



THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AGRO FORESTRY TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF HOUSEHOLDS IN OKIGWE ZONE OF IMO STATE, SOUTH EASTERN NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

Economic stagnation of Nigeria; neglect of renewable natural resources sector, e.g., agriculture and forestry.

54% of West African population

51% of its gross national product

80% of government revenue and 10.6% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at factor cost – Oil revenues, (Merem, 2005).

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture – 40% of GDP

Declining soil fertility, deforestation and unsustainable land use practices (WTO, 2004) – challenges to agriculture.

Deforestation – human pressure, plantation agriculture

Depleted at an annual rate of 3.5%

PROBLEM

Agriculture and forestry (agro forestry) – cause of deforestation

Has agro forestry affected, stimulated, or adversely affected the socio-economic development of the study area?

Is there relationship between agro forestry and other socio economic activities?

AIM & OBJECTIVES

Assess contributions of agro forestry to the economic and social development of Imo state.

Document the major agro forestry practices and products in the study area

Identify the relationship between agro forestry and other economic activities

Identify positive and negative effects of agro forestry in Imo State.

STUDY AREA

Imo State

Tropical rain forest

Latitudes $5^{\circ} 10'N$ - $6^{\circ} 00'N$ and Longitudes $6^{\circ} 40'E$ - $7^{\circ} 23'E$

Spatial extent – 5,530 square kilometres according to federal office of statistics

Bounded on the west and south by Rivers state, on the east by Abia, on the north by Anambra state.

METHOD

Primary data and secondary data

Primary; 450 copies of questionnaire

3 LGAs – under study, 150 – per LGA

3 autonomous communities per LGA

50 per community

QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTIONS FOR THE STUDY

L.G.A	Community	No Distributed	Percentage Distributed	No Retrieved	Percentage Retrieved
Okigwe	Ogii	50	11.1	50	11.5
	Isiokwe	50	11.1	49	11.3
	Umulolo	50	11.1	48	11.1
Onuimo	Umuna	50	11.1	46	10.6
	Umuduru	50	11.1	48	11.1
	Egbeguru				
	Okwelle	50	11.1	47	10.6
Isiala Mbano	Umunkwo	50	11.1	46	10.6
	Amaraku	50	11.1	49	11.3
	giri	50	11.1	50	11.6
Total		450	100	433	96.2

RESULTS

1. Involvement of different age groups in agro forestry in the study area
2. Occupational and Farming/Agricultural practices of the respondents
3. Forestry products in the study area
4. Economic benefits/contributions of agro forestry in the area.

INVOLVEMENT OF DIFFERENT AGE COHORTS IN AGRO FORESTRY IN THE STUDY AREA

L.G.A	COMMUNITY	AGE COHORTS				
		16-25 yrs	26-35 yrs	36-45 yrs	46-55 yrs	> 55
Okigwe	Ogii	0	4	9	8	17
	Isiokwe	3	6	6	20	33
	Umulolo	2	3	4	10	25
Onuimo	Umuna	1	3	5	8	11
	Umuduru Egbeaguru	4	8	6	17	21
	Okwelle	2	2	3	5	8
Isiala Mbano	Umunkwo	1	6	8	17	30
	Amaraku	—	4	7	13	24
	Ugiri	2	15	12	20	31
Total		15	40	60	118	200
% (percentage)		3.5%	9.2%	13.9%	24.3%	46.2%

- Agro forestry— handled mostly by the ageing men and women (46-55) (24.3%) and above 55 years (46.2%).
- 318 (70.5%) of the sample population.
- Food insecurity

FARMING/AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES OF THE RESPONDENTS

Mixed farming and mixed cropping – 85%

L.G.A	Community	Farming/Agricultural Practices				Total
		Mixed Farming	Mixed Cropping	Mono Cropping	Animal Rearing	
Okigwe	Ogii	24	20	–	6	50
	Isiokwe	21	18	2	8	49
	Umulolo	26	18	–	4	48
Onuimo	Umuna	20	16	3	7	46
	Umoduru Egbeaguru	21	17	4	6	48
	Okwelle	23	15	–	9	47
Isiala mbano	Umunkwo	18	23	–	5	46
	Amaraku	25	22	–	2	49
	Ugiri	19	19	5	7	50
Total		197	168	14	54	433
Percentage		45.5	38.8	3.2	12.5	100

MIXED FARMING AND MIXED CROPPING

- Minimize cost
- Inadequacy of available farms plots for agricultural practices.



FORESTRY PRODUCTS IN THE STUDY AREA

- Iroko – decline
- African oil bean and gmelina – 70%
- Trees facing extreme exploitation – implication

TIMBER TREES	TOTAL NO. FROM RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE SCORE OF EACH TREE
Iroko	15	3.5
African Oil Bean	225	52
Gmelina	80	18.5
Mahogany	5	1.2
Achi	25	5.8
None	83	19.2
Total	433	100

FORESTRY PRODUCTS IN THE STUDY AREA

- Conversions of trees into charcoal before selling to charcoal dealers – current trend.
- Oil bean tree – ₱1 200.00 per bag, others, ₱800.00 per bag.
- Implication

	METHODS OF TIMBER TREE SALE	NO OF RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
1	Sold live to timber Merchants	338	78.1
2	Processed into timber and sold to Merchants	10	2.3
3	Cuts into pieces and sold as fuel wood	50	11.5
4	Converted into charcoal and sold to dealers	30	6.9
5	Personal use	5	1.2
	Total	433	100.0

BAGS OF CHARCOAL OBTAINED FROM TREE CONVERSION



SOCIO ECONOMIC BENEFITS/CONTRIBUTIONS OF AGRO FORESTRY

- Non-timber forest products – utazi (*Gonronema latifolia*), Uziza (*Piper guineensis*)
- >95% - women
- Food,
- Income generation,
- Trado-medical purposes

Socioeconomic Benefit	NO OF RESPONDENT	PERCENTAGE
Source of food	198	45.7
Source of income	38	8.8
Medicinal purpose	48	11.1
Source of employment	59	13.6
Maintenance of soil fertility	44	10.2
Control of soil erosion	46	10.6
TOTAL	433	100

RECOMMENDATIONS

Encouragement of local involvement in agro forestry

Promoting Education and Research Efforts

Land reform should be made so as to make for easier and quicker access to land by those prospecting to engage in agro forestry ventures.

CONCLUSION

Agriculture and related forestry (agro forestry) are the main sources of food.

The production of non timber forest products (NTFPs) are basically undertaken by more women than men while men are more involved in timber production than women.

Agro forestry, though constituting part of the economic activity in the area is not a major economic activity in the area.