

NORTH EAST ARID ZONE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NEAZDP): DIASPORA PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE SAHEL OF NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in June, 1992 is a landmark in providing international interest groups to express their concern on the issues of the state of world environment and North-South partnership.
- The spirit of principle 6 is noteworthy, stating that “the special needs of developing countries, international actions in the field of environment and development should address the interest and needs of all countries”; encouraging North-South collaboration.
- The Project NEADZP is a worthy example of North-South collaboration in view of its positive impacts on sustainable livelihoods with its friendly environmental posture.

NORTH-EAST ARID ZONE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NEAZDP)

- **Sub-Regional Location**

NEAZDP area of operation lies in the Sudano- Sahelian zone of Nigeria in the historically rich Borno, which now constitutes Borno and Yobe States. The Sahelian Zone is considered one of the most sensitive and delicately balanced ecological systems in the world.

- In this zone, livestock, which is a major factor in land degradation, takes preeminence over crops, owing to the reduced precipitation of about 400mm per rainy season. Coupled with constrained transportation system in view of the sandy terrain, poverty and disease become very serious issues.

Programme Profile

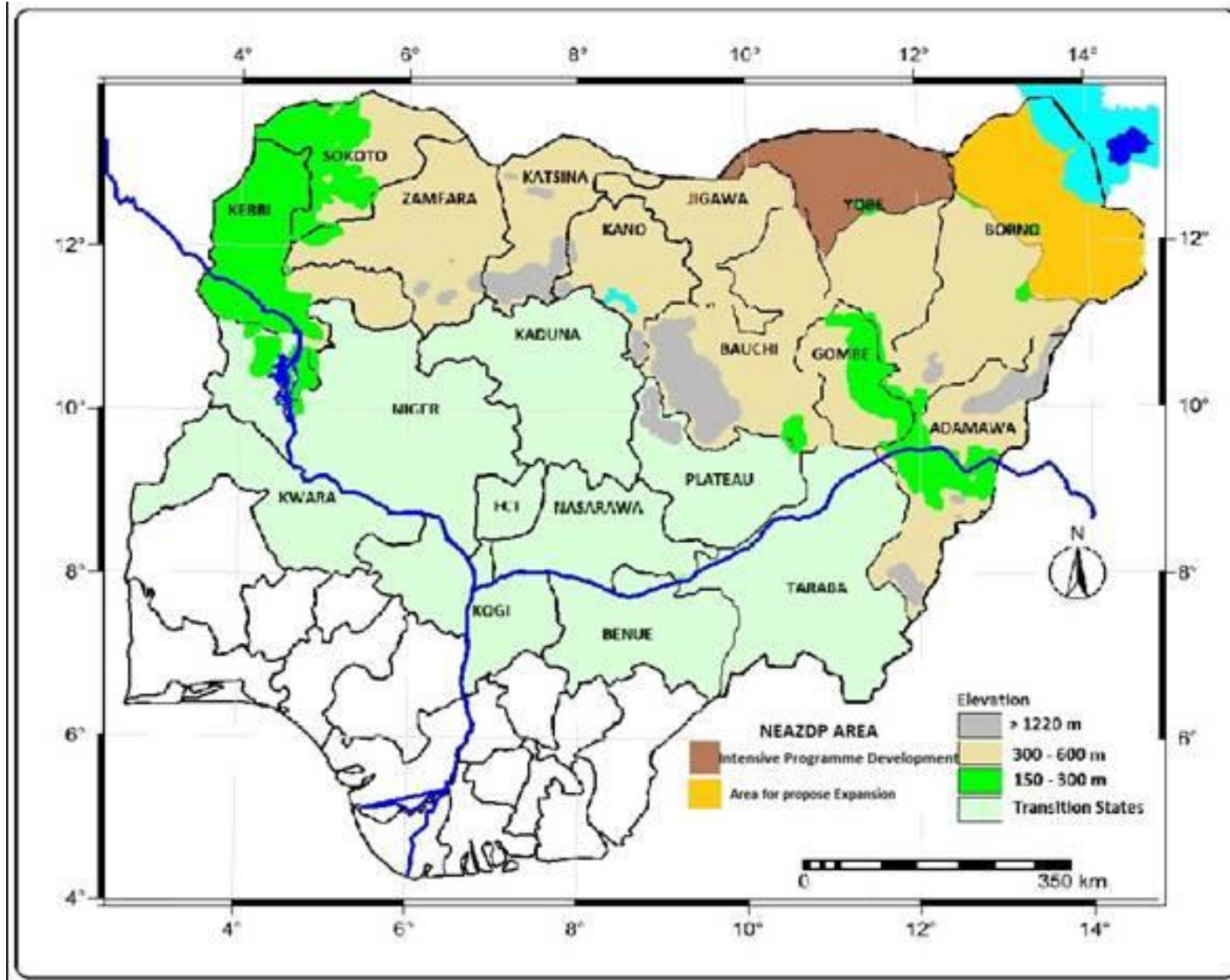
- NEAZDP is a multi-million European Currency Unit (ECU) funded Project under financing agreement of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) with then European Economic Community (EEC).
- Although this was initially a **soft loan of ECU 29 million**, with **Nigeria contributing ECU 5 million** in support of this medium-term project, the loan has now become a grant by the EU, in realization of the **social and environmental significance and success** of the Project.
- **Programme Management and Technical Assistance Services** were provided by the **Danish group** of consultants (**Danagro Advisor A/C and Hannemann A/S**) in partnership with a **Nigerian Diyam consultants**.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: METHODOLOGY

APPROACH

- **Management hierarchy, strongly reflected an advisory, rather than executive role. Central to implementation is the Development Area Promoter (DAP) who is advised by villagers in his pilot Village Development Programmes (VDP) of the 18 cluster villages. Through this, “list of activities, and requirements, reflecting the villagers’ perceived needs and priorities,” are drawn up.**
- **It is also noted that participatory rural appraisal (PRA) method may be more adequate here than rapid rural appraisal (RRA) one in such rural projects. Both methods were however relevant in this Project.**
- **NEAZDP and CAZS staff were to advise and guide the DAP and village representatives to finalize realistic, technically sound, coherent and feasible village development.**

Figure 1: Desertification Frontline States and the Buffer Zone
Source: Gadzama and Ayuba, (2014); Gadzama, (2009)



Management of NEAZDP has four Sub-Programmes:

- ***Sub-Programme 1-*** Includes management, administration and major project activities and *services*.
- ***Sub-Programme 2-*** Responsible for technical supervision of the Village Development Plan (VDP), generation of base line information, for demonstration and adoption of new technologies and practices, and for local training, communication and media production.
- ***Sub-Programme 3-*** Civil, mechanical and electrical engineering and appropriate technology services required for adequate implementation of the VDP.
- ***Sub-Programme 4-*** Formal training of Nigerian staff out-side the NEAZDP area, considered essential to match staff skills with the requirements of the VDP. **Collaboration of CAZS** was often required in implementing this sub-programme. **Possible inputs of Diasporas would be most useful and beneficial here.**

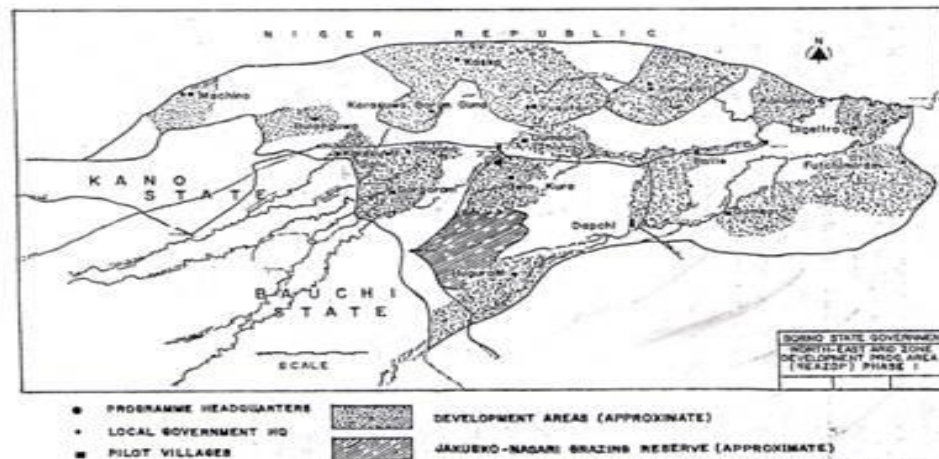
MAP OF BORNO AND YOBE STATES AND LOCATION OF PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES IN THE STATES

Figure 2



Figure 3

NEAZDP VILLAGE CLUSTER 1991 - 1992



SOURCE - NEAZDP

Management of NEAZDP Contd

- **VDP components of the work programme were prepared with support and response of the DAP and the villagers. This strengthens the DAP's advisory role in organizing and testing applied research, demonstrating viable results.**
- **This strategy achieved considerable success, thereby providing confidence for the executive powers to authorize the second phase of the Programme; also providing ample opportunity for the research component to demonstrate its support role.**
- **The first phase of the Programme was largely completed in the third/fourth year.**

CENTRE FOR ARID ZONE STUDIES (CAZS) , UNIVERSITY OF MAIDUGURI: ITS SPECIAL ROLE IN BACK-UP RESEARCH DATA BASE.

Research objectives and Programmes

- **CAZS was established as a multi- disciplinary research Centre about the same time as NEAZDP in 1987. It was to provide and develop the necessary base- line information bank, in support of NEAZDP developmental activities.**
- **CAZS has now become a regional research unit with research undertakings initially financed by the EEC.**
- **The EEC grant of ECU 4 million was for a period of 5 years, for the training of study fellows and 20 staff research projects.**
- **The research Programmes were organized as 5 Projects, collaborating with Silsoe College of Cranfield University, UK as the European Linkage Partners.**

1. Hydrology and Hydrogeology- Water Resources

Research Plans were aimed at generating reliable information to quantify and describe surface and ground water source within the NEAZDP area.

2. Arid Agriculture and Rural Development-

(i) **Growing of Millet-Cowpea intercrops as influenced by cowpea. Millet is the staple food crop of the Sahel; cowpea is a rich source of protein with good commercial value**

(ii) **Water stress trials as mark of drought resistance of cultivars and their appropriate use.**

3. Climatic Variability and Rangeland Productivity in Yobe State-

The study was to **develop a method capable of predicting forage production, and determining stocking levels.**

4. State of Livestock Health in Northern Yobe State-

The pilot survey was to **provide overview of the livestock disease problem of the site visited so that attention could later be given in follow-up research on serious disease problems.**

5. Other Areas of CAZS Collaboration with NEAZDP and Partners

- i. Geographic Information System (GIS) satellite imagery*** for evaluating the potential of *Fadama* and long-term monitoring of land use and land cover in the NEAZDP area..
 - ii. Pest Survey: systematic surveillance*** of eruptive grasshopper and other pests is the area.
 - iii. Natural Regeneration Trials:*** assessment of vegetative potentials of native and exotic plants for economic use and for desertification management.
 - iv. Soil and Land Suitability:*** for appropriate agricultural Development and general land use.
 - v. Fisheries:*** biological and commercial status of fish among the inhabitants in view of dwindling water resources.
- In 5 years, 6 scientific conference papers were presented, 8 PhD Thesis were approved and 12 research reports submitted, besides the many community services rendered.**

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSION

- **Yobe State, the major benefactor of the Phase 1 Project, has adopted the frame work of NEAZDP for its present sustainable rural development activities. The NEAZDP and CAZS Programmes are models for future rural development, in view of their acceptability and achievements in a relatively short period of five years.**
- **The factor that immensely contributed to the success of NEAZDP is the great deal of pilot study work and time that had been devoted to the foundation of the Programme. This took over one year during which implementation strategies were tested with adoption of a bottom-to-top based- programme and with strong affinity to middle-level advisory capability. Village Development Plan (VDP) became a central focus of the Project.**
- **Phase I of the Project has been a considerable success with immense popularity among the local people. With good base for sustainability at local level, it was agreed to extend the programme eastwards to the shores of Lake Chad. The Project came to sudden end due to macro-economic issues, making EEC pull out.**

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSION Contd

- **In conclusion, but for the funding agreement between the Federal Government of Nigeria and EEC, it would have been difficult, to source equivalent funds for these two successful activities during the Economic Structural Adjustment period.**
- **The intimate relationship between NEAZDP and CAZS was obligatory and desirable as their complementary roles are unique in terms of project implementation. For this reason, there was constant dialogue and free flow of information for mutual benefit between the two and the international partners.**
- **With peace returning to the North-Eastern part of Nigeria we invite the Nigerian Diasporas and other concerned nationals to fully participate in Research and Development as part of the rehabilitation currently taking place. We appeal to EU to fund the completion of the second phase of NEAZDP in Borno State.**

Thank you for listening