

IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF SELECT UNDP ADVOCACY PROGRAMMES ON THE LIVING STANDARD OF RURAL DWELLERS IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA

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Abstract

This study evaluates the effectiveness of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) advocacy initiatives in improving rural living conditions in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory (FCT), focusing on three programmes: cash transfers during the COVID 19 Pandemic; a five-year strategic plan to transform Abuja; and a plastic waste management project. Employing a case study approach, the research targets rural communities in the FCT including Gadabiri in Abaji Area Council, Tudun Wada in Kwali Area Council and Sauka in Kuje Area Council, collecting data through surveys, interviews and analysis of UNDP reports between 2015 and 2025. Situation analysis identifies internal and external factors affecting outcomes while findings indicate that UNDP advocacy secures policy attention, but its impact is limited by corruption, economic recession and cultural misalignment. Recommendations suggest localized, transparent strategies to strengthen UNDP's advocacy in Nigeria's complex socio-political context.

Key Words: Advocacy, Communication, Development, UNDP, Rural Dwellers

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Introduction

The concept of Advocacy in Development Communication is primarily a planned, concerted effort to change the behaviour of public leaders or policy makers. Advocacy is about influencing and persuading individuals or institutions to change. Advocacy communication is any planned communication that seeks to achieve the following goals: to inform, to persuade and move to action (Servaes and Malikha, 2012). For example, we can advocate for change of policies or laws that affect society, but this may not go smoothly if we cannot communicate the ideas and proposals effectively. According to Haft (2020), as society becomes better informed and people's voices can be heard, advocacy becomes more relevant. Through advocacy communication, we translate our goals into a concise and compelling case for action to policy makers. Instead of just informing them that there is an issue on ground, advocacy communication will make them pay more attention through prepared activities and

materials. What we want is for them to learn and understand our key message communicated through multiple channels and then make the desired response.

According to Buckley (2024), 'pro-poor advocacy' means advocacy for political decisions and actions that respond to the interests of people who directly face poverty and disadvantage. In the social and economic development context the aims of advocacy are to create or change policies, laws, regulations, distribution of resources or other decisions that affect people's lives and to ensure that such decisions lead to implementation. Such advocacy is generally directed at policy makers including politicians, government officials and public servants, but also private sector leaders whose decisions impact upon people's lives, as well as those whose opinions and actions influence policy makers, such as journalists and the media, development agencies and large NGOs.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) undertakes advocacy as well as direct

development projects all over the world including in Nigeria. It channels funds into its efforts and leverages its unique position as an arm of the UN to develop strategies and plan action that make political leaders sit up and pay attention. Through their advocacy, they influence policy at the highest level. They supply counterpart funding for projects they undertake as a result of behavior change of policy makers. For instance, in the area of food security and climate change awareness, the UNDP embarks on projects within rural areas in Nigeria that aim at demonstrating sustainable agricultural practices and raising of tree seedlings to replace cut down ones, use of solar power for energy, importance of the natural environment through documenting its plant biodiversity to promote awareness, combat climate change while using these skills as means of income (Udofia, 2024). Through advocacy, the UNDP has been able to make a serious case for security by researching into the factors responsible for incessant friction and breakdown of law and order in different parts of Nigeria. This is usually the first step of an advocacy campaign where situation analysis, which means a systematic identification and evaluation of internal and external factors that may influence performance and plans is carried out.

Statement of the Problem

Impact assessment of Select UNDP advocacy programmes seeks to beam a searchlight on the activities of the UNDP in the area of advocacy geared towards rural development and the improvement of living standards of rural Nigerian dwellers, with FCT rural communities as case study, in order to discover how much impact these activities have made towards their stated goals, using the outcomes to judge the effectiveness or otherwise of their efforts. Most importantly, the study seeks to discover whether there are shortcomings and the factors that might be responsible, while proffering solutions for them. The rationale for the study stems from a lecture series on the course: Development Communication Case Studies during which the lecturer, Rabiun gave examples of Mobilisation for Development programmes of UNDP in Nigeria. Several of these programmes were either inconclusive or unable to attain their goals. Other studies on the developmental mandate of UNDP abound. Cluver, L. in 2019 studied the rate of improvement of lives by accelerating progress towards UNDP's Sustainable Development Goals. The study was not domiciled in any particular region of the world, ignoring structural and cultural peculiarities that differentiate societies. Komarova, V., Vasserman, Y. and

Natalya, S. (2018) Assessed the UNDP Declared Human Development for All. The study aims to examine the viability of UNDP's declared 'Human Development for Everyone' Project and the possibility of attaining its goals in reality. Its objectives were to ascertain what happens beyond the average indicators of human development in real life; and to discover the possibility of achieving the equally high level of human development for everyone. Udofia, A. (2021) studied UNDP's Sustainable Livelihood Programmes and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria: The Development Paradox of Prebendalism. The study aimed to examine the effect of Sustainable Livelihood (SL) programmes of the United Nations Development Programme on poverty reduction in Nigeria. Its objectives were to examine the activities of the UNDP as it pertains to sustainable livelihood and poverty reduction in Nigeria, using the prebendal theory thesis by Richard Joseph (1987); to unravel the reason behind Nigeria's poverty rate despite these numerous commitments and efforts.

Most of these studies focused on UNDP's national or global advocacy, thereby creating a gap in findings which are too generalized. None of them specifically addressed the case of rural dwellers in the Nigeria, neither did they cite FCT rural communities as case studies. This is the gap which the current study seeks to bridge.

Research Questions

The study was guided by four research questions as follows:

1. What are the aims of UNDP advocacy in Nigeria?
2. What are the channels by which the UNDP communicates its advocacy programmes?
3. How effective are UNDP's advocacy efforts in improving of the living conditions of rural dwellers in the Federal Capital Territory?
4. What are the hinderances to the realization of the set goals of UNDP's advocacy in Nigeria?

Literature Review

Impact Assessment

Impact assessment is a prediction of outcomes before they happen, so as to deter or deflect adverse consequences. According to Hayes, A. (2017), impact assessment (IA) can be described as 'the knowledge of consequences'.

It is not a 'social science, although those disciplines inform much of its work, as do many others in the division of the natural sciences. IA would seem to fit most comfortably in a hybrid category that political

scientist Harold Lasswell called 'policy science' or that physicist Alvin Weinberg called 'trans-science'. It aspires to become a 'science of the total environment', where that encompasses the universe of impact situations. What is distinctive of IA is its claim to the fore-knowledge of consequences – in effect, of knowing before you know. Such prescience is a logical impossibility, however, so validating that claim is highly problematic. Even so, it is possible to ask what is the best kind of knowledge available about the future – what are its contents, how it could be acquired, and to what end.

Impact Assessment is carried out by practitioners and interested or affected parties in agencies, companies, and communities at scales ranging from local to global. In principle, IA applies in all the sectors, sections, and segments of society: economic, social, and environmental concerns; in public, private, and civil society (non-government, non-private) sectors and their characteristic institutions: agencies, companies, and communities.

Advocacy Programmes

The word *advocacy* comes from the Latin *advocāre*, meaning “to call for.” Advocacy is a process of influencing policymakers, stakeholders and targeted audiences, to address a specific issue and attain a particular outcome. Advocacy is not scientific. However, it requires strong evidence, data and facts supported by research. High quality information makes advocacy credible, trusted, and impactful.

- Raising awareness and educating the audience,
- Engaging and mobilizing stakeholders showing the direction,
- Empowering legislators and decision-makers,
- Ultimately, changing behaviours and policies

According to Derby (2019), an advocacy programme is a set of strategic actions and activities carried out over a period of time to create support for social policy or ensure some kind of social change.

Advocacy programmes are about influencing and persuading individuals or institutions to change, and advocacy communication is any planned communication that seeks to achieve the communication goals: to inform, to persuade and move to action. For example, advocating for change of policies or laws that affect society may not go smoothly if the ideas and proposals are not effectively communicated. As society becomes better informed and people's voices can be heard, advocacy becomes

more relevant. (Derby, 2019).

Through advocacy communication, advocacy goals are translated into a concise and compelling programmes for action of policy makers. Instead of just informing them that there is an issue, advocacy communication will make them pay more attention through the prepared activities and materials. The goal is for them to learn and understand the key message communicated through multiple channels and then make the desired response. Advocacy communication focuses on influencing specific audiences by means of specific messages to deliver a change in policy.

As has been stated, the essential elements of an effective advocacy programme comprise a clear vision, smart objectives aimed at solving the problem, extensive knowledge of whom your target audiences are and a compelling message tailored for the different stakeholders. The plan must be well thought out and include systematic monitoring and evaluation to make sure it matches the objectives. The first step in advocacy programme planning should be situation analysis, which means a systematic identification and evaluation of internal and external factors that may influence performance and impact.

Living Standard

Standard of living refers to the quantity and quality of material goods and services available to a given population. Kelly, R, (2024) posits that standard of living is the material well being of the average person in a given population. It is typically measured using gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. [Standard of living and quality of life](#) utilize some of the same data, but standard of living represents a more physical aspect of life while quality of life represents the more intangible aspects.

Standard of living focuses on basic material factors such as income, [gross domestic product \(GDP\)](#), life expectancy, and economic opportunity. It is closely related to [quality of life](#), which can also explore factors such as economic and political stability, political and religious freedom, environmental quality, climate, and safety. Standard of living is often used to compare geographic areas, such as the standard of living in the United States versus Canada, or the standard of living in St. Louis versus New York. Standard of living can also be used to compare distinct points in time.

In a narrow sense, economists frequently measure standard of living using GDP. [Per capita GDP](#) provides a quick, rough estimate of the total amount of goods and services available per person. While numerous, more complex, and nuanced metrics of

standard of living have been devised, many of them correlate highly with per capita GDP. Standard of living is generally measured using per capita GDP.

Standards of living are usually higher in [developed countries](#). In fact, basic measures of standard of living, such as per capita GDP, are often used to define the differences between more and less developed countries. [Emerging market economies](#) usually see rising standards of living over time as they grow and develop into modern, industrialized economies.

Investopia Team came up last year with pertinent statistics to measure standard of living using the [United Nations' Human Development Index \(HDI\)](#), which scores in 189 countries based on factors including life expectancy at birth, education, and [income per capita](#). As of 2019, the countries with the five highest HDI scores are Norway (0.957), Ireland and Switzerland (0.955), Hong Kong and Iceland (0.949), and Germany (0.947). Conversely, the countries with the five lowest 2019 HDI scores are Niger (0.394), Central African Republic (0.397), Chad (0.398), Burundi and South Sudan (0.433), and Mali (0.434). The United States came in at #17 while China was #85.4.

To exemplify the difference between the scores of 0.957 and 0.394, Norway has a life expectancy at birth of 82.4 years, 18.1 expected years of schooling per citizen, [gross national income \(GNI\)](#) per capita of \$66,494 (purchasing power parity-adjusted currency units), and an internet usage rate of 96.5% of its population.⁵ Niger, meanwhile, has a life expectancy at birth of 62.4 years, 6.5 expected years of schooling, a GNI per capita of \$1,201, and an internet usage rate of 5.3%.⁶

The U.S. scored seventeenth on the list, with a combined score of 0.926, a life expectancy at birth of 78.9 years, 16.3 expected years of schooling, and GNI per capita of \$63,826.7. (Investopia, 2024). The terms [standard of living](#) and quality of life are often believed to mean the same. While they may overlap, there is a difference between the two. Standard of living generally refers to wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities of certain classes in certain areas—or, more objectively, measures of income and consumption. Quality of life is more subjective and intangible. This [happiness economic metric](#) includes such things that impact human well-being. Items such as personal liberty or environmental quality are considered. Characteristics that make up a good quality of life for one person may not necessarily be the same for someone else.

Rural Dwellers

According to Ford (2022), a rural area can be

defined by population density, or how many people live in a given area, or it can be defined by geographical isolation, or how the geography of a location separates people. The United States Census Bureau defines rural communities as simply any population, housing, or territory that is not urban.

Mondal (2016) enumerates ten characteristics of rural communities viz:

- a. Size of the Community: Village communities are smaller in area than the urban communities. As the village communities are small, the population is also low.
- b. Density of Population: As the density of population is low, the people have intimate relationships and face-to-face contacts with each other. In a village, everyone knows everyone.
- c. Agriculture is the Main Occupation: Agriculture is the fundamental occupation of the rural people and forms the basis of rural economy. A farmer has to perform various agricultural activities for which he needs the cooperation of other members. Usually, these members are from his family. Thus, the members of the entire family share agricultural activities. That is the reason why Lowry Nelson has mentioned that farming is a family enterprise.
- d. Close Contact with Nature: The rural people are in close contact with nature as most of their daily activities revolve around the natural environment. This is the reason why a rural dweller is more influenced by nature than an urban dweller. The villagers consider land as their real mother as they depend on it for their food, clothing and shelter.
- e. Homogeneity of Population: The village communities are homogenous in nature. Most of their inhabitants are connected with agriculture and its allied occupations, though there are people belonging to different castes, religions and classes.
- f. Social Stratification: In rural society, social stratification is a traditional characteristic. The rural society is traditionally divided into various strata.
- g. Social Interaction: The frequency of social interaction in rural areas is comparatively lower than in urban areas. However, the interaction level possesses more stability and continuity. The relationships and interactions in the primary groups are intimate. The family fulfills the needs of the members and exercises

control over them. It is the family, which introduces the members to the customs, traditions and culture of the society. Due to limited contacts, they do not develop individuality and their viewpoint towards the outside world is very narrow, which makes them oppose any kind of violent change.

- h. **Social Mobility:** In rural areas, mobility is rigid. Shifting from one occupation to another is difficult. Tradition determines the social status of the rural people.
- i. **Social Solidarity:** The degree of social solidarity is greater in villages as compared to urban areas. Common experience, purposes, customs and traditions form the basis of unity in the villages.
- j. **Joint Family:** Another characteristic feature of the rural society is the joint family system. The family controls the behaviour of the individuals. Generally, the father is the head of the family and is also responsible for maintaining the discipline among members. He manages the affairs of the family.

Cohn and Curtin, (2015) state that the term rural is not easy to define. They argue that perhaps the most obvious characteristic of rural communities is low population density relative to more urban areas. According to them, rural communities are often perceived as serene, rustic and isolated, suggesting protection from the problems of the modern world. The reality is different from these stereotypical impressions. Rural areas tend to share higher rates of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, and uninsured and underinsured compared to urban areas. They also place emphasis on family blood lines, kinship relationships, family preservation and a cultural emphasis on taking care of kinfolk (Bosewell, 1980; Murry & Brody, 2005). Although researchers have generally argued that these institutional and structural elements may serve as barriers, these elements may also serve to help and enhance resilience for some rural dwellers. The notion of resilience stands in contrast to the typical problem-focused approach when exploring rural areas. Rather than examining what is not working in rural areas, the resilience approach and positive psychology theory encourage providers, practitioners and scholars to examine what is present in, and the strengths of rural communities that may help mitigate the challenges. Margalit (2004) suggests that resilience is built upon the dynamic interplay between the individual, family, social and culture, and captures a

process of positive adaptation. This approach suggests that in rural communities resilience is enhanced through living in a supportive community and that having an accepting social network or networks evokes a sense of safety. The social connections of many residents in rural communities are by-products of a sense of place and connection to the land, or “homeplace” (Burton, Winn, Stevenson, & Clark, 2004; hooks, 1990), a place where “all that truly mattered in life took place.”

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The United Nations Development Programme is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. The organization is in 170 countries and territories, supporting their own solutions to development challenges and developing national and local capacities that will help them achieve human development and the Sustainable Development Goals which is its core mandate. The UNDP's work is concentrated in three main focus areas:

- a. sustainable development;
- b. democratic governance and peace building;
- c. climate and disaster resilience.

The UNDP came into being from the merging of the United Nations Expanded Programme on Technical Assistance, created in 1949 and the United Nations Special Fund established in 1958. The UNDP was established in 1965 by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

UNDP is central to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG), a network that spans 165 countries and unites the 40 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other bodies working to advance the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. Chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General and with UNDP's Administrator as Vice Chair, the UNSDG provides strategic direction and oversight to ensure its entities deliver coherent, effective and efficient support to countries in their pursuit of sustainable development. UNDP has a critical advisory role in driving the sustainable development agenda based on Member States' priorities and country context and plays an important role in fostering coordination within the UN system at country level including by providing key system-wide services and country support platforms to support the implementation of the SDGs. UNDP participates in 66 “Delivering as One” initiatives which together with the Standard Operating Procedures enable UN Country Teams to operate more

coherently, effectively and efficiently, minimizing transaction costs, reducing duplication and scaling up common approaches and joint initiatives. UNDP also reinforces joint action on development in such forums as the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations. (Culled from UNDP home page

Selected UNDP Programmes for Study Assessment

The launch of cash transfers by the UNDP to poor, vulnerable Abuja residents. This project which kicked off during the peak of lockdowns occasioned by COVID 19 outbreak was reported by Premium Times on December 8, 2020. In the report, 15,253 households in rural areas across the FCT will benefit from the UNDP cash transfers, while 2,972 MSMEs and start-ups will receive funding for business continuity. The project sought to alleviate the socio-economic impact of Covid-19 on beneficiaries and strengthen the resilience of communities in council areas across the FCT. The sum of N264,499,200 million equivalent to US \$694,679.43 was earmarked for its execution. The crisis and the resultant shutdowns and restrictions on movement exerted a heavy toll on the health and livelihoods of communities, impacting the functioning of businesses and government.

UNDP and its stakeholders developed a five-year strategic plan to transform Abuja.

In an effort to transform Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) into a smart city, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has undertaken an initiative aimed at developing a five-year (2018-2022) strategic physical plan for the showpiece city. The plan is aimed at transforming the FCT into a modern city and making it compatible with current realities like climate change. Speaking in an exclusive interview with Danmarya of *EnviroNews* during a three-day Consultative Meeting on the Development of the Five-year Strategic Master Plan for the FCT, the Deputy Director in charge of International Cooperation of the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA), Mohammed Lawal Abubakar, disclosed that the strategic plan would guide the development of the FCT. He explained that subsequent budgets of the FCT would be tailored towards making the FCT one of the best capital cities in the world. He noted that even though there are sectoral plans for the FCT which are being implemented over the years, the strategic plan is a holistic one that will enable the capital city to develop fast and make it compatible with modern realities of the time. Abubakar noted that the plan was just the beginning. There was going to be a validation process, wherein the minister, the permanent secretary, the directors and the secretaries of the FCT Ministry would

sit and look at what the UNDP has done and agree with it (Danmarya, 2017).

UNDP Programme Targets Proper Plastic Waste Management in Abuja.

The Guardian on April 19, 2023 reported that The United Nations Development Programme in its commitment to aiding countries in the management of plastic waste and curtailing the reckless disposal of plastic waste, organized a program tagged “Deploying the power of IT-Engaged Youths in Effective Plastic Use and Waste Management. The project was funded by UNDP through Global Environment Facility, GEF. Some of the prominent objectives of the project according to the organisers is to deepen awareness of proper plastic waste management, reduce plastic waste in Abuja by 50 per cent, and build an army of youths starting with the over 400, who will be the proponents of the ideas generated through the project as influencers of proper plastic use and plastic waste management. It is expected that the youths who will be divided into 40 teams of 5 members will come up with the best idea (Ajuluchukwu, 2023).

Review of Empirical Studies

Numerous empirical studies have examined the advocacy programmes of the UNDP intended for achieving its Sustainable Development Goals. Oyen, E. and Javan, J. (1997) carried out a Programme Development Specialist Research on Implementing the UNDP Global Programme on Poverty Eradication and Sustainable Livelihood. The study explained the strategic role of the UNDP in poverty eradication, the challenges that hinder its achievement of this laudable mandate and proffers solutions to these challenges and recommended a revamping of the UNDP Nigeria's management structure to reduce the number of executive officers who sit in the office and direct operations and include more expert field officers who would boost effectiveness of their programmes and projects.

Ajor, O., Akintola, A. and Okpa, J. (2023) researched into UNDP and Poverty Alleviation in Cross River State North Senatorial Zone. This study sought to investigate the contributions of UNDP towards the reduction of poverty in Cross River North senatorial district, Nigeria.

It found that poverty in Cross River North senatorial district is significantly high as access to housing, good food, portable drinking water and adequate sanitation posed a serious problem to the people. Healthcare facilities are inadequate to cater for the health needs of the people, thus leading to sudden and avoidable

death. It recommended that investments in infrastructure that directly enhance productive capacities (such as water supply, energy supply, and motor-able roads) can have a high economic return through increased agricultural output. Roads and other infrastructures should be extended to geographically remote areas.

Special attention should be given to the needs of the marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable segments of the population including women towards their empowerment and self-sufficiency. Also that there is a need for the formation of social development departments to disburse social grants like old age, pensions, grants for child support, disability unemployment grant.

Stanton, E. (2007) studied the Engendering of Human Development: A Critique of the UNDP's Gender-Related Development Index; a study that reviewed the UNDP's Gender-related Development Index (GDI), which is a measure of human development penalized for the extent of gender inequality in each country. It found that GDI is a measure of human development that includes health, education, and income, plus the degree to which the well-being of a society as a whole suffers as a result of any gender disparity. It went on to recommend that in order for GDI to be useful not just to economists but to policy-makers, development professionals, and a broader public, GDI must not only be distinguishable from HDI. It also must be clear and relatively simple.

Graydon, H. (2006) examined the concept of Governing Through Community: The UNDP's Capacity 2015 Initiative. This study examined how the United Nations Development Programme's Capacity 2015 platform creates relations of global governance as a development initiative. The study found that Capacity 2015 implements advanced liberal discourses of community through the imaginaries, roles, responsibilities and micro-macro connections it produces. While Capacity 2015 intends to alleviate poverty, it utilizes primarily market-oriented approaches toward integrating communities into the global economy. Consequently, this initiative neglects power relations contributing to poverty and social inequality. It therefore recommended that within 'Capacity 2015', poor communities and localities are socially constructed as independent and cut off from economic and social relations. Capacity 2015's inability to acknowledge or engage alternative narratives and interpretations of globalization lead it to espouse unlikely solutions. A more objective report should be more inclusive of alternative narratives and research

outcomes.

Review of Related Theories

Planned Behaviour Theory

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen 1975, Ajzen & Fishbein 1980). Both models are based on the premise that individuals make logical, reasoned decisions to engage in specific behaviours by evaluating the information available to them. The performance of a behaviour is determined by the individual's intention to engage in it (influenced by the value the individual places on the behaviour, the ease with which it can be performed and the views of significant others) and the perception that the behaviour is within his/her control. In RA a TPB model based on attitudes, social support, self efficacy and intention was moderately successful in predicting and explaining self management of arthritis (Strating et al 2006). Whilst no validated questionnaires are available, a comprehensive guide to developing measures of TPB components is given in Ajzen (1991). A challenge in TPB measurement is the difficulty in conceptualising and capturing attitudes. The TPB is also a widely applied behavioral model. It helps us understand how the behaviour of people can change. The model assumes that behaviour is planned; hence, it predicts deliberate behaviour.

This theory is very significant to the study. It provides a guide for the UNDP to tailor the behaviour of members of rural communities where they embark on developmental projects. By positing that the behavior of a person can be teleguided to suit a given situation or to accept a positive change innovation, the UNDP can employ this theory to greater effectiveness in attitude change of its target communities when planning its projects.

Social Norms Theory

It was first used by Perkins and Berkowitz in 1986 to address student alcohol use patterns. The approach has also been used to address a wide range of topics including tobacco use, driving under the influence prevention, seat belt use, and more recently sexual assault prevention. This theory aims to understand the environment and interpersonal influences (such as peers) in order to change behaviour, which can be more effective than a focus on the individual to change behaviour. Peer influence, and the role it plays in individual decision-making around behaviours, is the primary focus of Social Norms Theory. Peer influences and normative beliefs are especially important when addressing behaviours in

youth. Peer influences are affected more by perceived norms (what we view as typical or standard in a group) rather than on the actual norm (the real beliefs and actions of the group). The gap between perceived and actual is a misperception, and this forms the foundation for the social norms approach.

The Social Norms Theory posits that our behaviour is influenced by misperceptions of how our peers think and act. Overestimations of problem behaviour in our peers will cause us to increase our own problem behaviours; underestimations of problem behaviour in our peers will discourage us from engaging in the problematic behaviour. Accordingly, the theory states that correcting misperceptions of perceived norms will most likely result in a decrease in the problem behaviour or an increase in the desired behaviour.

Social norms interventions aim to present correct information about peer group norms in an effort to correct misperceptions of norms. In particular, many social norms interventions are social norms media campaigns where misperceptions are addressed through community-wide electronic and print media that promote accurate and healthy norms about the health behaviour.

The UNDP could benefit immensely from the application of this theory at group level whenever its planned programmes encounter an obstacle in the form of norms and negative behaviour that counteract its positive change efforts. Besides media campaigns, change initiatives could be directed at opinion leaders or role models who command a lot of influence with members of the target population.

Nudge Theory

Harvard professor Cass Sunstein and University of Chicago professor Richard Thaler introduced the concept of nudging to the world, in 2008. Nudges are interventions, big and small, aimed at getting people to act in their own best interest. Health organizations, for example, have used nudges to educate citizens about COVID-19 testing and vaccination. Consumer-goods companies have used them to steer customers toward climate-friendly products and services. A nudge is an intervention that maintains freedom of choice but steers people in a particular direction. A warning is a nudge: Nudges help people deal with a fact about the human brain—which is that we have limited attention. The number of things that we can devote attention to in a day or an hour or a year is lower than the number of things we should devote attention to. A nudge can get people to pay attention.

Nudging theory can be applied in media

campaigns by the UNDP to convince rural dwellers of the importance of its projects to the improvement of their living standards. In their advocacy efforts, they could 'nudge' policy makers in the right direction by presenting them with the pros and cons of the decision they are about to make. Since advocacy gives no room for coercion just as Nudging theory eschews ultimatums, both concepts would work wonderfully together for the enhancement of the UNDP's efforts.

The UNDP could benefit immensely from the application of this theory at group level whenever its planned programmes encounter an obstacle in the form of norms and negative behaviour that counteract its positive change efforts. Besides media campaigns, change initiatives could be directed at opinion leaders or role models who command a lot of influence with members of the target population.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Halton (2021) defines the diffusion of innovation theory as a hypothesis outlining how new technological and other advancements spread throughout societies and cultures, from introduction to widespread adoption. The diffusion of innovation theory seeks to explain how and why new ideas and practices are adopted, with timelines potentially spread out over long periods. The way in which innovations are communicated to different parts of society and the subjective opinions associated with the innovations are important factors in how quickly diffusion or spreading occurs.

The theory was developed by Everett M. Rogers, a communication theorist at the University of New Mexico, in 1962. Integrating previous sociological theories of behavioural change, it explains the passage of an idea through stages of adoption by different actors. In synthesizing many studies from different disciplines about how people respond to new ideas, Everett Rogers was answering a call set forth by the sociologist Robert K. Merton, but in empirical ways and with practical implications. (Deaning & Cox, 2018).

The different classes of people in the diffusion of innovations theory are:

- Innovators: People who are open to risks and the first to try new ideas.
- Early adopters: People who are interested in trying new technologies and establishing their [utility](#) in society.
- Early majority: Those who pave the way for use of an innovation within mainstream society and are part of the general population.
- Late majority: Another part of the general population—the set of people who follow the

early majority into adopting the innovation as part of their daily life.

- Laggards: People who lag the general population in adopting innovative products and new ideas. This is primarily because they are [risk-averse](#) and set in their ways of doing things. Eventually, the sweep of an innovation through mainstream society makes it impossible for them to conduct their daily life and work without it. As a result, they are forced to begin using it.

Factors that affect the rate of innovation diffusion include the mix of rural to urban within a society's population, the society's level of education, and the extent of [industrialization](#) and development. Different societies are likely to have different [adoption rates](#)—the rate at which members of a society accept a new innovation. Advocacy organisations including the UNDP need a good understanding of the Diffusion of Innovations Theory in order to know what to expect and set realistic timelines for projects and programmes to achieve maximum impact.

Research Design

The study adopted a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology. The qualitative design was a survey research where a questionnaire was used as data gathering instrument. For the qualitative design, structured Key Informant Interviews, tailored along the research questions were administered. The mixed methodology adopted for this study found relevance by seeking the opinions and perceptions of respondents about the impact of select UNDP programmes on the living conditions of rural dwellers in the FCT.

Population of Study

Going by Mondal (2016)'s ten characteristics of rural communities including size of the community; density of population; agriculture is the main occupation; close contact with nature; homogeneity of population; social stratification; social interaction; social mobility; social solidarity; and joint family, residents of three rural communities which meet most of these classifications were selected as the study population namely: Gadabiri in Abaji Area Council, Tudun Wada in Kwali Area Council and Sauka in Kuje Area Council. Citypopulations (2022) puts the population of Abaji Area Council at 128,000; the population of Kuje Area Council at 212,100; and the population of Kwali Area Council at 188,000. This brought the total population to 528,100.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted a multi-stage sampling technique. In the first step of sampling, three Local

Government Councils were purposively selected. The next step of sampling selected one rural community from each of these area councils also by purposive sampling viz: Gadabiri in Abaji, Tudun Wada in Kwali and Sauka in Kuje. A questionnaire was randomly distributed to residents of these communities according to the sample numbers derived from the total population using the Taro Yamane formula. Criteria were those 18 years old and above with the ability to read and understand the questions.

Sample Size

A sample which is the sub-set of a population is selected based on the number of elements it contains, which is the sample size (Singh, 2018).

If total population = 528,100.

With the Taro Yamane formula of 1967:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = sample size (not given)

N = population of study (given as 528,100)

e = level of significance (given as 0.05)

Therefore we have;

$$n = \frac{528,100}{1 + 528,100(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{528,100}{1 + 1,320.25}$$

$$n = \frac{528,100}{1,321.25}$$

$$n = 399.6972563859981$$

Sample Size (n) \approx 400

Research Instrument

A questionnaire and Key Informant Interviews served as major tools of data collection. Each was tailored according to research questions. The questionnaire was classified by demographic data such as such as gender, age, profession, educational qualification and area of residence. The main body of questions were centred on the opinion of respondents about UNDP's developmental and advocacy programmes in the FCT, and how their living standard has been improved. The interview covered both research questions and follow-up questions that arose from them.

Method of Data Collection

Hand-to-hand questionnaire administration was employed to sample the opinions of FCT residents in rural communities. The Resident Representative of the UNDP and the Social Media Manager were

interviewed as key informants to generate useful information. These measures effectively covered the scope and case study of the research.

Method of Data Analysis

For the purpose of analyzing data collected for the research study, the researcher made use of the descriptive statistical method. Data was analysed using frequency tables, simple percentages and comprehensive write-ups on the topic. Analysis was channeled towards providing satisfactory inferences to the research questions guiding the study.

Analysis

400 copies of the questionnaires were administered to respondents of which 110 were shared among Gadabiri residents; another 140 were shared among Tudun Wada residents while 150 went to Sauka residents. Of the 400 copies, 350 were returned. Thus, this analysis was based on the exact number of copies of the questionnaires returned.

Table 4.1.4. Showing if they know of an organization named UNDP and its work in Nigeria

Response	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	160	45.7%
No	120	34.3%
Not Sure	70	20%
Total	350	100%

Source: Field Study 2024

Table 4.1.4. shows that less than half, (45.7%) of respondents know about the organization named UNDP and majority of respondents are either unaware or unsure of its existence. This question is strategic to the study since knowledge of the UNDP by respondents is the main variable on which the study is hinged. From this point forward, data will be restricted to the number of respondents who know about the UNDP and its work.

Table 4.1.6 Showing if they have ever seen or heard of a UNDP project or programme in the FCT

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	124	77.5%
No	36	22.5%
Total	160	100%

Source: Field Work, 2024

Table 4.1.6. answers Research Question 1. It shows that 77.5% of those who know about the UNDP have heard of its programmes in the FCT. It signifies that UNDP has made some marginal impact as a development partner in the FCT. Going forward,

analysis will be based on the total number of respondents who answered "YES" in table 4.1.6.

Table 4.1.7 Showing the channels through which respondents got to know about the UNDP programme(s) or project(s) in the FCT

Response	No. of Responde	Percentag
Yes	35	28.2%
No	74	59.7%
Not Sure	15	12.1%
Others	0	0%
Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study 2024

The table answers Research Question 2: What are the channels used by the UNDP to communicate its projects and programmes? It reveals that the mainstream media play a vital role in the dissemination of the UNDP's advocacy programmes to their external audiences since 59.7% of respondents got to know about them through that means. It would be therefore helpful to the UNDP's work if they increased their reach through other communication channels such as community leaders (word of mouth) and the social media.

Table 4.1.8. Showing if respondents judged the UNDP's cash transfer programme to poor, vulnerable FCT residents during the COVID 19 lockdown as impactful to their lives

Responses	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	33	26.7%
No	68	54.8%
Not Sure	23	18.5%
Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study 2024

The table answers Research Question 3: How effective are UNDP's advocacy programmes in improving the living conditions of rural dwellers in FCT? It shows that 26.7% which is less than half of respondents who know about UNDP's work in the FCT believe that the UNDP programme is actually useful to the masses. This outcome means that the impact of UNDP programmes on those they are targeted at is below expectations.

Table 4.1.10: Showing whether or not respondents believe that the UNDP's climate change conformity programme for the FCT masterplan (2018-2022) had been completed

Response	No. of Responder	Percentage
Yes	32	25.8%
No	68	54.8%
Not Sure	24	19.4%
Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2024

Table 4.1.10 further answers Research Question 3, which seeks to ascertain the impact of UNDP programmes on the living conditions of rural dwellers. 54.8% said that UNDP programmes have a low completion rate. The table shows a very low threshold of completion and impact of UNDP projects in the rural areas of the FCT.

Table 4.1.11: Showing if respondents believe that the UNDP's plastic waste management programme for the FCT is currently achieving its purpose

Response	No. of Responder	Percentage
Yes	44	94%
No	65	0%
Not Sure	15	6%
Total	68	100%

Source: Field Study, 2024

Table 4.1.11 further answers Research Question 3, showing that among the respondents who are aware of the UNDP's programmes, 52.4% responded that UNDP's plastic waste management programme is not achieving its purpose.

Table 4.1.13: Showing whether respondents believe in the ability of the UNDP to achieve maximum success with its programmes and projects in the FCT

Response	No. of Responden	Percentage
Yes	64	94%
No	0	0%
Unsure	4	6%
Total	350	100%

Source: Field Study 2024

Table 4.2.13 also answered Research Question 4 which sought the opinion of respondents about the hindrances to the successful conclusion of UNDP advocacy programmes. In this case, the possibility of overcoming them. The table shows that an overwhelming majority of respondents representing 94% agreed that there is room for improvement and also that the UNDP is quite capable of implementing

these improvements. It is noteworthy that this table was also based on the number who responded negatively to Table 4.1.8 by saying that the UNDP was not making the desired impact on the living conditions of rural dwellers.

Key Informant Interviews

Interview Responses by Ms. Elsie Attafuah – UNDP Resident Representative in Nigeria

Q. What purpose does your organization seek to achieve in Nigeria?

The UNDP programmatic response in Nigeria has two objectives: socio-economic recovery in the medium term and structural transformation for inclusive and sustainable development to achieve the SDGs by 2030. This is translated into the three linked priorities of inclusive growth, climate change, and governance, peace, and security. Adhering to the principle of “Leaving No One Behind” gender equality and empowerment will be prioritized along with vulnerable groups, poor, female headed households, and people living with disabilities. UNDP will mainstream volunteerism into programme implementation strategies as a valuable way of achieving the SDGs by 2030. The programme is flexible and responsive to addressing emerging issues and reflect extensive collaborations with multiple stakeholders.

The UNDP CPD for 2023 to 2027 contributes to the United Nations development system (UNDS) overall objective in the UNDSF that promotes inclusive human-rights based and gendersensitive development in Nigeria for the acceleration and achievement of the 2030 Agenda and African Union Agenda 2063. As such, UNDP will contribute to UNDS outcomes in the UNDSF, by focusing on (i) establishing a strong foundation for a diversified and inclusive economy, (ii) building a solid framework and enhancing capacities to consolidate peace, strengthen security and social cohesion and ensure good governance, and (iii) enhancing capacities for climate resilience and sustainable access to energy.

Q: How does UNDP communicate its programmes to local communities?

UNDP has a robust and effective communication strategy by which we engage local communities through recognised traditional institutions; from the clans, villages, towns and local governments and even at the state level. When projects are proposed, we work with governments at the state and local levels whose role would be to introduce us and explain our mission. they work with us to initially engage community leaders and later provide personnel

who help with execution. They are our link to the community. For example, we established the Peace Building Fund (PBF) project in several northern states which has strengthened local infrastructure and the capacity of community leaders to identify early warning signs and offer the right approach in resolving it at the local level. It began as an advocacy initiative with collaboration of state governments but it falls within the domain of traditional institutions.

This approach has not only reduced mini conflict but has fostered and strengthened community trust in the traditional court system. In Katsina and Kaduna State, through the implementation of the Peacebuilding Fund Project, UNDP has worked to strengthen government infrastructures. This initiative aims to ensure peace and stability across communities, bringing them closer to the justice system.

Identifying early signs of conflict and responding with the right mechanisms and approaches is key to mitigating and preventing conflicts that impact communities and societies. This proactive approach preserves livelihoods, prevents the displacement of families, and reduces the risk of violence and social instability. By addressing conflicts early, we can foster resilience, promote peaceful coexistence, and safeguard the overall well-being of affected populations. Through this program, UNDP has brought the community closer to the justice system by reducing minor conflicts and encouraging peaceful dispute resolution through mediation, arbitration, and negotiation. This has, in turn, helped ease the burden on traditional courts.

What has been the overall UNDP strategy for mobilizing the public-at-large and other partners through mainstream and social media?

The United Nations has fully embraced social media tools to tell its story while still relying on traditional means such as radio, television and print to disseminate its messages. UNDP along with other UN systems maintain presence on the major social media networks, including Facebook, Google+, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram and Threads, to convey the UNDP story to varied audiences worldwide. We recently signed an MOU with Channels Television aimed at strategic communication of our programmes.

UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes have organized around the world various media campaigns to gather attention from the public and attract them in the work of the UN. The 2015 Social Good Summit sparked a record-setting global conversation on using social media and technology to

advance human development. Organised by the United Nations Foundation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mashable and other actors, the summit united people around the world to participate in-person and online to answer the question, “What type of world do we want to live in by the year 2030?” At the Sustainable Development Summit, Member States adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Social media was used to widely engage civil society networks, and the public-at-large to bring their voices to the conference.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, communicating effectively the work of the UN development system has become more important than ever. Hundreds of tools are available to help manage various social media platforms. The UNDP has successfully used a wide range of platforms to efficiently track conversations and measure campaign results. Equally important for campaigns is the creation and development of a brand identity with a strong message which can engage the public.

Q. What are the challenges facing the UNDP in Nigeria as well as obstacles in the way of achieving your developmental objectives for the country?

Economic and social challenges may affect the successful implementation of the programme such as prolonged economic slowdown if proposed strategies for economic stabilization are not implemented; limited capacity of government and national stakeholders to implement programmes; protracted crises in the north, south-east, Niger Delta, and the middle belt; difficulties in mobilizing adequate resources. Moreover, lack of political will, inadequate allocation of resources, and adverse societal perceptions on gender equality, especially leadership and decision-making related interventions, could lead to risks relating to gender inequality and the situation of women and girls.

To mitigate risks, UNDP will deploy a robust risk management system to ensure adaptive programming strategies, direct implementation and working with strategic partners including civil society and volunteers so they have timely information that will lead to quick and meaningful programmatic decisions prior to, during, and after the elections.

Interview Responses by Clare Omizegba-Henshaw, Leader, Strategic Communication, UNDP

Q: How effective have the social media been to you as a means of communicating UNDP's programmes?

Social media gave organizations like UNDP a

means to directly connect to the public rather than wait to be noticed. It's an opportunity to be more approachable and rewrite our own narrative, break down mis-information, and show that for every negative story about those in the UN system, there are 100 undiscovered stories of positive action, and that behind these results, are amazingly talented and committed human beings who work very hard to improve conditions for the world's most vulnerable. By not responding, by not engaging, because of a culture of risk-aversion, we run the risk of letting the myth or stereotypes and public perceptions of us become bigger and bigger monsters. The best way to address mis-information and chase the monsters away is turn the light on and reveal ourselves, who we are, what we do and how it makes an impact, what the steps look like at different phases of a project, and why you should care.

Social media also opened up a way for the public to have a dialogue with UNDP and our staff directly through our global social platforms and through staff's individual Twitter handles. Access to information remains a big part of our conversations with the public. On a given day, I respond to questions on how to apply for jobs, how to receive climate adaptation training or become a project participant – most times, people seeking answers to questions want to learn. In the past year, we've had farmers who needed advice on climate adaptation as the leaves on his coconuts were already drying up. We were able to connect a youth fish farmer in Nigeria who faced the challenge of getting a loan and had put all his savings into starting his fish farm before weather patterns changed and his fish started dying. Students and journalists turn to us when on deadline to find data resources or information.

Social media is transforming the culture of communications and transparency in the organization where often, no news comes out of projects until the project reporting cycle comes to term, a very technical status and budget report is sent to donors, and depending on the communications capacity (whether they have a dedicated communications staff in their office or not), we may or may not get a report or story about the project that may or may not sound more or less like a budget report. So social has challenged different parts of the organization to change specific processes so that we're more accountable and transparent at every step of the process. This new demand requires skill sets and training for staff and skill sets. It sheds light on the capacity gaps that are systematic – the need for staff from all areas of work to be able to write effectively void of policy jargon and the need for capacity, especially in offices where a communications function maybe one of six functions a

staff holds. We are part of a tree and the tree has to be healthy for everything to work right—I cannot tweet without getting quality stories that show impact and has a strong human narrative from fellow communications colleagues. They in turn need capacity, training, dedicated time and the full support and cooperation of their office to communicate, as well as a strong linkage with the project and technical staff who have the expertise, data and access to the communities who participate in our projects.

Making this connection – getting that buy-in at all levels on the vital importance of investing in communications skill sets, finding that space in business processes, in cultural mindsets of the value of social media and strategic communications – these are priorities we're working on to innovate within the organization following our UNDP organizational restructuring as a new Communications Strategy. We need to evolve in the way we communicate because the world is moving at a faster pace and we need to adapt and get out of the “the UN bubble.”

How do you reach the poor and vulnerable demographics? Do you segment any of your channels for specific audiences? For instance, regionally or demographically?

UNDP's global communications office has a sub-team—the social media team, which manages UNDP's global social media accounts in English, Spanish and French on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn. What we prioritize on the global channels are the best of our work. We do not segment based on demography but we shine the light on local heroes who bring amazing changes to improve their communities through our work. We show development impact. We tell the story of transformation through the voice of the communities affected and the people who have found their lives changed for the better by our projects. We curate and re-write content pulled daily from over 170 UNDP offices, through websites, through exposure [photo blogs](#), through [YouTube](#) channels, through Twitter and Facebook. In addition, I do quite a bit of monitoring of staff's Twitter handles depending on the global news priority and trends of the day.

Advocacy, education, ensuring accountability and transparency through open.undp.org data and thought leadership are priorities for messaging. For the general public, we've slowly started a series called [#ABCdev](#) which seeks to demystify policy wonk jargon into practical examples that anyone interested in learning about development will be able to appreciate. Data, results reports and updates on developing and ongoing work are key to our approach too. In the case of

under-reported news, we raise light to conditions not covered in big media that profoundly affects the very existence of these communities.

Access to information is the primary reason why our audience follows us. Using [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#) as a space to provide feedback on our programs and have someone from UNDP respond back is also a key reason. The general public, both from the global south and north, follow UNDP's social channels on different platforms to learn about our work, our results, trends in key global conversations, about the issues that matter most to them such as climate action, gender equality, anti-corruption, social justice and youth action. Media and those who work in government such as parliamentarians and those who sit on Foreign Affairs Committees or are responsible for covering specific foreign policy issues follow us to keep tuned into trends in global affairs and sustainable development, especially new or emerging key development decisions, policies, results, data in reports, and our responses to global challenges. An ongoing example is the Climate Summit as well as the next stages of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the research questionnaire so far have reinforced those already revealed in the Review of Related Literature to the effect that there is a low performance threshold of UNDP projects in the rural areas of Nigeria which has undermined its objectives of improving the living conditions of rural dwellers. (See Table 4.2.8). Data gathered from the field show a consistent negative perception of UNDP's performance by rural dwellers who see little or no impact from such programmes while also believing that something can be done to improve this performance deficit.

A sizable number of respondents had neither seen nor heard of any UNDP project or programme in the FCT and this fact resulted in a sharp reduction of the numbers of those who could effectively provide answers to the questionnaires. (See table 4.1.6). In every case relating to the merits of UNDP programmes, the dissenting opinions combined with the neutral voices were always in the majority. This showed that the UNDP has found itself in the unenviable position where its programmes are either unknown or unappreciated.

This is in agreement with the conclusion of Buckley (2024) in the literature review where he asserts that even the most clear-minded advocacy for pro-poor policies can meet resistance for various reasons. He concludes that careful planning and a strategic approach are needed if results are to be achieved. It equally validates the assertion of Weisner et al (2001)

that understanding the peculiar needs and development challenges of the country in the area of poverty reduction, fostering democratic governance, promoting environmental sustainability and being able to provide sound policy advice are the bedrock of success in advocacy. The Planned Behaviour Theory of Fisnbein and Ajzein (1975) validates this position where they prescribe that individuals make logical, reasoned decisions by evaluating the information available to them.

Table 4.1.7. It was very revealing of the role played by the mainstream media in the dissemination of information about the rural development projects of the UNDP. Majority of respondents heard of UNDP programmes in their state through the mass media, leaving word-of-mouth and the social media in second and third places respectively. The finding emphasizes the need for concerted effort to be made to include community leaders and local residents right from the planning stages of UNDP programmes which will enable their greater participation, leading to higher impact and success of the programmes. A lot more also needs to be done in reaching out to the rural areas through the social media which findings have shown to be the least utilized means of communication by UNDP Nigeria.

It aligns with the submission of Twigg, M. (2021) that recent policy from multilateral organisations have encouraged the diffusion and use of Information and Communication Technology (social media) for development purposes. It is in tandem with the views of Everett Rogers in the Diffusion of Innovation Theory in which he describes how technological advancements spread throughout societies and cultures; explaining that some individuals adapt more quickly to new innovations such as social media than others.

Table 4.1.8 marked a turning point in the research when 54.8% responded that the programmes were not making their desired impact. The finding is in agreement with Fayoyin (2013) who posits that despite the extensive recognition of the importance of advocacy in development discourse, its effectiveness of sometimes questioned. This is a result of ignorance which needs to be conclusively eliminated.

It tallies with the assertion of Buckley (2024) in the review of literature where he states that much depends on the character, approach and credibility of those seeking change and the receptiveness of those they are seeking to persuade. He went on to aver that advocacy is inherently politico-cultural and as such, an understanding of political dynamics and cultural norms of the target society is at the heart of effective advocacy.

It also buttresses the provisions of Nudge

Theory which postulates that big or small interventions may be applied with the aim of getting people to act in their own best interest.

In the case of UNDP Nigeria, well applied Nudge interventions would be invaluable in eliminating the ignorance of target communities and ensuring greater success rates for its programmes.

Table 4.1.12 was pivotal where respondents were asked to decide what factors constituted hindrances to the success of UNDP's programmes. This was based on their responses in Table 4.1.8. Corruption was chosen by majority of respondents as the biggest hindrance to the effectiveness of UNDP advocacy projects and programmes. Other hindrances identified by respondents in answer to Research Question 4 include lack of sustenance, lack of awareness and insecurity.

The finding validates the position of Oyen, E. and Javan, J. (1997) that there are challenges of a cultural and structural dispensation of the Nigerian society as well as human factors that militate against the smooth execution of UNDP programmes in Nigeria.

It also validates the conclusion of the UNDP Evaluation Office's 2023/2024 Human Development Index Report which says that despite possessing unprecedented wealth, knowledge and digital connectivity at global, regional and national levels, the UNDP finds itself stuck in achieving equitable human progress, sustainable development and the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement for sundry reasons of cultural, structural and human factors. It affirms the Social Norms Theory which aims to understand the environment and interpersonal influences that affect behaviour change.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher has appraised some select UNDP advocacy programmes and their impact on rural dwellers in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja namely: UNDP's cash transfer programme to vulnerable FCT residents during the COVID 19 lockdown; UNDP's climate change conformity programme for the FCT masterplan; and UNDP's plastic waste management programme for the FCT. The researcher sought to examine the channels of communication by which the UNDP engaged rural community dwellers about these programmes; their levels of effectiveness and what hindering factors could have contributed to their partial or total failure to achieve their set goals.

Based on the findings, the study concludes that the UNDP has been hampered in its efforts by factors ranging from communication gaps to human factors of corruption and mismanagement of projects. It also

concludes that the UNDP could be more effective if it made serious efforts to improve on its planning and communication strategies and by working to reduce the interference of human factors that hinder its success. This may be achieved through better community engagement, media content tailored towards the needs of target communities and more efficient staffing of its Nigerian office.

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