

## **ASSESSMENT OF FARMERS RESPONSE TO AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMMES BROADCASTED IN RIMA RADIO SOKOTO**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Radio is potentially a powerful means of information dissemination. It can provide general information about agriculture quickly and accurately to a large number of farmers and create awareness of extension's production recommendation. The study was carried out to assess the response of farmers to agricultural programmes broadcast on Rima Radio Sokoto. A total of fifty farmers were interviewed using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentage. Finding of the study reveals that Rima Radio is the most important source of agricultural information to farmers. Even though less time is allocated to these programmes, the farmers were observed to be benefiting from them. The study further reveals that various organizations such as Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Agriculturalist, producers of the programmes and the farmers were involve in sponsoring the programmes. Recommendations were made in the area of adequate provision of facilities to Rima Radio, and the broadcast should be free of charge.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Agricultural development plays an important role in rural development. It is well known that most rural development plans have agricultural development as an afterthought. This lack of incorporation of agricultural programme in development plans have led to unattainment of desire objective. Nigeria in her attempt to increase its rural agricultural productivity adopted the agricultural extension programme for rural development. This programmes deals with the improvement of agriculture, it also has some indirect influence which are non-agricultural. The agricultural extension programme is based on research work hence the research finding is communicated to the extension agencies and from the extension agencies to the rural farmers.

The research findings are communicated to the rural farmers through various communication channels among which is Rima Radio Sokoto. Farm radio broadcast, a mass method tool designed to create interest and awareness among farmers is our case study. This farm radio broadcast, when used rightly, can be the most versatile tool to effect change in attitude and behaviour, and teach new skills to the predominantly illiterate or semi-illiterate rural farmers. The radio broadcast which is based on the local language of an area is an ideal way of communication for awareness among rural farmers, i.e. it does not demand high level of literacy by the farming public in order to benefit from the programme.

Communication is a vital issue in agriculture, conveying improved and recommended agricultural practices through extension workers to clients in order to improve on their agricultural production and in marketing of their produce

(Williams, 1989). On the other hand, agricultural extension is an out of school education for rural people. An extension agent is responsible for providing knowledge and information on particular innovations and through communication, he passes such to farmers.

Knowledge and information are essential for people to respond successfully to the opportunities and challenges of social, economic and technological changes, including those that help to improve agricultural productivity, food security and rural livelihood. But to be useful, knowledge and information must be effectively communicated to the people.

Communication is a key process in information dissemination in agriculture. The development of agriculture requires, among others, a timely and systematic transmission of useful and relevant agricultural information from the technology generation system (source) via various communication channels to the intended audience (receiver). It is expected that the client's changes in behaviour as a result of the message received (effect) be passed back to the source (feedback) for the communication process to be complete (Adebayo, 1997).

Adams (1982) defined media as any materials, objects, instruments or system which serves to communicate information including leaflets, farming press, other written and printed materials, all types of cinema films, radio and television and video system. Communication has also been defined as a process by which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach mutual understanding. He further defined communication as a

process of sending and receiving messages through the channels and devices at a convergence and as established meaning between a source and receiver (Rogers, 1995).

However, the predominance of radio in disseminating effort is over whelming. Example abound Radio Nepal for instance in 1974 broadcast for fifteen minutes agricultural programmes per week. The programme was produce by the Ministry of Agriculture. Africa also has farm radio broadcast, countries like Ethopia, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia has similar farm radio broadcast. Uganda is reported to have seven hours agricultural broadcast per week. In Nigeria, a daily farmer programme "Agbe Onije Amodun" was broadcast in the state of Oyo and elsewhere. Similarly, Rima Radio Sokoto since its inception in 1954 has been broadcasting farm messages to date.

It is therefore the aim of the study to assess the farmer's response to these farm messages broadcast in Rima Radio Sokoto. It is also hoped that such analysis may lead to the re-appraisal of the radio as a channel of communicating information to rural farmers.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objective of the study was to assess the response of farmers to agricultural programmes of Rima Radio Sokoto. Specifically the objectives are:

1. To determine the extent to which farmers listen to these agricultural programmes.
2. To study the problem associated with farm Radio broadcast and to make recommendations.

3. To ascertain the effectiveness of Radio as a source of farm information to rural farmers.

The finding of the study shall add to the body of knowledge in area of radio usage in agricultural information dissemination. The finding shall also assist agricultural extension agents and radio station to design relevant agricultural programmes and air same at appropriate time to meet information needs of farmers.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted in Wamakko Local Government Area of Sokoto State. The study area covering a total of 270000 square kilometres with a population of 60,000 people according to 1991 census it is located within latitude  $12^{\circ} 57'' - 13^{\circ} 15''$  and longitude  $4^{\circ}$

$124'' - 5^{\circ} 14''$ . The local government comprises of four districts areas which include: Wamakko, Gumbi, Dundaye and Gumborawa. Wamakko local government is bounded by Sokoto south and Kware local government to the east, Binji and Tangaza local government to the north, Silame local government to the west and Bodinga local government to the south.

Wamakko local government is predominantly Hausa - Fulani settlement. Agriculture in its various forms provides a means of livelihood to over eighty percent of the settlers. The typical vegetation of the area is Sudan savannah with nearly continuous grass cover and scanty trees. The area has access to water for dry season farming from River Rima which

provide the proximate Fadama nature and make it prosperous in food production.

Fifty (50) farmers were targeted for the study. Two stage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting sample for the study. The first stage was a random selection of the villages in the local government area which comprises of Wamakko, Gumbi, Dundaye and Gumborawa. The second stage was a purposive selection of respondent in the villages. A total of ten (10) farmers were drawn from each village using generated set of random number making a total of fifty (50) farmers. Data were collected through questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies, percentages and mean.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Distribution of respondents according to their Primary Occupation**

<b>Primary Occupation</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Farming	28	56%
Trading	5	10%
Civil servant	8	16%
Fishing	2	2%
Others	7	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The result in the Table above shows that 56 percent of the respondents were farmers while 10 percent are traders, 16 percent are civil servants, 4 percent were fishermen and the remaining 14 percent were engage in other business activities.

This implies that those that take farming as major occupation are more interested in farm radio broadcast, which is also in line with this study of Oluwo (1991) who stated that agricultural radio programmes provide market price and weather information on a regular basis. This indicate how best farmers can allocate land among crops at planting time and they also suggest what profit will be earned if surplus harvest are shipped at a given time.

**Distribution of respondents according to the Type of Farming they engage in**

Type of Farming	No of Farmers	Percentage
Livestock	6	12%
Crop	19	38%
Fisheries	2	4%
Crop/Livestock	18	36%
Fish/Crop	5	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The Table above shows that 38 percent of the respondents were engage in crop cultivation, 36 percent cultivate crops and rear animals, 12 percent engage in livestock farming, while 10 percent cultivate both crops and are fishermen, and the remaining 4 percent are fishermen. This can be regarded as one of the obvious reason why Rima radio agricultural programmes mostly covers both crops and livestock issues Musa (1997). This implies that farmers that listen to farm radio broadcast are mostly crop and livestock/crop producers respectively.

### Distribution of respondents based on the Ownership of Radio

Radio Ownership	No of Farmers	Percentage
Owned	44	88%
None	6	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The Table above shows that 44 number of the farmers constituting 88 percent of the total respondents owned radio, while the remaining 12 percent of the respondents does not own radio but has access to radio sets belonging to friends, neighbour etc. Therefore even those who do not own radio sets receive radio messages. This finding is in line with that of Van den Ban *et al*/(1988) who observe that radio is available to most rural people around the world.

### Distribution of respondents based on Awareness of Farm Radio Broadcast

Awareness	No of Farmers	Percentage
Yes	47	94%
No	3	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

This Table indicate that 94 percent of the respondents are aware of the farm messages broadcasted in Rima radio, while 6 percent are not aware of its existence. This implies that majority of the farmers in the study area are aware of Rima radio programmes. This is in line with Musa (1997) who stated that the most simplest and effective way of disseminating agricultural information to wide spectrum of farmers in the



study area is through Rima radio. This is also conformed with Vanden Ban (1988) that radio is important for making people aware of innovation and for stimulation of their interest.

### **Distribution of respondents based on Duration in Listening to Farm Radio Broadcast**

<b>Duration</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1 - 10 years	15	30%
11 - 20 years	24	48%
21 - 30 years	6	12%
31 years and above	5	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

This Table shows that 30 percent of the respondents have been listening to farm radio broadcast for between 1-10 years while 40 percent have been listening to these programmes for between 11-20 years, 12 percent of the respondents have been listening for 21-30 years and 10 percent of them have been listening for 31 years and above. This implies that majority of the respondents have been listening to these programmes for between 1-20 years. This indicate that farmers level of awareness is on the increase which is also in line with Musa (1997) who attribute level of awareness of farmers to listen programmes as increasing progressively.

### **Distribution of respondents based on their Listening Habits**

<b>Listening Habit</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Daily	2	4%
Occasionally	48	96%
Never	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The above Table shows that 96 percent of the respondents listen to farm radio broadcast occasionally, while 4 percent of the respondents listen to farm radio broadcast on daily basis. This conforms to Dare (1990) and Musa (1997) who reported that access to radio information is not the same as its exposure. Many people have radio sets which for one reason or another they hardly use. Also it's possible for most farmers to miss agricultural information communicated through Rima radio since they listen to the programme s occasionally.

### **Distribution of Respondents based on their Convenience as to the Time of the Broadcast**

<b>Convenience</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	37	74%
No	8	16%
Others	5	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The Table indicates that 74 percent of the respondents reported that the time of the broadcast is convenient to them, while 16 percent reported that the time of the

broadcast is not convenient to them. And 10 percent of the respondents are those that claim being neutral. This implies that majority of the respondents are convenient with the time of the broadcast. This however agrees with Vanden Ban *et al* (1988) who stated that farm radio programme for agricultural development must be broadcasted at time when farmers can listen usually early in the morning before going to their farms or in the evening after work.

#### **Distribution of Respondents based on their choice of Radio as their Better Source of Farm Information**

<b>Radio as Better Source</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	44	88%
No	6	12%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The above Table shows that 88 percent of the respondents preferred radio as their better source of farm information, while 12 percent preferred other source apart from radio. This agrees with the finding of Ononiwo (1992) that as far as agricultural extension work is concern radio has proved to be one of the most important and effective means of dissemination of agricultural information and innovation in the developing countries.

**Distribution of Respondents based on Importance of Radio over other Medium**

<b>Radio over other Medium</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Its Affordable	22	44%
Simple to operate	6	12%
Portable	6	12%
All of the above	16	32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

This Table shows that 44 percent of the respondents preferred radio over other media because it is affordable, 12 percent preferred it because it is simple to operate and 12 percent preferred it because it is portable over other media while 32 percent preferred radio because of its combine advantage of being affordable, simple to operate and portable over other media of communication. This is in conformity with the assertion by Babatunde (1992) that radio technology is relatively cheap to install and maintain.

**Distribution of Respondents based on their Problems Associated with Farm Broadcast**

<b>Problems</b>	<b>No of Farmers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	16	32%
No	34	68%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The Table above shows that 32 percent of the respondents had attributed of instantaneous response system, communication gap and timing suitability as the problem

associated with farm broadcast. While 68 percent of the respondents reported having no problem with farm radio broadcast. This is in line with the finding of Musa (1997) who reported that radio has emerge as the most effective and relatively the easiest to operate. It covers every nook and corners of the society provided there is a receiver with adequate supply of power. Apart from its time, it is capable of carrying information to audience no matter whether they are in their farms, stores, living room, cars, etc. It is also in conformity with the assertion made by Ononiwo (1992) that the absence of such facilities as roads, light and water are no hindrance to radio. It defeat such obstacle as difficult topography, distance, time and unfavourable political climate. Illiteracy is no barrier to radio as such message can be passed in the audience own language.

**Distribution of Respondents according to their attempt to Change their Farming System through Radio Broadcast**

<b>Attempt to Change</b>	<b>No of Farmer</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	41	82%
No	9	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field Survey 2001**

The table above shows that 82 percent of the respondents that listen to farm broadcast asserted to change their farming system, while 18 percent of the respondents do not attempt to change their farming techniques. This is in line with the study of Ban and Hawki (1998) which says that media accelerates existing change but they seldom bring about change in behaviours by them. This is because a sender or the

receiver tends to employ several selective processes when using mass media which often result in the receiver distorting the sender's message.

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Agricultural programme broadcast by Rima radio Sokoto is aimed at making farmers to be aware of new farm practices. These programmes would improve their yield, facilitate their income base and enhance the standard of living. The study focuses mainly on assessing farmers responses to these agricultural programmes broadcasted by Rima radio in Wamakko local government area of Sokoto state. Specific attempt was made to identify Rima radio agricultural programmes, their sponsors and time allocated to these programmes, whether the farmers are benefiting from the programmes and the problem facing farmers and the corporation concerning the programmes as well as possible solution to the problems.

Finding of the research reveals that the farmers are aware of these programmes and they also receive information on farming through Rima radio Sokoto. These study reveals that Rima radio is the most important and simplest source of farm information to farmers in Wamakko Local Government. Respondents who used radio as their source of information can understand Hausa language. Even though less time is allocated to the programme, farmers are benefiting from the programmes. Sponsoring of agricultural programmes is the most important problem facing the station and the farmers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the finding and conclusion aimed at in this study, the following recommendations were offered:

1. It was observed that radio was very effective in imparting knowledge and changing the attitude, behaviour of those farmers who owned and listen to it. It is therefore suggested that radio farm forum be created within villages and the farmers.
2. More funds should be disburse to the extension agencies such as National Agricultural Extension and Research Liaison Services (NAERLS) and higher institutions to enable them produce more agricultural programmes for radio production in Nigeria.
3. The Federal Government should make it possible for any radio agricultural programme to be broadcasted free of charge not in Sokoto State but all over Nigeria.
4. The Federal Government and the State Government should come to the aid of the station by providing funds, vehicles etc. They should also attract the attention of International Agricultural Organisation and non-governmental organization to liaise with radio station all over the Federation.
5. The programme should be based on local problems. Farmers should be encourage to make their feelings and problems known to government through Rima radion
6. More time should be allocated to agricultural programmes by Rima radio so that they should carry more information. And the timing of one agricultural programme should be either early in the morning or late in the evening so that farmers will have the opportunity to listen.

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