded the problems of making those who deliver services answerable both to those who finance them and those who use them.

One of the areas that have traditionally been the focus of much of the constitutional and institutional arrangements has been in the management of public funds. It is in this regard that a variety of rules, regulations and instructions are instituted to guide public officers in the proper conduct of finances entrusted to their care.

Accountability consists of four elements:

- (i) Political
- (ii) Legal/ judicial
- (iii) Moral and ethical, and
- (iv) Financial: (Halidu *et al* (1988). However, our concern here with is the last element, which is financial. Accountability in the financial sense according to these writers:

Involves among other things adequate checks and balances (controls) on the disbursement and use of the Local Government financial resources. It also means that proper purposes for which they are approved and that best value is obtained for all monies spent.

It is further observed that financial accountability is enhanced where

- (a) There is orderly and accurate recording of financial transactions
- (b) Performance can be appraised in relations to inputs of men, money and materials, and
- (c) These exist an efficient internal auditing system.

With democratic institutions now fully in place at the grassroots level, Adewale (1993) has observed that the central idea behind democracy is that government should be accountable and responsible to the people for the policies adopted and the manner in which they are carried out. This is the essence of auditing, reviewing and controlling of the work of government whether central, state or local, to ensure that they are in

agreement with the wishes of the people.

However, accountability when restricted to local government "involves eliminating or at worst minimising any losses of the local government funds and property". (Orewa, 1988) This implies "that contracts, jobbing orders and local purchases of materials and equipment should be undertaken and procured at the most reasonable prices, and the assets procured or job done should be of the best quality under the prevailing circumstances".

Furthermore; accountability "also includes the accurate preparation of financial and other records of the local government, and for the maintenance of an efficient system of reporting of the activities and performance of the various levels of management to the higher authorities" (Orewa, 1988). From the above discussion, accountability implies that the chief executives, supervisory councillors, and councillors must of necessity report to the people of their areas on the achievements, and problems of the councils at specific and regular intervals. This is what accountability is all about.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the main functions of financial management?

3.3 Measures for Ensuring Efficient Financial Management and Accountability in Local Government

Over the years, various measures have been adopted to ensure prudent financial management and accountability in our local governments. These include constitutional provisions, the local government financial memoranda and internal and external checks on the activities of local government officials.

Specifically, the 1979, 1989 as well as the 1999 constitutions guaranteed the system of local government by democratically elected local government councils. In addition, the constitutions; granted powers for the authorisation and control of public funds and made provision for the auditing of public accounts.

The Financial Memorandum (FM) is another written instruction on the control and management of local government financial transactions. The FM states categorically that every local government is responsible for ensuring that adequate control is exercised over the receipts, custody and disbursement of its funds.. It states that all transactions must be promptly accounted for and that all documents and records relating to financial transactions must be produced as required to the auditor or

internal auditor. Essentially, the local government must ensure that:

- There is compliance with the provisions of the FM;
- Financial direction under the law and any other financial instruction by appropriate authority be strictly observed;
- All revenues are promptly collected and brought to account;
- Every expenditure is properly authorised and satisfactorily achieves the purpose for which it is intended;
- Adequate safeguard exists for die custody of funds, stores and other assets of the local government;
- All annual estimates, supplementary estimates, development plans accounts, financial statements, and other financial reforms are submitted on die due dates and on the manner required by the memoranda;
- Boards of survey of enquiry are appointed on:
 - (a) Cash on hand
 - (b) Revenue earning books
 - (c) Losses of funds
 - (d) Stores
 - (e) Bonds of local government officials
 - (f) That where applicable, all staff duties are adequately bonded;
 - (g) That appropriate disciplinary action is taken against any individual held personally responsible for, losses of funds or stores, for making improper or unauthorised expenditure, for failing to collect revenues for which he is responsible, or in any other way failing to discharge properly financial duties.

Other measures for ensuring accountability include the following:

- (a) The role of the chairman as chief executive of the local government and the power to recall him to come and account for his actions even after he/she might have left office;
- (b) The spending limits
- (c) The creation of the office of director of local government audit.
- (d) The internal control service - audit alarm committee
- (e) The external control service e.g. by the state and federal governments which relates to issues of budgets, byelaws, capital projects, statutory auditing of accounts of local governments
- (f) The contract, jobbing order, etc. which must be signed only by the officer recognised by law to do so,
- (g) The codification of offences and sanctions for ease of checks and balances so that no officer will feign ignorance of the law.

3.4 Problems of Accountability in Local Government

In spite of the numerous provisions, it appears there is a failure on the part of the existing rules to achieve true public accountability in financial management, eliminating the possibility of corrupt practices, as well as encourage efficient and effective practices for achieving best values for money spent in our local governments. Reported cases of corruption and mismanagement of funds are daily affairs in the country'. In 1996, chairmen of all the 18 local governments in Kaduna State were arrested, detained and charged to court by the military administrator for colluding with officials of the federal pay office to divert allocations meant for their local governments to private pockets. About the same period, the chairman of Abuja Municipal Area Council was removed and the treasurer of the council was dismissed over financial recklessness. In the Fourth Republic, many chairmen have been taken to the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) for corruption. All these demonstrate beyond doubt that there is financial recklessness in our local governments.

Generally speaking, the problems of accountability in local governments include the following:

Firstly, lack of qualified manpower. The numbers of qualified staff (i.e. professionally qualified) are grossly inadequate for the task of financial management and control in most local governments. There are few accountants on the employment of local government throughout the country. Treasurers of local governments have not been adequately trained to the expected level of financial managers.

Secondly, there is the poor internal set up of the internal audit division of most local governments. Since, the internal auditor is made responsible to the chairman, he or she (the internal auditor) cannot be in a convenient position to discharge his or her duties without prejudice.

Thirdly, there is the problem of relationships with the elected representatives. Such relationships are not strong enough to encourage the raising of audit alarm. The fear of victimization has not encouraged the career staff to raise audit alarm in most local governments in the country.

To ensure effective financial management and accountability in our local governments, there is the urgent need to do the following:

- (a) There is the need to adopt modern accounting techniques presently in use in the private sector like cost and management accounting and also the institutionalisation of a

- dynamic auditing system;
- (b) Watchdog organisations such as the Code of Conduct Bureau, Public Complaints Commission, public' accounts committees, and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) should be given adequate resources and independence to perform their jobs of exposing unethical practice and investigate complaints of administrative abuses.
 - (c) There is the need to remove the internal auditor from under the control of the chief executive so as to make him effective and bold to operate the audit alarm system;
 - (d) Need to force the chairman of every local government to render monthly returns of receipts and payments to the state government.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Identify the four elements of accountability

4.0 CONCLUSION

There is no gainsaying that prudent financial management and public accountability confer legitimacy to the actions of public officers and restore public confidence in the behaviour of public officials. For this reason, the constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the handbook on local governments, the local governments financial memoranda and a number of decrees on local governments have made elaborate provisions on financial management and accountability and probity on the local government system. The stipulation of duties and responsibilities in the financial memoranda is intended to ensure financial management and accountability in local government.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit we underscored the whole essence of financial management and accountability in local government

“Financial management is that part of the total management function concerned with effect and efficient raising and use of funds”

Most importantly, financial management in local government, we also examined the scope of financial management as;

- Defining funds requirements in an organization
- Spending funds in line with the demands of competing claimants
- Execution of programmes in an efficient and cost effective manner
- Giving proper stewardship for funds obtained and expended

We went further to highlight the elements of accountability as follows:

- Political;
- Legal;
- Moral and ethical, and
- Financial.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

- i. Control
- ii. Accountability
- iii. Resource Allocation
- iv. Revenue Generation

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

- i. Political
- ii. Legal/Judicial
- iii. Moral and Ethical
- iv. Financial

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the measures for ensuring efficient financial management and accountability in local government.

7.0 REFERENCE/FURTHER READING

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UNIT 4 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
 - 3.1 Objectives of Grassroots Development
 - 3.2 Programmes of Rural Development in Nigeria
 - 3.3 Local Government and Grassroots Development
 - 3.4 People's Role in Grassroots Development
 - 3.5 The Role of Community Organizations and Groups in Grassroots Development
 - 3.6 Community Development Associations and Cooperative Societies in Grassroots Development
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Among the many reasons for creating local governments in Nigeria is grassroots development. Though grassroots development, which is also known as rural development has been given various interpretations, based on different ideological leanings, it could be seen as a "process embracing a host of economic, social and political activities, whose ultimate objective is the enhancement of human welfare and societal transformation and progress." (Maikasuwa, 2002).

Another view sees grassroots development as a self-generating process of socioeconomic and political improvement in which the masses are meaningful participants as well as sharers in the costs and benefits. Because welfare and progress have several dimensions, the development process should serve a number of purposes, which include:

- (i) Reduction of poverty,
- (ii) Raising people's standard of living,'
- (iii) Expanding the range of choice open to people so that they choose for themselves more satisfying lives,
- (iv) Enhancing the capabilities of people so that they may come closest to fulfilling their potential, and
- (v) Enhancing the participation of the people in meaningful political activities, as well as in policy making and execution.

2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you are expected to;

- Identify the objectives of grassroots development
- Explain programmes of rural development
- Identify objectives of rural development programmes
- Identify specific functions of the local government
- Explain the role of people in grassroots development

3.0 MAIN CONTENT

3.1 Objectives of Grassroots Development

The ultimate objectives of grassroots development thus translate into improvements in the standards of living which can be achieved through rising incomes, increases in health, nutrition, education, agriculture, infrastructure and so on. Also, for such improvements to be achieved there has to be investment in human capabilities., particularly in education, skill acquisition and health. And such investment will enable people to work productively and creatively as they seek to achieve full potential. However, to achieve these objectives, the development effort has to be supported with sound economic policies, strong infrastructure and a sustainable build-up of human and institutional capabilities. Over and above these fundamental requirements, a successful grassroots development effort requires good governance, managed by an enlightened political leadership operating in a stable political system that creates an enabling environment in which capable people have the incentive to work effectively. Grassroots development requires leadership that is inspiring, people-oriented, exemplary and transparent.

Having seen what grassroots development is all about, our next attempt is to describe the present situation of the rural areas in the country. As a matter of fact, a visit to the rural areas is a sad and unforgettable experience. Everywhere one turns, there is hunger, wretchedness, squalor and frustration on the faces of the rural people. The rural areas are generally characterised by lack of health facilities, potable water, access roads, communication system, electricity, functional schools and other infrastructural facilities. Furthermore, the nutritional level of what is consumed in the rural areas is low. Although, it is the rural areas that produce food for the nation, regrettably, the quality of food products they produce are sold to earn meager income, while they consume the unmarketable ones.

Poverty in the country is felt mostly in the rural areas. The Health Organisation (WHO) surveys on Nigeria have shown that throughout

the year, about 40% of rural families consume less than 80% of the protein requirement.

3.2 Programmes of Rural Development

Since colonial periods, the following programmes have been formulated and implemented aimed at developing the rural areas:

Programmes Objectives

Farm Settlement Scheme Aimed at creating conducive atmosphere for development at the grassroots level through provision of infrastructure such as potable water supply, road construction, dispensaries etc.

Agricultural Development Projects

The main purpose of ADP is to stimulate increased food production and enhanced the income of rural population.

River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA)

The principal objective is to raise the agricultural productivity as well as the "standard of living of the rural areas.

Directorate of Foods, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)

Responsible for financing construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure such as roads, water supply, earth dams and rural electrification.

Better Life Programme/ Family Support Programme

Aimed at alleviating rural poverty, particularly among women.

Peoples Bank and Community Bank Programmes

Designed to- make banking services more accessible and extend credit to the poor.

Mass Mobilisation for Social and Economic

A micro approach at mobilisation whose aim is to encourage the participation of rural people in their

Reconstruction. (MAMSER)

development through active political participation.

The Nomadic Education Programme

Aims at making primary education available to nomadic children without endangering the sustainability of pastoralism - a very prominent occupation among the Fulani ethnic group:

Oil and Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC)

Responsible for providing special aid to the oil producing areas.

Primary Health Care Scheme Aims at providing at least one health centre in every local government.

National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)

To encourage small-holder farmers to bring more land under cultivation and thereby improve agricultural output.

Strategic Grain Reserves programme (SGRP)

The objective is to achieve stable prices for grains by buying large quantity at harvest period, storing them and releasing thereof during off-season periods when prices are high because of scarcity. SGRP is also used for providing emergency-assistance wherever it may be.

National Directorate of/Employment (NDE)

Responsible for vocational skill development and small-scale enterprises programmes designed to combat unemployment.

National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERF)

Provides long-term loans at interest rates to promote small and medium scale industrial projects.

Community Action Programme for the Poverty Alleviation Programme (CAPPA)

The objectives are

- (a) improvement of living conditions of the poor through targeted, cost-effective, demand driven and promptly delivered programmes, and
- (b) enhancement of the productivity of the poor through skill improvement and empowerment of the nutritional statues of the poor, through improve household, food security and health practices.

Family Economic Advancement programme

Established to complement CAPPA.(FEAP)

National Urban Mass Transit Programme

To ease the problem of transport congestion for workers in the urban centres

Expanded Programme on Immunisation

Two types of immunisation as advocated by WHO and UNICEF- infants below the age of one year being provided immunisation BCG, diphtheria-per Tetanus, third dose (DPT3), oral poliovirus, fourth dose (OPV3), and measles; and.,

(b) immunisation of pregnant women with two or more dose of tetanus toxoid.

Programme under the Social Development Policy for Disadvantaged Group

These are rehabilitation programmes for the disabled, beggars, children, the aged and juvenile delinquents.

Others with laudable objectives include: National Commission for Mass Literacy, Universal Basic Education, Rural Banking scheme, Nigeria Agricultural and Cooperative Bank, Petroleum Tax Fund etc.

In spite of the laudable objectives of these programmes, they did not record any tangible success because they were introduced from the top and implemented by bureaucrats who were totally strangers to the communities that were supposed to benefit from the programmes. Moreover, the target beneficiaries were completely excluded from the conception, planning and execution of the programmes. The rural people were "treated merely as instruments instead of catalysts of change.

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 1

What are the objectives of grassroots development?

3.3 Local Government and Grassroots Development

The principal justification for the existence of government at any level is the promotion or advancement of the common good or welfare of the citizens. The common good of the larger society is more important and takes precedence over the interests of any individual or section of the society. The tier of government, which is closest to the ordinary people at the grassroots level in Nigeria, is the local government. This is the level of government, which should be the real foundation for genuine grassroots development in the country.

To be effective catalysts for development, local governments must throw away the tradition of seeing themselves as insignificant organs whose primary responsibilities are to assist in controlling the masses, maintaining law and order, collecting all kinds of taxes and levies, and executing a few trivial projects (culverts, drainages small market stalls, etc.) while leaving real development projects and programmes to the state and federal levels of government. The constitutional and legal provisions setting up local governments have charged them with the responsibility of participating actively in the "economic planning and development of the local government area concerned".

In pursuance of this objective, Part IV Section 27 of the constitution has assigned clear and specific functions to the local government. These functions include:

- Formulation of economic planning and development schemes for the local government areas;
- Collection of rates and issuance of radio and television licences;
- Establishment and maintenance of cemeteries, burial grounds and homes for the destitute or infirm;
- Licensing of bicycles, trucks (other than mechanically propelled trucks) canoes, wheel barrows and carts;
- Establishment, maintenance and regulation of slaughter houses, slaughter slabs, markets, motor, parks and public conveniences;
- Construction and maintenance of roads, streets, street lightings, drains, parks, gardens, open spaces, or such public facilities as may be prescribed from time to time by the Governor or House of Assembly of a state;
- Naming of roads and streets and numbering of houses;
- Registration of all births, deaths and marriages;
- Assessment of privately owned houses or tenements for the purpose of levying such rates as may be prescribed by the Governor or House of Assembly of a state;
- Control and regulation of outdoor advertising and hoardings; movement and keeping of pets of all descriptions; shops and kiosks; restaurants, bakeries and other places for sale of laundries; and licensing, regulation and control of the sale of liquor;
- The provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education;
- The development, of agriculture and natural resources other than the exploitation of minerals;
- The provision and maintenance of health services; and
- Such other functions as may be conferred upon a local government by the Governor or the House of Assembly of

a state;

Some of these functions may look simple, elementary or even inconsequential. Yet they are the foundation upon which real progress can be built at the local level. The failure of local governments to discharge these simple functions effectively, efficiently and conscientiously tends to rob local communities of the vital elixir for actual take-off into genuine development.

Local governments can only be effective instruments of development if they emphasise the following:

- The principle of participation whereby the ordinary people or masses are involved or have a direct say in determining the decisions, priorities, policies, programmes and projects of the local government;
- The principle of responsiveness whereby the leaders are guided by the wishes of the masses and preoccupied with trying to meet, the needs, yearnings and aspirations of the ordinary people instead of. the pursuit of their own interests and those of their friends and associates;
- The principle of accountability whereby the resources and funds accruing to the local government are judiciously managed, openly accounted for, and their use subjected to the scrutiny of the normal regulatory bodies as well as the public to ensure that public officeholders do not abuse the people's mandate
- The principle of service to the people in place of inordinate ambition to control and dominate them;
- The principle of respect for dialogue and debate rather than coercion or the use of force as the basis for solving problems and building consensus;
- The principle of effective planning as a basis for determining the broad goals and priorities which should inform the direction and operations of the government.

A situation where each set of elected or appointed officials pursue their own agenda to the neglect of the wishes of the masses cannot make for effective local governance. A situation where the principle of service is pushed into the background and needed improvements in infrastructure, public welfare and community facilities are neglected cannot make for grassroots development. Neither can the pursuit of arbitrary, *ad hoc* and uncoordinated projects and programmes lead to meaningful or sustainable development. Local governments must begin to do things differently in the new and challenging environment of the 21st century.

3.4 People's Role in Grassroots Development

It is, however, a known fact that no government, no matter its good intentions, resources and manpower, can provide all the services, infrastructure and facilities that will transform the society and eliminate poverty in its entirety. Governments must allow, encourage and energise the people to organise themselves so as to complement the efforts of government through identifying their own problems, devising solutions to these problems, and mobilising their resources, talents and creativity to pursue those actions which will improve their own situation.

The beginning of wisdom in local governance lies in the ability to discern between those things which government should do for the people and those things which the people can and ought to do for themselves. The failure to marry government's projects and programmes with the people's efforts, abilities and priorities has been one of the major shortcomings of Nigeria's development strategy. Unless people are organised and encouraged to pull their own efforts and resources together in pursuit of the development of their communities, their standards of living will continue to fall below their expectation. By the time they combine their efforts with those of the government, they will discover that *vital link* which is the secret of success in development.

Everywhere in the world, people have had to get directly involved in their own development through self-help activities, philanthropic assistance and community mobilisation. The need to tap, harness and strengthen the spirit of self-help, brotherly concern, and community service is very critical for the people's collective welfare and progress. If there is anything we can learn from our traditional philosophy as Africans, it is that our own personal welfare as well as the collective survival of the social system all depends on our readiness to be our brother's keeper and render service to the community that brought us up.

The crisis in which we find ourselves today derives largely from our abandonment of this philosophy. Everybody now thinks that he can only *prosper* by outsmarting and therefore impoverishing his brother or neighbour, or by grabbing all the resources that should have gone into building a better social system for all of us. The opposite, is indeed, what brings about progress. Our African tradition has imbued us with a very strong sense of community. This is a value and an asset which we should not allow ourselves to lose. Not only would we have wrecked everything "African" about us, we stand to pay dearly in future for losing our sense of community.

This explains why community development should be important for us. Community development is essentially about the things we strive to do through our own efforts to build the communities in which we live. Community development has been defined by the United

Nations as:

The processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and enable them contribute fully to national progress (UN 1956: 7).

The emphasis in this definition is primarily on the people, and only secondarily on the government. If you would pardon the crude edges of my analogy, the government can be compared to an ass. Like any other ass, it has a tremendous amount of energy, But it requires somebody to give it a kick and a direction before it does what it is obviously capable of doing.

It amounts to over-optimism to imagine that government will necessarily come to your assistance whenever you have a problem or a need. It is in fact foolhardy to imagine that government will step in, without your asking, to do those things you desire. Enlightened people and communities have a responsibility to map out what is good for them and then pressurise government to assist in those areas where government can perform creditably while leaving to the community those things which the community can do better. It is in this regard that social clubs, community development associations and other social organisations have a very critical role to play.

Existing facts indicate that these organisations have played a very important role in spearheading community development activities everywhere in this country. Research has shown that communities in which such organisations are lacking have tended to lag behind in terms of development. In some communities these associations, even when present, have not played the kind of role expected of them. Communities with strong, active and responsible organisations have been in the forefront in terms of development even when government has neglected to play its role. In other words, it is principally people and their organisations which build nations and communities, but with assistance from government.

3.5 The Role of Community Development Associations and Cooperative Societies in Grassroots Development

Many social groups and organisations exist in different communities which can serve as catalysts for development. They can be pioneers or initiators of different projects and innovations, many of which might be treated with suspicion if they were coming from the government. Coming directly from the people's initiatives and felt needs, such projects and innovations have a higher chance of success than government projects. It is much easier for such local social groups or community-based organisations (CBOs) to win the support of the people, draw on their material and human resources, and mobilise them to participate in the execution of such projects and programmes.

There are many types of organised social groups or associations which can impact positively on the development process in our local communities. We can classify these community organisations into three broad types. The first consists of indigenous organisation or associations which were already in existence long before the arrival of the colonial masters. These include the traditional authority structure; indigenous credit associations (*esusu*, *adashe*, *biki*, or contribution clubs); labour exchange cooperatives (called *gayya* among the Hausa, *aro* among the Yoruba, *egbe* among the Nupe, etc.); age-grade associations; and other traditional self-help organisations. Many of these indigenous organisations are still alive and very active in many of our local communities.

The second category consists of modern government-initiated or government-induced associations or organisations. Examples include modern cooperative societies, community development associations, vigilante groups, farmers' organisations (e.g. young farmers clubs, livestock associations, *fadama* or irrigation farmers associations etc.), district and village planning committees business associations, etc. These organisations are often recognised and registered by the government and their development activities tend to attract government assistance.

The third category consists of modern voluntary organisations such as Boys' Brigade, Boys' Scout, Girls' Guide, social clubs, philanthropic organisations, youth clubs, women organisations, etc. These associations either cater for the welfare and recreational needs of their members, or extend philanthropic support or assistance to needy individuals, groups and communities.

We will comment briefly on the roles and contributions of some of these groups. The essence here is to illustrate the potentialities of these groups and associations if effectively mobilised for grassroots development.

3.6 The Role of Community Development Associations and Cooperative Societies in Grassroots Development

The need for people to get involved in their own development through self-help activities is not only desirable but inevitable. The need to tap and harness this spirit of self-help, which is an enduring feature of all local communities in Nigeria, lies at the root of community development. Governments at all levels, most especially the local government, should devise strategies of stimulating, energising and supporting the self-help efforts of the people so as to accelerate the pace of development at the grassroots.

Experience has shown that members of different communities in Nigeria, whether resident at home or in the towns, have mobilised themselves into community development associations (CDAs) and social clubs. These associations have played a crucial role in spearheading the development of their communities. Many self-help projects and activities undertaken in most rural Communities in Nigeria have been initiated, sponsored or supported by such organisations and associations. The role played by these associations is such that they have been recognised as the foundation of any sustainable programme of grassroots Development. The local government should strengthen and support these associations and organisations through grants-in-aid, appropriate training, technical support and capacity-building.

Co-operative societies

While community development associations are primarily preoccupied with the provisions of social amenities and community facilities (roads, culverts, water supply, electricity, schools, health facilities, post offices, etc), cooperatives attend primarily to the economic interests of their members. They are economic institutions geared towards enhancing the economic wellbeing of their members in the areas of savings mobilisation, credit procurement, marketing, production, and consumption. Cooperatives constitute one of the most reliable instruments for raising people's productivity and transforming the local economy.

The benefits which cooperatives can bring to small-scale rural producers are so many that they have been seen as the most ideal institutional mechanism for mobilising and assisting the rural population. This

potential is recognised in Nigeria's past development plans. The Third National Development Plan sees cooperatives as "potentially powerful instruments for increasing the scale of existing small farmers and achieving rapid rural transformation"; while the Fourth Plan emphasises that "government will give all necessary encouragement towards the development of the modern cooperative movement" in order to achieve "development through self-help, mobilise development resources at the lower and middle-income levels, and provide effective organisations that can attract credit, as well as provide a vehicle for implementation of government economic policies and programmes" (*Nigeria: Third National Development Plan, p. 292; and Fourth National Development Plan, p. 52*).

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE 2

Identify at least five (5) specifications of the local government

4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has highlighted the roles which various organisations and social groups can play in development at the grassroots level. We started with local governments, the level of government which is nearest to the grass roots and has primary responsibility for grassroots development. Local governments, we have shown, have a dual responsibility in the development process: the first as the provider of those infrastructure, facilities and municipal services needed at the local level, and the second as a catalyst or activator charged with the role of mobilising, energising and galvanising all other local groups and organisations to rise up to the challenge of contributing maximally to the development of their communities.

It has been argued in the chapter that the secret of development lies in recognising what government should and must do for the people and what the people can and should do for themselves. The government and the people should therefore, complement each other in the tasks of promoting grassroots development. Once recognised and given an opportunity to perform, many associations, clubs, organisations, and social groups which exist at the community level can play very wonderful roles in the development process. After all, nobody knows where the shoe pinches better than the persons wearing it. The local masses have a very important role to play, alongside government, in the process of bringing development to the grass roots.

5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have examined local government administration and grassroots development by bringing to the fore some salient issues bordering on grassroots development.

For instance, development of the grassroots hinges on;

- Reduction of poverty
- Raising people's standard of living
- Expanding the rate of choices for people so that they choose for themselves
- Identify programmes of rural development in Nigeria

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Improvement in standard of living
- ii. Increases in Health Care facilitated
- iii. Increases in education, agriculture and infrastructural facilities etc
- iv. Skill acquisition
- v. Sustainable build-up of human and institutional capabilities.

ANSWER TO SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Formulation of economic planning and development.
- ii. Collection of rates and issuance of radio and television licenses.
- iii. Construction and maintenance of roads.
- iv. Control and regulations of outdoor advertising.
- v. The provision and maintenance of primary, adult and vocational education.

6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Discuss the roles of people and community association to grassroots development.

7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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