

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO TILA FLOOD VICTIMS IN WUDIL, KANO STATE

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper examines the government response to flood in Wudil Local Government of Kano State. The data was generated from both primary source by the use of questionnaire administered to 84 household heads at the old and new locations, and secondary source which involved the use of a list of affected heads of household who received emergency relief materials from the officials of Wudil Local Government Council's Flood Committee and published document from Kano state Ministry for Information. According to official figures, 94 household heads were affected by the flood disaster, but field survey showed that only 84 households could be traced at both locations. Descriptive statistics was used in the analysis of the data. The findings showed that the disaster made the victims to lose most of their property such as food crops, houses and other structures among others. Response by government included donation of emergency relief materials like foodstuff etc. The findings further showed that the distribution of the materials depended on the time of their arrival not on the needs of the victims. Also part of the response was reconstruction of Kafin-Chiri dam's Spillway, the source of flood water which was started but not completed as at the time of data collection. This paper recommends adequate provision and distribution of relief materials and early warning, in order to rehabilitate victims and forestall future occurrence of the disaster.*

**KEYWORDS:** Emergency relief, disaster, flood, dam, relocation

### INTRODUCTION

Flood is the oldest and most devastating catastrophe throughout the history of man environmental relationship. Mbadiwe (1998) observed that major floods are often regarded as freaks of nature. It is an excess water over the expected water level, which is generally higher than the spill way level (Ahmed and Musa, 1986; U.S. Geological survey, 2005). Flood is classified into two, normal and abnormal floods. The normal flood is a natural fundamental process for the transfer of water and sediment from the drainage channel to the immediate basin and modification of valley floor and alluvial fan landforms. It is limited within the basin and usually leads to no destruction. Abnormal flood is the accidental inundation of any area which is not normally covered with water from stream, river, lake or sea, which subsequently results in loss of lives, properties and the destruction of trees, structures and monuments. It is also a fluvial phenomenon, which is associated with inundation, over-flowing or havoc-spill over of water from streams, rivers and lakes on neighbouring land surface (Ibrahim, 2002). Flood is the second most frequent cause of natural disaster after windstorms, but affects more regions and more people than any other phenomenon. Statistics from studies indicate that floods are becoming more frequent. From 66 major floods in 1990 the number rose in 1999 to 100 (Kazaure, 2001).

Flooding in many parts of Northern Nigeria occurs naturally and sometimes assisted by man. In earlier times floods were seasonal and were the direct result of excessive rainfall in the catchment areas, e.g. the floods of the Hadejia-

Nguru wetlands and the lower Sokoto plains. Such floods inundated thousands of hectares of agricultural land for many months each year leaving only a small fraction of the flooded land for cultivation through residual moisture utilization technique (Olofin, 2000). Several researchers have suggested some human adjustments/mitigation options to the flood in order to minimize the effects on the affected persons. Ibrahim (2002) suggested some human adjustments to include bearing the loss, public relief, abatement and control, land use regulation, land elevation, emergency action, structural adjustment and flood insurance. Okpalla (1979) and Folorunsho and Awosika (2000) provided three possible approaches to contain Ogunpa river flood in Ibadan of 1978 to include; emergency action and or bearing the loss, structural changes in flood plain and control of land use on flood plain and some flood mitigation measures for Victoria and Ikoyi Islands through wise practices respectively.

The flood disaster in the study area resulted in the loss of properties such as crops, granaries, houses, animals' sheds etc., but no human or animal life was lost. In response to that, Individuals, Governmental and Non-governmental organisations provided some emergency relief materials and other structural works at Kafin Chiri dam's spill-way to forestall future occurrence of the disaster. It is against this background that this paper examines the nature, distribution and adequacy of the materials in cushioning the effect of the disaster on the affected persons as well as the nature structural work at the dam.

**The Study Area**

Tila and Hayin Mallam Villages are in Tsibiri ward of Wudil local government area, Kano state. The two areas are located between latitude 11°37'N and 11°56'N and longitude 8°45'E and 8°57'E (Olofin, 2008). They are situated on opposite sides along River Jatau about 24 kilometers north east of KafinChiri dam in Garko local government area, Kano State. The river is a tributary of Wudil river. Heavy rainfall of about 1652mm was received during the 2001 rainy season as against the annual mean of 800-1000mm. This amount was recorded by Kano Airport and was responsible for raising the level of the dam's reservoir above its capacity of 31.12 million m<sup>3</sup>. The poor condition and limited size of the spillway of the dam led to its collapse that caused the 2001 flood disaster that affected the area. The outflow from the dam flooded most of the villages downstream of the dam including the study area (WRECA, 2002). The climate of the study area is tropical dry and wet type, classified by Koppen as Aw with an annual mean total rainfall of between 800mm and 900mm (Olofin, 2008). Temperature is high even during the cool harmattan period. The minimum temperature is not less than 20°C during the wet warm season usually mid-March to mid-May but the maximum temperature may be as high as 40°C, while the average temperature for these hot months may range between 30°C and 32°C (Adamu, 2003). The regional area within which the study area is located drained to the north east into Chad basin through River Hadejia. There are numerous streams mainly tributaries of river Wudil flowing in north west and north east directions like Duddurun Jatau (River Jatau) at the downstream of KafinChiri Dam (NEDECO, 1977).

**METHODOLOGY**

The data for this work was generated from both primary source by the use of questionnaire administered to 84 household heads at old and new locations and the secondary source which involved the use of a List of affected heads of household victims who were given emergency relief materials and some published documents. The list was collected from the officials of Wudil local government council's flood committee and the published documents were collected from

Kano state ministry for Information on the achievement of Kano state government in 2002. According to official figures, 94 household heads were affected by the flood disaster, but field survey showed that only 84 households could be traced at both locations. Frequencies and percentages were the descriptive statistics used in analyzing the data.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Characteristics of the Respondents**

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents were between 35-65 years while, youth (25-35) and the aged 85 years accounted for 15.47% and 9.52% respectively. Age is considered as one of the important factors in land matter because one has to attain certain age before he takes care of his own property. In most African society the rights of the under aged person to hold land is through inheritance. An adult holds the right in his behalf until he comes to an age capable of taking care of his own property. In addition, more than half (54.43%) of the respondents had one wife while 45.57% of them had more than one wife. Sixty-four (64%) had 1-5 children, 33.33% had 6-10 and only less 10% had more than 10 children. These reflect the traditional Hausa/Fulani setting where polygamy and large family size are the norm. These factors have often been used to explain the high population growth rate in the area. In rural areas, children help on the farms of their parents and also they help look after their younger ones when their parents are old or the household head is dead. They also help in other domestic activities. In such societies children are economic assets. The number of children determines the needs of family, the higher the number the more the needs in terms of food, shelter, clothing, etc., and the less the number the less the needs for such necessities. In addition, most of the rural societies of Nigeria live together in a communal life on the same compound, they cook together and cultivate (farm) together but the married offspring have their own rooms separated by fence with their parents' apartment within the same compound. The size of the family determines the labour force to work on the farm, the number of rooms and the greater the need for large farm holding for the family.

**Table 1. Characteristics of the Respondents (n=84)**

Age		Number of wives		Number of children	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
25 - 35	15.48	1	54.43	1 - 5	64.0
36 - 45	26.19	2	40.50	6 - 10	33.33
46 - 55	26.19	3	3.80	11 - 15	1.33
56 - 65	22.62	4	1.27	16 - 20	1.33
66 - 75	5.95				
76 - 85	3.57				

Source: Fieldwork, 2003  
 4.2Emergency relief

Federal, state, local governments and Non-governmental organizations such as Nigeria Red Cross, Igbo Community and individuals particularly wealthy and prominent politicians as well as neighboring Communities gave assistance in form of emergency relief materials to the affected persons. Table 2 shows some of the items provided which include, rice, salt, corn, wrapper, maggi, vegetable oil, Detergent, lanterns, blankets, beans, mats, clothes e.t.c. Each household got his share according to the quantity received. The victims made the distribution themselves in the presence of the village head, ward head and officials of the flood disaster committee set up by the local government which included all the above traditional rulers and councilor of the ward (Tsibiri Ward). It was only Red Cross organization that distributed their materials themselves. The

distribution was in batches depending on the time the materials are received. There were some that could not go round, so they were distributed to some and when other materials come are given to others.

The relief materials provided to Wudil local government flood victims affected 23 villages including the study area both along Jatau and Hadejia (Wudil) rivers. Distribution of the materials was based on the number of people affected in each of the villages. It also depended on the arrival of the materials which was bit by bit. The disturbed conditions of the victims made the record of what was given to each village by individuals and organizations difficult. In the case of the contributions of Kano State Government, the victims who received the relief materials were recorded for all the affected villages including Tila and Hayin Mallam.

**Table 2. Donations**

Items Donated	Kano State Government		Wudil Local Govt.		Individuals	
	Quantity Donated	% of Donation	Quantity Donated	% of Donation	Quantity Donated	% of Donation
Rice+67 bags (50kg/bags)	300bags	64.2	105 bags	22.5	62 bags	13.3
Sorghum 100bags(100kg/bags)	100 bags	100	-	-	-	-
Millet 100 bags(100kg/bags)	100 bags	100	-	-	-	-
Maize 121 bags(100kg/bags)	-	-	71 bags	58.7	50 bags	41.3
Beans 5 bags(100kg/bags)	-	-	5 bags	100	-	-
Salt 13,450 bags (25kg/bag)	12,500kg	92.9	450kg	3.4	500kg	-
Mat 1048	700	66.8	323	30.8	25	2.4
Blanket 700	700	100	-	-	-	-
Wrapper 1,3,50(6yard/wrapper)	1,200yards	88.9	-	-	150 yards	1.1
Clothes (10) yards/bundle)	1,800	100	-	-	-	-
Lantern 600	600	100	-	-	-	-
Vegetable Oil 1759 Litres (3 litres/Gallon)	1500 litres	85.3	234 litres	13.3	25 litres	1.4
Maggi 10 packets	-	-	10Packets	100	-	-
Pepper 10kg (1kg/mud)	-	-	10kg	100	-	-

Source: Wudil Flood Disaster Committee, 2001.

#### **KafinChiri dam rehabilitation and improvement of water works**

Kafin-Chiri dam was the source of Tila floodwater. It was constructed in 1977 for various uses like other 17 dams in the State. These include water supply, irrigation and fishing. The catchments area of the dam is 225 km<sup>2</sup> and the nature of the dam is zoned earth fill with active storage capacity of 24.60m<sup>3</sup> mil, and has surface area of 842 Ha. The spill way was concrete-ogee type with outlet work of submerged intake with 20 nos. and 600mm diameter outlets. The maximum height of the dam is 16 meter with side sloped of 1 to 3 meter upstream and 1 to 2.5 meters downstream. The length of the dam is about 5.4. Kilometers long.

The reservoir capacity of the dam is 31.12 million m<sup>3</sup> the spillway was formally 20m (wide simple broad crest). The dam even before 2001 disaster was in a very poor condition of lack of routine maintenance. The Spillway of the dam needs reconstruction and also channels require stabilization and protection (WRECA, 1993).

In 1999, Kano State Government discovered that the Kafin-Chiri dam was on the verge of imminent collapse, thereby threatening the life and properties of communities living around the dam area. The Government instructed WRECA to mobilize to the dam site where emergency repairs were carried out to forestall further trial of damages.

The State Government later decided to embark upon the total repairs (rehabilitation of the dam and upgrading of water treatment plant) in order to enhance irrigation and water supply for the teeming populace of the designation local government areas. The estimated cost of the project was N420 million and was jointly funded by the State and Federal Government (WRECA, 2002).

However, the 2001 flood disaster led to the collapse of the spillway caused by heavy rain storm and the filling of the dam reservoir by water before the storm. The disaster affected many villages around the dam particularly the down streamers including the study area. Kano State Government embarked upon the reconstruction of the spillway after the collapse and the spillway was enlarged from 20 meters wide to 50 meters concrete ogee type. It was hoped that the expansion would allow water from reservoir to spill very well so as to prevent the dam from future failure this finding is in line with that of Okpalla (1979) and Folorunsho and Awosika (2000). But official information confirmed that the fund was not available to continue the work and completed as schedule (Abdu, 2005). This was due to the release of the fund, which was bit by bit, and it took long time before another release is made, up to the time of this data collection in 2003 the work was not completed.

#### **Relocation of the victims of the victims**

Kano State and Wudil Local Government camped the victims immediately after the disaster at the government buildings such school (Wudil Government Secondary School), markets stalls and shops (at Garindau). Some victims stayed there with their relatives in Wudil town and nearby village (at Gachi Village). The relief materials were taken there for the victims. Later, resettlement houses were constructed jointly by Kano State and Wudil Local Government at the upland site away from flood prone area. Some

victims were given the houses while others reconstructed their own at the old location. Official information showed that resettlement site was acquired by Wudil local government from individuals (farmers) and cash compensation was given to them and the payment was exorbitant. Kano state government did the block laying of the two-bed room houses and the roofing was done by Wudil local government. The construction was done by cement block and official information from the architects of the houses said that the house design was traditional Hausa architecture and that the victims were not consulted on the type of house but rather on the relocation exercise (Abdu, 2009). Furthermore, no consideration was given on the family size of the households during the construction.

#### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Governmental and non-governmental organisations responded to the 2001 flood disaster that affected many villages in Wudil local governments by providing emergency relief materials and construction of relocation houses and structural responses at Kafin-Chiri dam to rehabilitate the victims and forestall future occurrence of the disaster. The provision of the emergency materials to the flood victims was not adequate because the size of the victims' families was not considered. However, the effort has gone a long way in their rehabilitation.

It is recommended that early forecast and warning system on the rising level of river need to be done and installed respectively to alert people along the river for flood control reasons. In addition, communities along rivers should be informed on the ways to respond to flood emergencies which would help in reducing the loss of live and properties. Finally, the neighbouring communities of the affected areas should assist the victims in removing some of their properties and government should have to provide adequate health care services such as mobile clinic and free drugs to the victims at various camps.

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