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FROM THE DESK OF THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

This is the sixth edition of this Journal by the Faculty of Law, Federal University, Oye-Ekiti and we are optimistic that it will be a continuous exercise so as to promote legal scholarship.

We are grateful to God Almighty for bringing to reality the aspiration of the members of the faculty.

We are equally grateful to the Acting Vice Chancellor Professor Olubunmi Shittu and the management team for the moral support given to the faculty for the publication of this sixth edition.

We also want to appreciate the assistance and cooperation of the external assessors who sacrificed valuable time to vet and edit the articles and for making meaningful contributions that enhance the quality of the journal.

Finally, we express our gratitude to all the editorial board members and members of editorial advisory board whose efforts put together made this publication a reality.

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POVERTY REDUCTION AND LIVELIHOOD PROGRAMMES IN ILORIN KWARA STATE: LEGAL ISSUES IN PERSPECTIVE

Halimat Tope Akaje, Ph.D *

Abstract

Nigeria has been rated as one of the poorest countries in the world as many citizens of Nigeria live below the poverty line. The Kwara State Bureau of Statistics estimated the poverty rate of the state to be 80.54 percent in 2010, Ilorin, being the capital of Kwara State, also has its fair share, as some residents are living with poverty. Hence, this paper seeks to discuss the livelihood programmes that have been embarked upon in Ilorin for the purpose of improving the lives of the vulnerable and marginalized residents. This paper relies on information from textbooks, journals, newspapers, and internet materials-doctrinal method of legal research. This paper reveals that livelihood programmes are valuable tools to reduce poverty but many factors such as corruption, nepotism, politicking, etc inhibit the sustainability and effectiveness of livelihood programmes in lifting people out of poverty in Ilorin. The paper also reveals that legal issues are embedded in the implementation of livelihood programmes, such as land ownership and access, environmental and social safeguards, human right issues and legal remedies for violation of rights, Transparency and accountability in programme implementation, etc. The paper concludes that adherence to legal provisions in the implementation of livelihood programmes enhance their sustainability and effectiveness. The paper also makes recommendations to surmount the challenges confronting the successful implementation of livelihood programmes in Ilorin, such as provision of adequate funding for livelihood programmes by government, monitoring of livelihood programmes, etc.

Keywords: Poverty Reduction; Livelihood Programmes; Legal Issues; Ilorin

Introduction

Ilorin, the capital of Kwara state in the North-Central Nigeria has a population of about 1,100,000 in 2025¹ with about 765km² (295 sqml) area.² Ilorin is largely populated by the Yoruba-speaking people and made up of three local government areas: Ilorin East, Ilorin West and Ilorin South.³ Being the state capital, the city is majorly urbanised and its residents is made up of civil servants, public servants, employees in corporate organisations, manufacturing industries (large scale and small scale), artisans, traders, transporters, business owners, farmers, etc.

The effects of the global economic meltdown which occurred between 2008 and 2009 on the Nigerian economy resulted in a drastic decrease in foreign direct investment. There was a decline in government revenue and its

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¹Macrotrends 'Ilorin, Nigeria Metro Area Population 1950-2025' <<https://www.macrotrends.net/global-metrics/cities/21998/ilorin/population>> accessed on 13 May 2025

² Ibrahim Rafiu Babatunde et al., APPRAISSAL OF URBANIZATION TRENDS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa (Volume 16, No.8, 2014) ISSN: 1520-5509 Clarion University of Pennsylvania, Clarion, Pennsylvania p.4

³ Ibitola A., History, Culture and Tradition of Ilorin People, Nigeria 2015 <<https://infoguidenigeria.com/culture-tradition-ilorin/>> accessed on 10 May 2025

expenditure due to the fall of the price of crude oil; the value of the Nigerian naira currency also fell.⁴ It is pertinent to note that the chain reaction of the global economic meltdown also brought about consolidated bank reforms in Nigeria in 2010, which stiffened credit facilities conditions.⁵ Nigeria was barely recovering from the global economic meltdown shock when it was hit by its worst economic recession in 2016. The recession was caused by fall in demand and price of crude oil which led to balance of payment deficit.⁶

The outbreak of Covid-19 in Nigeria in 2020 also affected the Nigerian economy⁷; jobs were lost, there was fall in demand and price of crude oil as well as decline in demands for goods and services. People were forced to stay at home in order to contain the spread of the virus, which worsened the living conditions of many Nigerians.⁸ It is pertinent to note that the chain effects of all these economic crises in Nigeria were also felt by residents of Kwara. The economic crises have led to reduced access to basic needs like food, shelter, clothing, medical treatment, etc., by people.⁹

The Kwara State Bureau of Statistics estimated the poverty rate of the state to be 80.54 percent in 2010¹⁰, this means 8 out of every 10 Kwara residents are considered poor as of 2010. Due to the effect of rise in poverty level, different livelihood programmes have been put in place by the Government and corporate organisations and philanthropic individuals to cushion the effects of economic downturns in Nigeria and by extension Kwara. The programmes were designed purposely to improve the lives of the vulnerable and marginalized people. Some of the livelihood programmes were/are undertaken by KWACSDA, KWASSIP, KHIS, MDGs, SDGs, YESSO, Quickwin, Npower, KWABES, Fadama, MMGIVIT, LEAH charity foundation, Future Assured Initiatives, Phemnick, ANRIN, RAAMP, etc., in Kwara State. The livelihood programmes have helped in alleviating poverty as have on the economy and the lifestyles of beneficiaries.

This paper discusses the impacts of livelihood programmes aimed at reducing poverty in Ilorin as well as discuss the legal issues that are tied to them.

I. Conceptual And Theoretical Framework

a. Concept of Poverty and Livelihood

Poverty can be defined as a lack of resources to meet one's fundamental necessities. It is the lack of resources and opportunities to fulfil the basic needs for a standard of living. It also includes the lack of access to essential needs like food, shelter, healthcare, education, other social amenities, etc., that are fundamental to a dignifying standard of living.¹¹ Poverty can be classified into two categories; absolute poverty and relative

⁴ Peter Labe Atime 'The Implications of Global Economic Crises on the Nigerian Economy: Lessons and Policy Options for the Regime of Muhammadu Buhari, FUDMA Journal of Politics and International Affairs (FUJOPIA) Volume 2 Number 1 August 2019, 63

⁵ Agaba, J.D and M.S, Tenuche Managing the Global Economic Meltdown in a Consolidated Banking Sector of Nigeria: Rhetorics or Realities Vol 2(1) *Current Research Journal of Economic Theory* 2010

⁶ Emanuel A., 'Nigeria's Economic Recession of 2016' Macroeconomic Research Project, 2017

⁷ Faruk Onibudo An Analysis on the Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Nigeria economy (2020)

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377387790_An_Analysis_on_the_Impact_of_Covid-19-Pandemic_on_Nigeria_economy_2020/link/65a3ab6540ce1c5902dac4f4/download?_tp=eyJjb250ZXh0Ijp7ImZpcnN0UGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIiwicGFnZSI6InB1YmxpY2F0aW9uIn19> accessed on 13 may 2025

⁸ Lawrence O and Cookey, A. E. 'Global economic meltdown and the Nigerian Economy' Vol. 5. No. 1, International Journal of Development and Management Review (INJODEMAR) June, 2010.

⁹ Collins Olayinka and Joseph Chibueze, Abuja 129 million Nigerians living below poverty line, says World Bank 18/10/ 2024 The Guardian < <https://guardian.ng/business-services/business/129-million-nigerians-living-below-poverty-line-says-world-bank/>

¹⁰ <https://kwassip.com.ng>> accessed on 13 may 2025

¹¹ United Nations 'Ending Poverty' <<https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/ending-poverty>> accessed on 13 may 2025

poverty.¹² Absolute poverty occurs when there is a complete lack of resources to satisfy basic needs of humans such as food, shelter, clothes. Relative poverty on the other hand occurs when there is lack of minimal financial resources needed to sustain the average level of life in a society. Poverty has many detrimental impacts; it denies people the opportunity to basic needs of life and affect the physical and mental wellbeing of those affected. It lowers educational attainment, increases crime rate, and enhances gender inequality and social unrest, etc.

Livelihood can be defined as the means and resources through which individuals make a living for the purpose of meeting their basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, etc. It focuses on how people earn income and manage their assets. It encompasses a set of factors that affect the well-being of persons such as education, healthcare, social support, etc.

b. Poverty as a Developmental and Right Issue

It should be noted that poverty is not just a developmental issue but also a right issue; as it does not only hamper human development but also violates fundamental human rights.¹³ Poverty limits access to basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, etc, thereby limiting access to a decent standard of living. Its impacts create a cycle of deprivation as limited opportunities in one generation can be transmitted to the next generation. Poverty is also a barrier to the full enjoyment of fundamental human rights. It degrades dignity of human persons, and limit access to the right to education, healthcare, etc., as provided in constitutions of different countries and other international and regional instruments.

c. Theories of Poverty and Legal Empowerment

It is important to state that different theories have explained the causes of poverty; the theories are individualistic, cultural and structural.¹⁴ Individualistic theory posits that poverty is as a result of personal lack of access to education, skills, etc. and that where an individual has access to education, skills, etc., he has the potential to a higher earning than those who do not have.¹⁵ The cultural theories posit that poverty is perpetuated by a set of values, beliefs, and behaviours that are passed down from generations to generations. This theory also focuses on how poverty is influenced by a person's early childhood experiences and socialization. Structural Theory hinges on how poverty is caused as a result of barriers that prevent an individual or groups from their earning potentials. These barriers relate to lack of access to resources, discrimination, geographical disparities, unequal distribution of wealth, etc.

The theory of legal empowerment focuses on how people can strengthen their capacities for the purpose of enhancing their rights. It focuses on the providing a means for marginalized people to make use of the law for the purpose of improving their economic, social and political status. The theory posits that people should have access to justice and the same time be able to influence and shape the legal institutions and frameworks to improve their standard of living. It is important to state that there are four pillars of legal empowerment; access to justice and rule of law, property rights, labour rights, and business rights. Access to justice and the rule of law underscores accessibility and clarity of laws in order to eliminate discrimination and enhance access to justice

¹² End poverty 'Relative Poverty Vs. Absolute poverty' <<https://endpoverty.org/relative-poverty-vs-absolute-poverty/>> accessed on 17 May 2025

¹³ Fernanda Doz Costa 'Poverty as Human Rights from Rhetoric to Legal Obligations' <<https://sur.conectas.org/en/poverty-human-rights-rhetoric-legal-obligations/>> accessed on 17 May 2025

¹⁴ Alex Addae-Korankye 'Theories of Poverty: A Critical Review' Vol.48 2019 Journal of Poverty, Investment and Development, P. 56

¹⁵ Ibid

for people, especially the poor. Property rights as key elements of legal empowerment focus on the security and accessibility of property rights for the purpose of providing people with a sense of dignity, identity, economic security, and belonging. Labour rights hinge on provisions of workers with a conducive working environment and fair wage. This also focus on the recognition and protection of the rights of individual workers and their organizations as a means of breaking the cycle of poverty. Business rights bother on the provisions of enabling environment, laws, infrastructure, etc., as means of enhancing viability of small and medium enterprises to reduce poverty.

d. Livelihood Programmes

Livelihood programmes are programmes designed to create opportunities for vulnerable people in order to increase their incomes and lift them out of poverty.¹⁶ Livelihood programmes help to improve the quality of life of marginalized people by providing them with access to health care, livelihood opportunities and protection.¹⁷ Thereby giving them hope to cater for their basic needs and that of their immediate family and to constructively contribute to their communities. Livelihood programmes aim to improve the state of life of low-income earners by giving jobs and business chances, healthcare access, educational opportunities and other forms of assistance to vulnerable people.

Livelihood programmes can take different forms such as social pension for indigent and old people, Vocational training and opportunities, Entrepreneurial skills training, Financial literacy training, Financial assistance and credit facilities, Agro-business development, Educational training, support and scholarships, etc. It is important to note that for a livelihood programme to be effective, it must be sustainable and people oriented.

II. Legal And Policy Framework On Poverty Reduction In Nigeria

a. 1999 Nigerian Constitution¹⁸

The Nigerian Constitution make provisions for the reduction of poverty in Nigeria. Chapter II of the Nigerian Constitution (Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy) specifically make provisions for the roles that Government is expected to play in promoting the welfare and well-being of its citizens. Section 16 outlines the State's economic objectives and stipulates that the Government must harness national resources, promote national prosperity, and foster an efficient, dynamic, and self-reliant economy. It also stipulates that resources should be distributed as best suited to promote the common good of the citizens. Section 17 stipulates the State's Social objectives and places the responsibility on the Government to direct its policies to promote social justice, equality and human dignity. It should however be noted that the provisions of Chapter II of the Nigerian Constitution are not justiciable, by virtue of the provisions of Section 6 (6) (c) of the Constitution, but nonetheless the provisions are very crucial as they provide guidance to Government in formulating policies.

¹⁶ Lamidi, K. O., and Igbokwe, P. I. , 'Social investment programmes in Nigeria: Impact and Challenges' Vol 11 (1) African Journal of Social Work, Pp 1-11

¹⁷ HEIMUNDO 'What is the importance of livelihood program <<https://heimduo.org/what-is-the-importance-of-livelihood-program/>>accessed on 5 May 2025

¹⁸ CAP C23 LFN 2004

b. Nigerian Legislation

- National Directorate of Employment Act.¹⁹

This act provides the legal framework for the establishment and operation of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in Nigeria. NDE is created²⁰ to address the problem of unemployment in Nigeria²¹ by designing and implementing programmes and initiatives to create jobs for citizens.

- Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria Act

This act established the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency in Nigeria.²² The Agency is responsible for the promotion of the development of micro, small and medium enterprises sector to enhance sustainable economic development.²³ The Agency also has the responsibility of facilitating access of MSMEs to resources that are crucial to their development. Section 8 of the Act spelt out the functions of the Agency.

c. International Treaties

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

This is a treaty adopted by the United Nations. It places an obligation on all State parties under the treaty to ensure that individuals have access to economic, social and cultural rights. These rights relate to rights to work²⁴, social security²⁵, education²⁶, adequate standard of living²⁷, health.²⁸ States have the responsibility of ensuring that individuals have the opportunity to gain a living by freely choosing a work of their choice. Article 7 of the treaty puts an obligation on States to ensure that individuals have access to conducive working conditions, fair wage and decent living. The states are expected to make adequate provisions to enhance access of individuals to social security and to make policies and adopt plan to for free and compulsory primary education.²⁹ The access to enjoyment of a quality and attainable standard of physical and mental health by individuals is also a responsibility placed on States. The treaty also recognizes the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living by having access to food, shelter, clothing, etc. The implementation of the treaty by States is monitored by the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

- African Charter on Human and People's Rights

This regional instrument makes provisions for economic, social and cultural rights as a way of reducing poverty. The charter places a duty on States to facilitate the realization of economic, social, and cultural development.³⁰ The charter also recognizes the right of everyone to have control over their resources and they can freely dispose of wealth and natural resources³¹ in order to reduce poverty. Articles 15, 16 and 17 of the charter recognises peoples right to education, healthcare and decent work as a means of reducing poverty and States are obligated to respect, protect and facilitate the implementation of the rights. Article 24 pf the Charter hinges on the right of people to a healthy environment that is favourable to their development and conducive for their well-being.

¹⁹ CAP 250 LFN

²⁰ See Section 1 of the National Directorate of Employment Act

²¹ See section 2 of the National Directorate of Employment Act

²² See section 1 of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria Act

²³ Alliance for Rural Electrification 'SMEDAN' <<https://www.ruralelec.org/partner/smedan/>>accesed on 10 May 2025

²⁴ Article 6 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

²⁵ Article 9 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

²⁶ Article 13 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

²⁷ Article 11 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

²⁸ Article 12 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

²⁹ Article 14 of International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

³⁰ Article 22 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights

³¹ Article 21 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights

States parties under the charter have the responsibility to respect and protect the right, especially as it is important to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

III. **Poverty Reduction And Livelihood Programmes In Ilorin, Kwara State**

Different livelihood programmes were embarked upon in Kwara state and by extension Ilorin in a bid to improve the quality of lives of the vulnerable residents; the programmes were designed to grant indigent residents' access to basic needs and amenities. A few of these livelihood programmes are discussed below:

1. Kwara State Community and Social Development Agency (KWACSDA)

The community and social development project (CSDP) is a national flagship World Bank assisted project that provides grants for human capital development of communities and vulnerable groups in Nigeria³², to enable them embark on various development agendas. The project focuses on areas such as education, health, rural electrification, portable water supply³³ etc. The project makes use of a community driven development approach to allocate project resources to benefit communities and vulnerable groups. The project is co-funded by the World Bank, Federal Government and participating states including Kwara state. The Kwara State community and social development project is handled by the Kwara State Community and Social Development Agency (KWACSDA).

The agency provides financial and technical support to communities, who are allowed to prioritize their needs and implement their communities' projects. The agency provides basic amenities for communities and trains groups and community members including Ilorin residents on micro- projects sustainability and conduct sensitization and advocacy on gender and vulnerable investment.

2. Kwara Health Insurance Scheme (KHIS)

This scheme was established by the Kwara State Health Insurance Law³⁴ for the purpose of providing health insurance coverage to all residents of Kwara State. The scheme was designed to improve access to quality, equitable, and affordable healthcare services to all residents of the State for a low annual premium. The scheme was launched in 2018 by the State Government³⁵. However, nothing much was heard about the scheme until 2020, when the scheme was relaunched by the current state Government for the purpose of boosting life expectancy and the economy. The first phase of the relaunched scheme covered 10,000 poor people in the State for free. Indigent residents of Ilorin were also captured for the purpose of granting them access to good health and well-being. The State Government paid the premium for the indigent beneficiaries in full. The Scheme was designed to strengthen the economic powers of the enrollees as good health has the potential to prevent people from becoming poor due to unforeseen health crises.

3. Kwara Bridge Empowerment Schemes (KWABES)

This scheme was designed to empower youth with the aim of eradicating unemployment among youth in the State and empowering them in order to have financial freedom. KWABES was launched by the Kwara State Government in May, 2011 to capture and analyse data of employable youth with the objective of providing them with gainful and productive employment. The scheme employed about 2,000 unemployed youth in the State and more than 1000 of them were absorbed into the civil service of the State on permanent appointments.³⁶ The

³² Suleiman Odapu 'CSDP: A decade of community-driven development December 21, 2020, [The Nation](https://thenationonlineeng.net/csdp-a-decade-of-community-driven-development) <<https://thenationonlineeng.net/csdp-a-decade-of-community-driven-development>> accessed on 13 May 2025

³³ December 29, 2017 by [The Nation](https://thenationonlineeng.net/kwara-spends-n551m-micro-projects/) Kwara spends N551m on micro projects <https://thenationonlineeng.net/kwara-spends-n551m-micro-projects/> accessed on 13 May 2025

³⁴ 2017

³⁵ S-Davies Wande July 13 2018 'Gov Ahmed launches Compulsory Health Insurance Scheme for Kwarans' <<https://tribuneonlineeng.com/gov-ahmed-launches-compulsory-health-insurance-scheme-for-kwarans/>> accessed on 7 May 2025.

³⁶ Hammed Shittu Kwara: Raising the Bar to Reduce Poverty and Realise the MDGs Date: 2014-04-17 <<https://www.ilorin.info/fullnews.php?id=10312>> accessed on 20 May 2025

scheme was developed to reduce poverty among youth and minimize the commission of crimes and eradicate youth restiveness. Ilorin residents were captured and benefitted from the scheme, as some of them who were employed under the scheme were transited to various ministries and MDAs on permanent appointments.

4. Quickwin

This programme was launched in 2014 by the Kwara State Government in order to move youth from unemployment to employment. Youth were trained in entrepreneurial skills under the programme in order to improve socio-economic development in the State. About 5,400 youth were first captured under the programme,³⁷ and they were trained in different skills to empower them. Ilorin youth benefitted from the programme as trainees underwent a twelve-month training and were paid #5,000 monthly.³⁸ The beneficiaries were also granted access to loans to start their businesses after the completion of their training. Ilorin residents also benefited from the programme.

5. Kwara State Social Investment Programmes (KWASSIPs)

The Kwara State Social Investment Programmes (KWASSIPs) were established to impact positively on the lives of the poor, vulnerable, unemployed, and those at the bottom of the financial pyramid without access to funding, to ensure they are availed the opportunity to better their lives. The programmes are aimed at graduating Kwara indigenes from poverty by investing in the people through direct support and capacity building. The programmes aim to improve the living conditions of households of the poor and vulnerable with access to targeted funds³⁹, reduce the rate of youth unemployment, eradicate malnutrition in school-age children by partnering with the FG's school feeding programme, promote access to financial services and increase the rate of financial inclusion⁴⁰, stimulate productivity and growth, especially in rural communities through investment in agriculture and rural businesses. The programmes have four initiatives; they are Ounjé ofe (free meal), K-Power, Owo Arugbo (cash support for the aged) and Owo ishowo (investment cash). Residents of Ilorin have immensely benefited from the programmes.⁴¹

6. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOS) Religious, Humanitarian And Social Clubs Livelihood Programmes

Ilorin residents have also benefited from livelihood programmes embarked upon by NGOs, religious organisations, humanitarian societies, and social clubs. An example is Phemnick which is a foundation that renders financial assistance to indigent people in Ilorin. The foundation built an old people's home at Taiwo Road to cater for old people. The foundation also assisted in re-integrating trafficked persons into society by rendering necessary support to them. The ABS Foundation also rendered assistance to indigents in Ilorin by providing cash support to them. The MMGIVIT which specialises in getting unused materials and resources across to indigent people in Ilorin, also assisted them in various ways. The Saliu Mustapha foundation also provided educational

³⁷ Hammed Shittu 'Nigeria: Quickwin - Kwara Releases Additional 1,000 Forms for Jobs' ThisDay 13 April, 2014 <<https://allafrica.com/stories/201404140446.html>> accessed on 20 May 2025

³⁸ *ibid*

³⁹ Stephen Olufemi Oni 'KWASSIP To Extend Support To More Communities, Households' New Telegraph April 29, 2025 <<https://newtelegraphng.com/kwassip-to-extend-support-to-more-communities-households/>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴⁰ KWASSIP 'About Us – Kwassip' <<https://kwassip.com.ng/about/>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴¹ *Ibid*

support and scholarships to indigents by giving free UTME forms to numerous tertiary institution admission seekers in Ilorin.⁴² Gobir Foundation rendered financial support to indigent people, especially women in Ilorin.⁴³ In addition, the Salman-Shagaya Foundation offered free medical treatment for indigent persons⁴⁴, provided solar-powered light to residents of Kwara, including Ilorin⁴⁵ and gave financial assistance to indigent people.⁴⁶ The Rotaract Club and Rotary International also render assistance towards community development such as training of indigent people and empowering them with different tools.⁴⁷ Social clubs and old students' associations also offer livelihood programmes in Ilorin by paying school fees of indigents⁴⁸ and providing educational materials and equipment to schools in order to aid efficient learning.⁴⁹ Religious organizations also render assistance to indigent people in Ilorin by giving them foodstuffs, cash⁵⁰ and offering empowerment skills and materials to them.⁵¹

7. First Ladies Initiatives/ Foundations

Livelihood programmes have also been embarked upon by wives of Presidents and Governors (both past and immediate) through their various initiatives embarked upon by Dame Patience Jonathan (the wife of the former Nigerian President; Goodluck Ebele Jonathan) rendered support for women. Equipment, materials and food stuff were distributed to vulnerable women in Ilorin through the initiative in 2014.⁵² The Future Assured Initiative of Mrs. Aisha Buhari was also launched in Ilorin in 2017.⁵³ About 1,000 women and youth across Kwara State including Ilorin, benefited from skills acquisition and empowerment programmes. Financial support was given to beneficiaries that excelled in the training to start their own businesses.⁵⁴

⁴²Saliu Mustapha Foundation 'Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today'

<<https://saliustaphafoundation.org/#:~:text=Transforming%20the%20educational%20landscape%20by%20offering%20scholarships%20and, and%20support%20to%20over%201%2C000%20underprivileged%20families%20annually>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴³ Ajide Felix 'Kwara: NGO Gobir organisation flags off interest-free loan to indigent residents' October 6 2022 ChoiceReporters <<https://choicereporters.com/2022/10/06/kwara-ngo-gobir-organisation-flags-off-interest-free-loan-to-indigents/>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴⁴ Paul Omorogbe 'Philanthropic body partners NGO on free medical services in Ilorin' Dec 9, 2019 Nigerian Tribune <<https://tribuneonline.ng.com/philanthropic-body-partners-ngo-on-free-medical-services-in-ilorin/>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴⁵ Grace Abejide 'NGO provides 4,000 homes with solar power in Kwara' November 15 , 2019 Nigerian Tribune <<https://tribuneonline.ng.com/ngo-provides-4000-homes-with-solar-power-in-kwara/>> accessed on 11 May 2025

⁴⁶ Muhammed Shaeed 'Salman Shagaya Foundation disburses ₦50 Million in cash to 1,000 beneficiaries' 16 September 2024 Inside Kwara <<https://insidekwara.com/salman-shagaya-foundation-disburses-%E2%82%A650-million-in-cash-to-1000-beneficiaries/>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴⁷ Rotary Club Of Ilorin 'Rotary Club Of Ilorin: Club's Projects' <<https://rotaryclubilorin.blogspot.com>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴⁸ Demola Akinyemi '40th Anniversary: GSS Ilorin 1984 Set Pays WASSCE Fees Of 41 Students' October 13, 2024 Vanguard <<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2024/10/40th-anniversary-gss-ilorin-1984-set-pays-wassce-fees-of-41-students/>> accessed on 1 May 2025

⁴⁹ Biola Azeez 'Old students hand over renovated classrooms to alma mater in Kwara' October 1, 2024 Nigerian Tribune <<https://tribuneonline.ng.com/old-students-hand-over-renovated-classrooms-to-alma-mater-in-kwara/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵⁰ Ilorin Info 'COVID-19: Christian, Muslim households benefit from N100m relief donation in Ilorin 2020-05-03 Ilorin. Info <<https://www.ilorin.info/fullnews.php?id=26733>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵¹ Ilorin Info 'Islamic foundation empowers 12 orphans with N.7m working tools' Ilorin. Info 2021-06-01 <<https://www.ilorin.info/fullnews.php?id=28855>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵² Ilorin Info 'Women for Change and Development Initiative Distributes Empowerment Materials In Kwara' Ilorin. Info November 2014 <<https://www.ilorin.info/fullnews.php?id=12110>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵³ Jaafar Jaafar 'Aisha Buhari trains 1,000 women in Kwara' October 8, 2017 Daily Nigerian <<https://dailynigerian.com/aisha-buhari-trains-1000-women-kwara/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵⁴ ibid

The Wellbeing Foundation Africa (WBFA), an initiative of the former first lady of Kwara State, Mrs. Oluwatoyin Saraki also offers support to mothers and children to enhance safety during and after pregnancy⁵⁵. The LEAH Foundation was an initiative of Mrs. Omolewa Ahmed, the wife of the former governor of Kwara State; Alhaji Abdulfatah Ahmed. The foundation offered support for the survival of women and children and provided entrepreneurial skills for women and youth through empowerment schemes. The foundation provided educational support for children in need by donating educational materials to vulnerable children in public schools in Kwara State⁵⁶ including Ilorin. The Ajike People's Support Group is the initiative of the wife of the current Governor of Kwara State Governor, Mrs. Olufolake Ajike Abdulrazaq, Ilorin residents have benefitted from the initiative through its skilled acquisition programme. The beneficiaries, who were mostly women were trained on different vocations such as soap making, bag making, makeup, tie and dye, cake baking, etc.⁵⁷ The group also conducted free medical tests on the beneficiaries and counselled them on how to maintain healthy lifestyles. The Group also trained women on financial literacy and offered cash and material donations to vulnerable people through different groups.

8. Constituency Intervention Livelihood Programmes

Political office holders especially law makers at the National assembly and State house of assembly also embark on livelihood programmes to empower and lift people out of poverty in Ilorin. For example, Skill Acquisition Training and Empowerment Programme (STEP) was an initiative of Senator Bukola Saraki to train youths and empower them in his constituency⁵⁸ which includes Ilorin. Mr. Mashood Mustapha who was a House of representative member of Ilorin West/Asa constituency also sponsored Universal Tertiary Matriculation Examination of many indigent admission seekers in Ilorin, conducted free coaching for students⁵⁹ and rendered financial support to students in Higher institutions from his constituency which includes Ilorin. He donated transformers, tricycles, motorcycles, block moulding machines, grinding machines, dryers etc. to members of his constituency, which also benefitted residents of Ilorin. Senator Yahaya Oloriegbe also empowered 250 artisans in his constituency by donating working tools to them⁶⁰, residents of Ilorin also benefitted from the empowerment. Other law makers at federal and state levels have also embarked on different livelihood programmes to better the life of their constituency members. Much of their livelihood programmes were done during the outbreak of Covid-19 in Kwara; food stuff and cash were given to Ilorin residents to ease their life during the lockdown period.⁶¹

IV. **Impacts Of Livelihood Programmes In Ilorin**

The core essence of livelihood programmes is to reduce poverty by empowering vulnerable people. The impacts of livelihood programmes are discussed below:

⁵⁵ Olaolu Odusan 'Nigeria's Maternal Health Crisis: How Wellbeing Foundation Africa (WBA) is making a Difference' Global Citizen 14 April, 2025 <<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/nigerias-maternal-health-crisis-how-wellbeing-fo-2/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵⁶ News Agency of Nigeria 'LEAH Foundation provides educational needs of 900 students in Kwara' March 10, 2017 Business Day <<https://businessday.ng/lagos/article/leah-foundation-provides-educational-needs-900-students-kwara/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵⁷ Umar Kawu Atolagbe 'Kwara First Lady's Group Empowers 500 Women' November 19, 2019 Factual Times <<https://factualtimesng.com/kwara-first-ladys-group-empowers-500-women/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵⁸ News Agency of Nigeria 'Saraki launches skill acquisition to empower 40,000 youths' 14 Nov 2016 The Guardian <<https://guardian.ng/news/saraki-launches-skill-acquisition-to-empower-40000-youths/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁵⁹ Aremu A, 'Hon Moshood Mustapha Provide Scholarship to 2 Secondary Students To University Level' <<https://www.nairaland.com/3598335/hon-moshood-mustapha-provide-scholarship>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁶⁰ Kaosara Olayemi Oladimeji 'Again, Sen. Oloriegbe Gives Back to Community, Empowers 250 in Kwara' October 19, 2024 Intercontinental News <<https://incnews247.com/sen-oloriegbe-community-empowers-250-kwara/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁶¹ Mumini AbdulKareem 'Covid-19: Kwara Deputy Speaker, House Leader, Commissioner distribute food stuff, cash to constituents' April 2, 2020 National Pilot <<https://thenationalpilot.ng/2020/04/02/covid-19-kwara-deputy-speaker-house-leader-commissioner-distribute-food-stuff-cash-to-constituents/>> accessed on 14 May 2025

a. Poverty reduction

The poverty rate of Kwara State was 80.54 percentage in 2010 according to the Kwara State Bureau of Statistics,⁶² while the rate of poverty in Kwara State has reduced to 20.54 percent in the 2022 according to the World Bank state by state poverty index.⁶³ It is pertinent to note that the poverty rate of Kwara State has a direct bearing on the poverty rate of Ilorin. Therefore, livelihood programmes have impacted the lives of Ilorin residents by reducing poverty rate.

b. Enhanced skills acquisition and vocational knowledge

Livelihood programmes in Ilorin have enhanced skills acquisition and vocational studies among unemployed youths. Many unemployed people have been trained in different skills. This has helped in empowering youths and creating job opportunities.

c. Job creation

Livelihood programmes have created job and business opportunities for many vulnerable people, through skills training and granting access to grants and loans. This has helped MSEs to thrive in Ilorin and afforded beneficiaries' opportunities to cater for their basic.

d. Access to basic amenities

Livelihood programmes have enhanced access to basic amenities through livelihood interventions such as borehole water, transformers, solar power panels etc. in Ilorin. This has helped to improve the lives of beneficiaries.

V. Legal Issues In Livelihood Programmes In Ilorin, Kwara State

Livelihood programmes usually entail some legal issues, which are sometimes complex and inhibits the realization of livelihood programmes. Some of these legal issues are discussed below:

a. Land Ownership and Access.

Some of the livelihood programmes embarked upon in Ilorin, Kwara State are related to agriculture, issues around land rights and land ownership can create legal disputes.⁶⁴ Traditional land tenure systems often clash with modern legal tenure⁶⁵, creating problems for beneficiaries and constituting impediments to livelihood programmes. Livelihood programmes, especially agriculture based require use of land. Some of the few examples of livelihood programmes that have been embarked upon in Ilorin cut across agriculture, examples are FADAMA project, the Agriculture support livelihood under KWASSIP etc.

These entails the use of land. However, the beneficiaries are usually hindered in enjoying the benefits of these livelihood programmes due to reduced access to land. The land tenure system in Nigeria does not adequately allow beneficiaries to have access to land. In addition. Even where Government makes provision to provide land for beneficiaries, there are usually hinderances as such land are sometimes compulsorily acquired from

⁶² R.A Mustapha et.al 'Impact of Poverty Reduction Program of the Kwara State Government of Nigeria on the Beneficiaries; International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management Vol. V, Issue 3, March 2017 p. 248

⁶³ Alabi Abdulkarim ' KWASSIP and the Battle Against Poverty In Kwara ' Economic Confidential September 16, 2022 <<https://economicconfidential.com/2022/09/kwassip-battle-against/#:~:text=Just%20last%20month%20%28August%29%2C%20the%20World%20Bank%20State,initial%2040%20percent%20often%20cited%20by%20government%20officials>> accessed on 14 May 2025

⁶⁴ The Trusted Advisors 'Resolving Land Disputes in Nigeria: A Comprehensive Guide' <<https://trustedadvisorslaw.com/resolving-land-disputes-in-nigeria/>> accessed on 09 May 2025.

⁶⁵ Innocent Franklin Makata and Nnamdi Alex Udobi 'Comparison of Land Use Act and Traditional Land Use' Vol. 12(1) International Journal of Civil Engineering, Construction and Estate Management, 70-82, 2024

traditional land owners, who may resist giving up possession. Therefore, securing access to land for the purpose of carrying out livelihood programmes creates legal issues.

b. Environmental and Social safeguards

Another major legal issue that must be considered in livelihood programmes are environmental and social safeguards. These are put in place to prevent and mitigate any potential harm to people and the environment that might arise from livelihood programmes.⁶⁶ Environmental and social safeguards ensure that livelihood programmes are sustainable, equitable, and responsible, particularly in sectors like agriculture, infrastructure, education, and natural resource management. While environmental and social safeguards are integral to livelihood programs, their enforcement remains inconsistent. The lack of comprehensive legal frameworks and effective monitoring mechanisms can lead to environmental degradation and social inequalities, undermining the sustainability and inclusivity of livelihood initiatives.

c. Corruption:

This is another issue that is very critical to livelihood programmes and raises legal concerns. Where livelihood programmes are sponsored by Government and funds are allocated by Government in conjunction with international organization. The re-distribution of livelihood resources to beneficiaries can raise legal issues vis a vis corruption. The lack of transparency⁶⁷ and accountability is a major concern especially as it relates to the sustainability of livelihood programs and realization of the upliftment of vulnerable people from poverty.

d. Human right issues

Another major legal issues in livelihood programmes bothers on human rights. As earlier noted, livelihood programmes are put in place to reduce poverty, however, where necessary safeguards are not put in place, there are bound to be human right violations, which tend to undermine the purpose of livelihood programmes. There have been circumstances where women, minority group members and disabled persistently face stigma, **discrimination**⁶⁸, and barriers to accessing basic social services and economic opportunities in Nigeria⁶⁹ This raises legal issues. In the same vein, potential beneficiaries of livelihood programmes are also sometimes exposed to inhuman conditions in a bid to access livelihood programmes.

VI. Challenges To Sustainability And Effectiveness of Livelihood Programmes

Livelihood programmes are usually confronted with different challenges which makes them less effective in improving the lives of vulnerable people. These challenges are discussed below:

a. Inadequate Funding

Funding is very germane to the sustainability and effectiveness of livelihood programmes. Livelihood programmes must be adequately funded in order to achieve their purpose of improving the lives of beneficiaries. Paucity of funds will hamper the sustainability of livelihood programmes and make them less effective in reducing poverty.

b. Corruption

⁶⁶FAO 'Environmental and social safeguards' <http://www.fao.org/environmental-social-safeguards/en/?utm_source=chatgpt.com>accessed on 16 May 2025.

⁶⁷ Ajie H. A and Wokekoro O. E. 'The Impact of Corruption on Sustainable Economic Growth and Development in Nigeria' International Journal of Economic Development Research and Investment Vol. 3, No 1, April 2012 P. 91

⁶⁸ Anyogu F and Okika E 'Marginalization and discrimination in Nigeria: a Legal Pointer to the Dictates of the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria' Vol. 1 Issue 2 Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Journal of Private Property Law. 2024, P. 29

⁶⁹ Rosa Maria Martinez and Varalakshmi Vemuru 'Social inclusion of persons with disabilities in Nigeria: Challenges and opportunities' <<https://blogs.worldbank.org/en/nasikiliza/social-inclusion-persons-disabilities-nigeria-challengesandopportunities#:~:text=Persons%20with%20disabilities%20in%20Nigeria%20persistently%20face%20stigma%2C,about%20by%20the%20impacts%20of%20the%20COVID-19%20pandemic>>accessed on 11 May 2025

Corruption is a major problem in Nigeria and it has transcends every sphere of human endeavours. Sustainability of livelihood programmes are hampered by corruption, livelihood funds, intervention tools, materials etc. meant to improve the lives of beneficiaries are sometimes diverted and converted to personal uses. This is very common under Government sponsored livelihood programmes; there have been situations where government officials and other individuals have been called out for personalising projects that were meant to alleviate people's suffering in Ilorin.⁷⁰

c. Politicking

This is another challenge to the realization of the objectives of livelihood programmes. Some benefactors of livelihood programmes are driven by politics to do livelihood interventions. These philanthropists offer succour to indigent people in order to enhance their political chances and careers. The target beneficiaries of their livelihood interventions are mostly people that have pledged loyalty to their political ambitions. Politicking at times defeat the purposes of livelihood programmes; as the beneficiaries may not be the right target or people in need of livelihood interventions. Another issue is that these benefactors also abandon their livelihood programmes subsequently after realizing or losing their political ambitions.

d. Change of Government

This can affect the sustainability of livelihood programmes, especially those that are sponsored by the Government. Many livelihood projects embarked upon by previous Governments and offices of the first ladies are usually abandoned by new Governments and offices of current first ladies. This leads to non-sustainability of livelihood programmes.

e. Bureaucracy

These also challenge the sustainability of livelihood programmes. The procedures and requirements needed to access some livelihood interventions may be cumbersome for an average vulnerable man. A vulnerable person may find it difficult to withstand the rigours of the requirements of a livelihood intervention, such as requesting all interested vulnerable persons to register with a particular group, open an account in a particular bank or enlist with a particular government agency before accessing livelihood interventions. These conditions may make vulnerable persons who are in dire need of livelihood interventions to abandon the programme, thereby denying the actual people that need interventions to lose the opportunity.

f. Nepotism

This occurs where coordinators and officials in charge of granting livelihood interventions to vulnerable people decide to give such interventions to their relatives and friends at the detriment of the actual vulnerable people that need such interventions. This weakens the effectiveness of livelihood programmes and defeat the purposes of livelihood interventions.

g. Poor maintenance of livelihood projects

The nature of some livelihood projects requires that such projects must be properly maintained in order to benefit the vulnerable and improve their lives over on a long term basis. Examples of these livelihood projects are borehole water, transformers, schools, primary health centres etc. Poor maintenance of these types of projects by benefitting communities' members may lead to the dilapidation of the projects and render such project less effective in improving the lives of the beneficiaries.

VII. Conclusion And Recommendation

Livelihood programmes in Ilorin cut across different project interventions to improve the lives of vulnerable and poor residents. This paper has discussed various livelihood programmes in Ilorin. The legal issues associated with the implementation of livelihood programmes and challenges to the effectiveness of livelihood programmes

⁷⁰ ENETSUD is a civil society organisation which specialises in tracking government projects in Kwara State in order to expose corruption.

were also discussed. The impacts of livelihood programmes on Ilorin residents were discussed. However, the legal issues embedded in the implementation of livelihood programmes as well as various challenges to livelihood programmes hinder the sustainability and effectiveness of livelihood projects in lifting people out of poverty. In addition, livelihood programmes also sometimes benefit small number of people, which is a smaller fraction of the number of vulnerable people in Ilorin. This paper therefore makes the following recommendations to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of livelihood programmes in Ilorin:

- a. Adequate funds should be provided for livelihood programmes by the government at all levels for livelihood programmes in Ilorin and Kwara.
- b. Government should adhere to all necessary legal provisions relating to livelihood programmes and also ensure that private individuals and organizations also adhere to legal provisions while embarking on livelihood programmes.
- c. Civil society organisations should track and monitor government-sponsored livelihood programmes to ensure transparency, probity, and accountability.
- d. Erring Government officials who collect bribes before granting access to beneficiaries divert livelihood projects for their personal use should be sanctioned appropriately.
- e. Members of beneficiary communities of livelihood projects must ensure that they maintain such projects.
- f. Government must have the political will to ensure that their livelihood programmes benefit vulnerable people who really need such interventions. Politicking and nepotism must be eschewed by livelihood benefactors and officials.



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