



## Nigeria's National Fadama Development Project Series

### *How to Build a Pilot into a National Program through Learning and Adaptation*



WORLD BANK GROUP

### Overview

The case study explores the following question: how did the Fadama project learn and adapt to changing circumstances, including the social and political context, as it evolved from a pilot program to a successful national project? In doing so, this case study traces the evolution of the project's design and implementation to demonstrate its adaptive capacity for promoting local agriculture and rural income generation. Prior to the Fadama project, most rural projects in Nigeria were managed centrally, with decisions made at higher levels of government. Today, a large number of communities are responsible for their own local development planning, and they participate actively in identifying needed infrastructure and supportive services. Fadama's community groups are joint stakeholders in many community assets.

**Key contextual conditions:** Nigeria's independence in 1960 brought with it high expectations, including for the expansion of agriculture. But the early post-independence experience, marked by a succession of ineffective governments and ineffective efforts to reduce poverty, slowly eroded Nigerians' aspirations that institutions could deliver, particularly for poor people. During the early postindependence period, agriculture remained the main source of livelihood for 80 percent of rural dwellers, who relied mostly on staples and subsistence farming. Proceeds from agriculture accounted for more than two-thirds of rural economic activity. Yet agricultural production and incomes were volatile because farmers used traditional cultivation methods and rudimentary practices and tools, and, despite its importance, the agricultural sector remained stagnant.

**Key stakeholders:** Fadama Community Association; Fadama Users Association; Fadama User Group; Local Fadama Desk; Local Fadama Development Committee; National Fadama Coordination Office; State Fadama; Coordination Office

### Lessons Learned

- **Maintaining presence and continuity** in the form of financial and advisory assistance is one of the most important factors in a project's development success.
- **Adaptive learning** encourages innovation at every stage of a project, enhancing results and sustainability.
- **Tailoring best practices to local conditions** promotes broad acceptance of the community-driven development model.
- **Building consensus and attention to process** facilitates a move away from centrally led, top-down approaches toward a locally led participatory approach.
- **Promoting participation to strengthen social capital** and an effective institutional structure at the local level is critical to organizing community participation and engagement.

#### PROJECT DATA

**PARTNER ORGANIZATION:**

World Bank

**ORGANIZATION TYPE:**

Multilateral

**DELIVERY CHALLENGE:**

Adapting rural development interventions to local contexts

**DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE:**

Reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of rural dwellers

**SECTORS:**

Agriculture, governance

**COUNTRY:**

Nigeria

**REGION:**

Africa

**PROJECT DURATION:**

1992-2017

#### CONTACTS

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**PROJECT MANAGERS:**

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- **Fostering inclusiveness** by recognizing indirect beneficiaries as legitimate users of shared resources develops a culture of inclusiveness.
- **Capacity building through investments in staff** strengthens the participation of community groups.
- **Cultivating a culture of joint responsibility** improves group cohesion and ensures the integrity of the flow of funds at the community level.

## **Development Challenge**

- Reducing poverty and improving the livelihoods of rural dwellers by building local capacity to fulfill the country's agricultural potential

## **Delivery Challenge**

- Adapting rural development interventions by learning from experience and scaling up gradually



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