

***BASELINE STUDY IN IKOLE EKITI,  
EKITI STATE 2017***

**By**  
**Community Life Project (CLP)**  
**2017**

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## ***Executive Summary***

The need for an informed citizenry is not only functional for democratic governance but also imperative for sustainable community life in recent times. It has been observed that over time, non-inclusion of citizens in policy making has a wholesale implication for failure and/or poor implementation of projects in various communities across the globe. Advocacy for inclusive governance continues to gain relevance in the faces of poverty, gender imbalance, discriminations, unemployment, and apathy among many countries of the world, especially developing countries like Nigeria. With the successful deploring of patronage politics in some communities in Brazil in the 1980s, especially the municipal Porto Alegre, the notion of inclusive governance began to gain accelerated ascendance and acceptance as a model amongst different governments and policymakers in the world. This is also in concomitance with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It was in the view of the above background that a baseline study was carried out in Ikole local government area of Ekiti, as a model, to ascertain the extent to which citizens participate in governance in Nigeria. Ikole is unique in many ways. Its history is inseparable from the history of the mainstream Yoruba ancestry. The nomenclature of the place connotes an administrative headquarter town of Ikole local government area and a cluster of diverse community-based autonomous kingdoms of 24 kings. Itapaji dam, schools, markets, and vast agricultural land are some of the resources available in Ikole. The population of Ikole stands 168,436 (2006 Census). The people of Ikole are predominantly agrarian with few people involved in the formal sector. While the main objective of the study was to examine the level of inclusion of community members in budgetary and development processes in Ikole local government area of Ekiti State, Nigeria, specific objectives included (i) assessment of resource/assets available, (ii) examination of how community members know about the available resources, (iii) unveiling various forms of exclusion of citizens, (iv) evaluation of challenges associated with inclusive governance, and (v) exploration of available opportunities for inclusive governance that will aid development in Ikole.

The research setting had a team of professional researchers, community facilitators and monitoring team in place. Intensive training sessions for various personnel involved were achieved to ensure efficiency. Prior to the actual field work at Ikole, a pilot study was carried out at Ado Ekiti to pre-test the research instrument for reliability. The subsequent fieldwork was facilitated by the already trained facilitators. The study design adopted was both descriptive and exploratory in nature. A total of 599 questionnaires was recovered out of the 700 administered. The survey was complemented by qualitative data which included five (5)

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), ten (10) In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) and ten (10) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). Study participants were made up of community members, members of different interest groups, community leaders, formal and informal social actors, youths, physically challenged and people from different genders, occupations and ages. The analysis of data was triangulated with the use of SPSS to refine and analyse quantitative data while NVivo, a qualitative analysis software was used to code nodes and present the qualitative data accordingly. Study findings were content-analysed under relevant themes in line with the set objectives.

The study found several things that connect directly with inclusive governance. For one, Ikole people are very sensitive to social and economic developments taking place in their environment as 97% of respondents attested to their knowledge of available resources and assets in their various communities. Many of the participants, 57%, expressed great worry over the inadequacy of available resources, of which bad road, shortage of water and poor electricity ranked highest. Another finding unearthed by the study is the relatively high inclusion of women in decision-making processes in Ikole. The percentage of those in favour of adequate involvement of women in governance, 84.8%, in Ikole makes the debate around gender exclusion in the area less plausible. Even though the marginalisation of women was readily displaced by most of the participants, under-representation of female gender was still shrouded in the existing pattern of leadership at the community and local government levels. Study participants agreed that Ikole has groups of men, youths, age grades, women and political party, it is important to note that the preponderance of women groups in the communities is evident with 23.3% as against those of men with 9.6%, age grades with 10.2%, and youth with 17.2%. This is a vital pointer for engendered discuss in Ikole. It was also found that contribution to budget and budgetary issues is not a matter of popular inclusion in Ikole Decision on development plan does fall within the purview of popular participation at the local government level even though majority have idea about various community projects that are usually discussed and agreed upon in occasions like the end of the year festivals and town hall meetings.

The challenges impeding inclusive governance in Ikole, according to findings, include poor sensitisation of people on the need to participate in governance, lack of transparency on the part of those at the helm of governance, discrepancy between choice of project and the actual needs of the people, non-inclusion of citizens in budgeting and project development processes, insufficient infrastructure, political apathy and high level of unemployment among youths. However, these challenges can be overcome if the potential embedded in Ikole can be

properly harnessed. For instance, a relative high confidence of people in their traditional leader rather than the local government administration exists. This system of trust can be levered to integrate the entire community for participatory governance. The vast arable land is another resource that can be used to generate development and employment opportunity for Ikole communities. Itapaji dam that lies fallow hold a huge potential for solving economic and social needs of the people in Ikole, especially the challenges of poor electricity and unemployment. Although the study findings showed a relatively high level of intra-community cohesion, the tendency for inter-community disharmony can be hushed through transparency and accountability of those in governance.

The study concluded that the level of inclusion of people in various processes of budgeting and development is inadequate, hence the need for urgent action.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The contemporary shift of paradigm for sustainable governance favours inclusiveness globally. This is clearly resonated in the Agenda 2030, which was integral to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution of September 25, 2015 aimed at world transformation. With a view to achieving Sustainable Development Goal sixteen (SDG 16), that is “peace, justice and strong institutions”<sup>1</sup>, UNGA outlined certain principles that various national institutions should pursue. The principles are inclusiveness, accountability and effectiveness. These principles are intertwined such that it is hard to separate them, especially with regards to sustainable development discourse. Often, the searchlight is beamed on Africa when matters of democratisation and inclusive government arise. This is partly due to the experience of a protracted period of dictatorship, exclusion and underdevelopment in the continent, gender gaps and youth-related questions among others.

Inclusive governance is an important feature of democracy. It involves integrating all those who have a stake and want to participate in the governance process can do so on equal basis. Inclusive governance, therefore, implies that exclusion and discrimination are absent in the provision of public services by the government. Inclusive governance entails citizens’ involvement in the decision-making process; contributions to public debate on national issues and voting, needs to be encouraged (Arowolo and Aluko, 2012). The purpose of inclusive governance is to create a sense of belonging and awareness necessary for sustainable

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Development (UNDP)

development. However, there has been some obvious disparity in the level of inclusive governance between men and women, old and young, rich and poor, physically fit and physically challenged persons in Nigeria (Offerdahl, Evangelides, and Powers, 2014). Similar to this, is the Common Wealth Principles endorsed by various Heads of Government and acceded to by Law Ministers in a Meeting at Abuja, Nigeria, in 2003, which stipulated the relationship of and accountability of the three branches of government<sup>2</sup>. It is on this premise that it is increasingly incumbent upon governments and leaders at all levels to continually see popular participation as a matter of utmost concern that policies and programmes of government will have direct bearing with the needs of the masses. It is the urgency of this realization that informed the conceptualization of this study.

### **1.1 Study Objective**

The main objective of the study is to examine the level of inclusion of community members in budgetary and development processes in Ikole local government area of Ekiti State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

- i. To assess the resource/assets of communities in Ikole LGA
- ii. To examine the perceptions of community members in Ikole LGA about their resources/assets
- iii. To unveil various forms of exclusion in Ikole LGA
- iv. To examine some challenges associated with the practice of inclusive governance
- v. To explore available opportunities for development through inclusive governance in Ikole LGA

### **2.0 Literature Review**

In order to have a clear understanding of the issues raised in the study and to establish logical connection of thematic issues of inclusive governance, this section is devoted to examination of relevant and extant scientific literatures on the subject matter.

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<sup>2</sup> Documented in Idasa's report of 2010, tagged "The Development and Use of Governance Indicators in Africa".

## **2.1 The Concept of Inclusive Governance**

It is no gainsaying that governance across the globe has gone beyond the sovereignty of a few powerful individuals who usurp power and resources to their own advantage, as it is in oligarchy, plutocracy, anarchism and other forms of dictatorships. The wave of democratic and responsive governance permeates the gamut of political processes in contemporary sense, making accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, accelerated growth and development sustainable values. According to the World Bank, the participation of stakeholders in the processes of project development guarantees effectiveness, efficiency, and high quality. As documented in the Global Sustainable Development Report (2016:62), “sustainable development requires an integrated approach to decision-making, incorporating social, environmental and economic dimensions”. This integrated approach holistically encapsulates issues relating to gender equality, youth development, social and economic development, which constitute the core of good governance anywhere in the world.

Looking at the African experience, researches have shown that the continent still experiences a lot of struggle with regards to democracies from the time of independence. Kabeer (2002) explained that intersection of economic and cultural exclusion was a major characteristic of many post-colonial States. Alluding to Mamdani’s analysis, Kabeer underscored how exclusion originated in the colonial experience of many African States. Thus, affecting the psychic elements of post-colonial relationships. More so, the class and racial discrimination replete in colonialism outlived colonialism in Africa. Thus, the legacy of exclusion bequeathed on Africa by colonialism has constantly been blamed by many scholars as the major cause of non-popular participation or inclusion of the generality of the people in governance and policy formulation process. Be that as it may, increasing sensitisation and advocacy for inclusive governance have continued to rekindle hope of revival of the interest of the people and governments alike in toeing the path of rectitude, which in this case refers to inclusion, in governance.

### **2.1.1 Inclusive Budgeting**

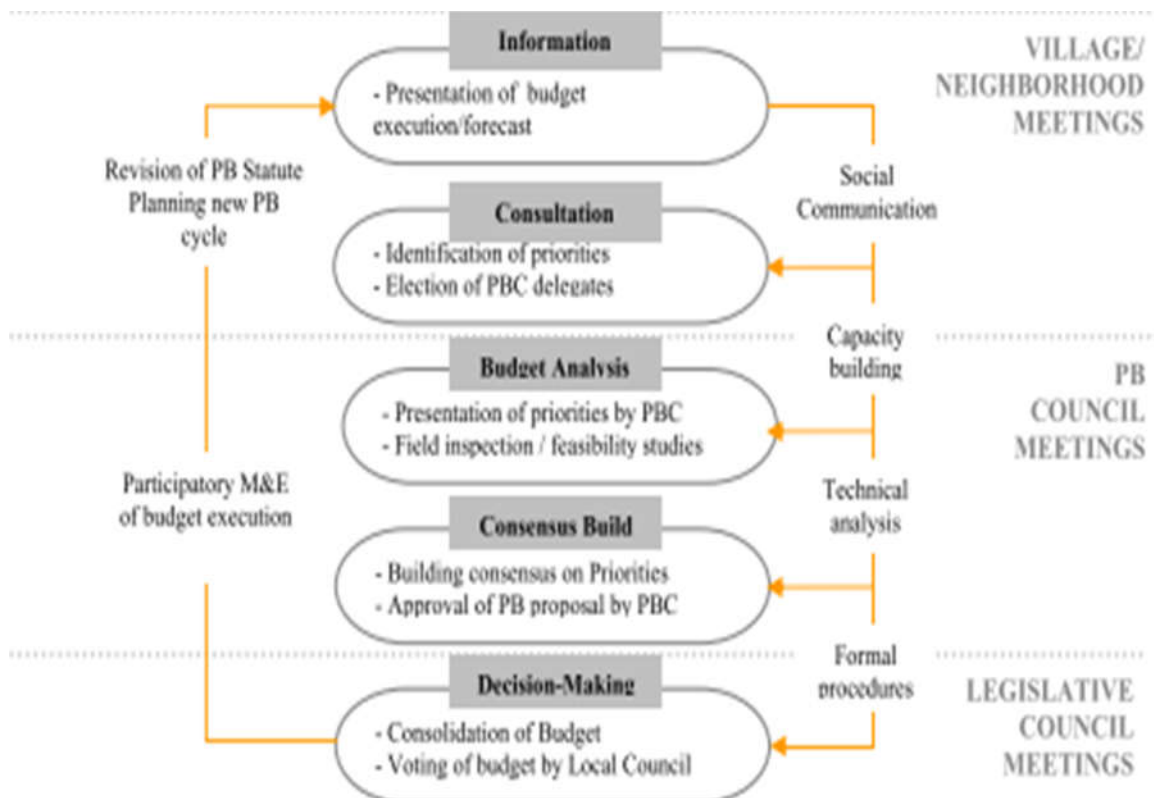
Historically, inclusive budgeting, otherwise referred to as participatory budgeting (PB), in 1989, evolved as a mechanism to address hitherto fiscal issues associated with governance and making sure citizens (made up of various stakeholders) benefited from the output of

policy and budget. The success of this mechanism and the subsequent adoption of the tool in Brazil eventually led to its whole scale adoption globally. PB refers to:

“An effective social accountability mechanism that strengthens the demand side for better governance and empowers citizens to influence public sector decisions, particularly socially excluded citizens. Participatory budgeting is known to improve public sector reform in public expenditure management. Through PB, local governments have demonstrated improved fiscal discipline, by finding ways to reduce costs, allocate investments in a more equitable manner, and increase transparency in budget allocation, spending and reporting (The Social Development Team for Europe and Asian Region, 2006).

Participatory Budgeting makes governance not only easier but also ensures that components of fiscal policies have direct bearing to the interests and needs of the people for whom they are made. For PB to become realistic and feasible, series of consultation and meetings with various groups in the concerned locality need to take place. Meanwhile, it must also be noted that PB is a circle of information flowing back and forth from the government to the governed and back again. This is shown in the diagram below:

Fig.1: Participatory Budgeting Circle



Source: The Social Development Team for Europe and Asian Region (2006)

### ***2.1.2 Development Planning***

Development planning is vitally linked to Participatory Budgeting. Scientific enquiries into what constitutes efficiency and effectiveness of project and development plan in governance is the ability of government to systematically incorporate the interests of various stakeholders in the planning and implementation phases of policy, programmes and projects (Ondrik, 1999). Elsewhere, inclusion at the level of decentralisation to gather ideas from the people, cooperation with all the stakeholders.

### ***2.1.3 Gender***

Governance in Nigeria is highly patriarchal, characterized by acute gender inequality. The sharing and exercising of power throughout the ages between men and women has never been equal (Nnaji, 2009). Women have been marginalized in governance from the colonial era to the present administration (Onwuka, 2007). Onwuka, further argued that for over a decade since the end of military dictatorship and re-democratic governance in Nigeria, women inclusion in governance is still very inconsequential. Though there has been little progress in women inclusion in governance, the situation is still far from what ought to be. Statistics over the years have shown that the number of women in governance is ridiculously low when compared to the number of men in governance. Gender equality in governance is essential in engaging the copious challenges facing women in all spheres of development in Nigeria (Afonja, 2007). Gender equality is, therefore, a sine-qua-non for inclusive governance (Nnaji, 2009). In terms of inclusive governance, women still have a long way to go in gaining equal footing in citizens' involvement in the decision-making process, contribution to public debate on national issues and voting, needs to be encouraged (Hartman, 2006). Creating awareness about gender equality is one of the ways of promoting inclusive governance in terms in Nigeria (Nnaji, 2009).

### ***2.1.4 Youths***

Youths are often socially or biologically perceived as not yet fully mature adult members of the society and this has affected their inclusiveness in governance (Offerdahl, Evangelides, and Powers, 2014). If importance is continually placed on becoming an adult, the importance of being a youth and the unique contributions that youths make to governance will be forfeited. When trying to participate in governance, there are challenges that youths encounter that prohibit their voices from being heard. According to Offerdahl, Evangelides, and Powers,



(2014) Age limits to contest for political office or even establish an independent organization affect and prevent youth involvement in governance. This has resulted to the expression of frustration among Nigeria's youthful population (LeVan, 2015). There is the need for youth inclusiveness in governance for adequate development and sustainability of any nation. reducing the age for contesting elective posts and encouraging the youth to participate actively in politics; crafting Constitutional provisions to provide for more posts for the youth; discouraging politics for profit; ensuring economic empowerment through funding, training and government support, and reorienting youths through institutionalised agencies Odah (2017). However, the level of youth literacy has a crucial role to play in determining youth inclusiveness in governance (LeVan, 2015). Increase youth participation in formal political structures, possibly through the establishment of youth wings in existing political parties. Youths need a seat at the table at the local, state, and national levels but also need that seat to be substantive.

Unemployment is a major bane that makes youths prone to exclusion globally (Offerdahl, Evangelides and Powers, 2014). As at 2012, UNDP Global Parliamentary Report indicated that the percentage of young people in their 20s and those in their 30s were 1.65% and 11.87%. Young people have been excluded from development programs and activities in numerous ways. As an age cohort, youth are less likely to be involved in governance and decision-making processes, as a result of economic, political, and procedural barriers that prevent their participation. The government of Nigeria has an important role to play in building capacity for youth participation at all levels of governance by building mechanisms for youth representation of young people in political processes and participation in decision-making at all levels (Odah, (2017). Age limits to run for office or even establish an independent organization affect and prevent youth engagement. High unemployment among youths was also identified as a barrier to their participation. One panelist raised concerns that high unemployment left youth vulnerable to political manipulation and radicalization by militant elements.

### ***2.1.5 Other Dimensions***

Let us suffice that both inclusion and exclusion in government and its processes manifest in devious ways aside the ones mentioned earlier and their manifestations are also relative to cultures, level of education, democratisation, and history of different peoples, among other

things. For instance, there is growing concern globally on how persons with physical challenges partake in decisions, which in the long run affect them. Physically challenged persons constitute one of the poorest, marginalized and socially excluded groups in governance, especially in developing countries (Barron and Amerena ed. 2007; Global Sustainable Development report, 2016). Inclusion in governance are fundamental human rights for physically challenged persons, such rights are critical to empowering physically challenged persons to live independently, be included in their States, and to partake in and make contributions to governance and development on an equal basis with others. In essence, inclusive governance is a critical starting point that government has to take up in order to integrate persons with disabilities and their needs (Global Sustainable Development report, 2016). An important achievement as regards inclusive governance at the global level was the adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which was ratified by 164 countries and one regional group, the European Union, as of June 2016.

## **2.2 Nigerian Experience**

Nigeria is exemplary in many instances in Africa, including social and economic inclusion. Amongst other things, Nigeria is often reckoned with as the most populous country in Africa. The country is also diverse in ethnic and religious composition making. Nigeria's development trajectories are often nuanced within the contexts of diversity, colonial and post-colonial antecedences, oil production, patriarchy and youth restiveness which constantly engender a plethora of social and economic upheavals in the country. Depicting a picture of the political economy of development in Nigeria, LeVan (2015:13) averred that "at the most basic level, social heterogeneity is seen as a possible impediment to collective action... Coordinating interests across socially diverse constituencies is simply more difficult as a result of mistrust or memories of marginalization among ethnic groups. And even if they do not harbour hard feelings that inspire retaliation, it can still be difficult to communicate across communities with different cultural values". By this, LeVan sees Nigerian pluralism as a possible breeder of exclusion in the country.

In a similar parlance, political participation and good governance has been examined from the angle of faulty democratisation processes in Nigeria. In other words, "democracy in Nigeria has three unique features which include: insulation of economic matters from popular participation, manipulation and monopolisation of democratic process including the use of

violence and electoral fraud to secure legitimacy and peripheral participation of citizens” (Arowolo and Aluko 2012:798). The Nigerian experience with regards to inclusive governance has not been altogether impressive given the rate at which the rights of different groups are still undermined. It has been argued that popular participation is integral to good governance and this can only be possible in a situation whereby the rights, respects and opinions of the people are given adequate recognition. Interestingly, Nigeria was listed in the 2016 Report of Global Sustainable Development as one of the 30 countries with some form of non-adult parliament structure at one level of institutional arrangement or the other. It is expedient to take a cursory look at various dimensions of inclusive governance and the Nigerian scores on these. To do this, we shall examine some key dimensions of inclusion which include gender, youth, participation in budgetary processes and development plans in the course this study to have a deeper understanding on the subject matter of the study.

### ***2.2.1 Beaming the Searchlight on Ekiti State***

Ekiti State is geographically located in the south-western part of Nigeria with a population of 2.75 million with annual growth rate of 3.2%, as reported in the last (2006) census of the country and document by Oloniteru and Ojo (2013). In 2013, the State came up with laudable 8-point agenda of good governance, infrastructural development, modernisation of agriculture, education and human capital development, healthcare services, industrial development, tourism, and women empowerment. Beyond the setting of agenda is the component of delivery and reflection of the interest or popular demand of the people of the state in the agenda set; a critical issue that bothers on the question of inclusive governance. Ikole.

## **3.0 Methodology**

The research design was cross sectional within analytical and descriptive frameworks. Qualitative and quantitative methods were deployed to interrogate issues relating to good governance as it relates to inclusion of people in budgeting process and development-related decisions. This was because the subject matter of the study largely bothered on exploring the dynamics of inclusion in governance at the local level, taking into account and/or making sense of worldviews of community members on the efficiency of the mechanisms of government in provision of people’s needs.

### **3.1. Population**

Participants for the study were drawn from various stakeholders across ages, genders, social and economic strata and other categories resident in Ikole local government. Interviews were conducted among men, women, youths, chief, and the physically challenged, and other individuals whose activities are one way or the other affected by the assets and resources of the local government.

### **3.2. Research Instruments**

Primary data for the study were collected in a triangulated manner with the use of qualitative and quantitative methods. The instruments were pretested in a pilot study at Ado-Ekiti to ascertain reliability. The qualitative data were collected through a combination of five (5) focus group discussions (FGDs), ten (10) in-depth interviews (IDIs) and ten (10) key informant interviews (KIIs), while the quantitative data were generated through the use of questionnaires of which 599 were recovered.

### **3.3 Analysis**

Thematic and content analytical approaches and quantitative analyses (with the aid of appropriate software) were deployed to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data collected.

#### **3.3.1 Descriptive Analysis**

The study deployed variegated qualitative and descriptive analytical approaches to clearly depict various profiles, typologies and classifications through the use of figures, graphs, tables and narrations as they apply to Ikole LGA in terms of inclusion in budget, project planning and general development. The selection process followed a logical sequence: prior to deploying data collectors to the field, a two-day residential training was conducted to community representatives who served as contact persons in the 24 communities in Ikole. This made it easy for strategic location planning and management which eventually aided the activities the field researchers.

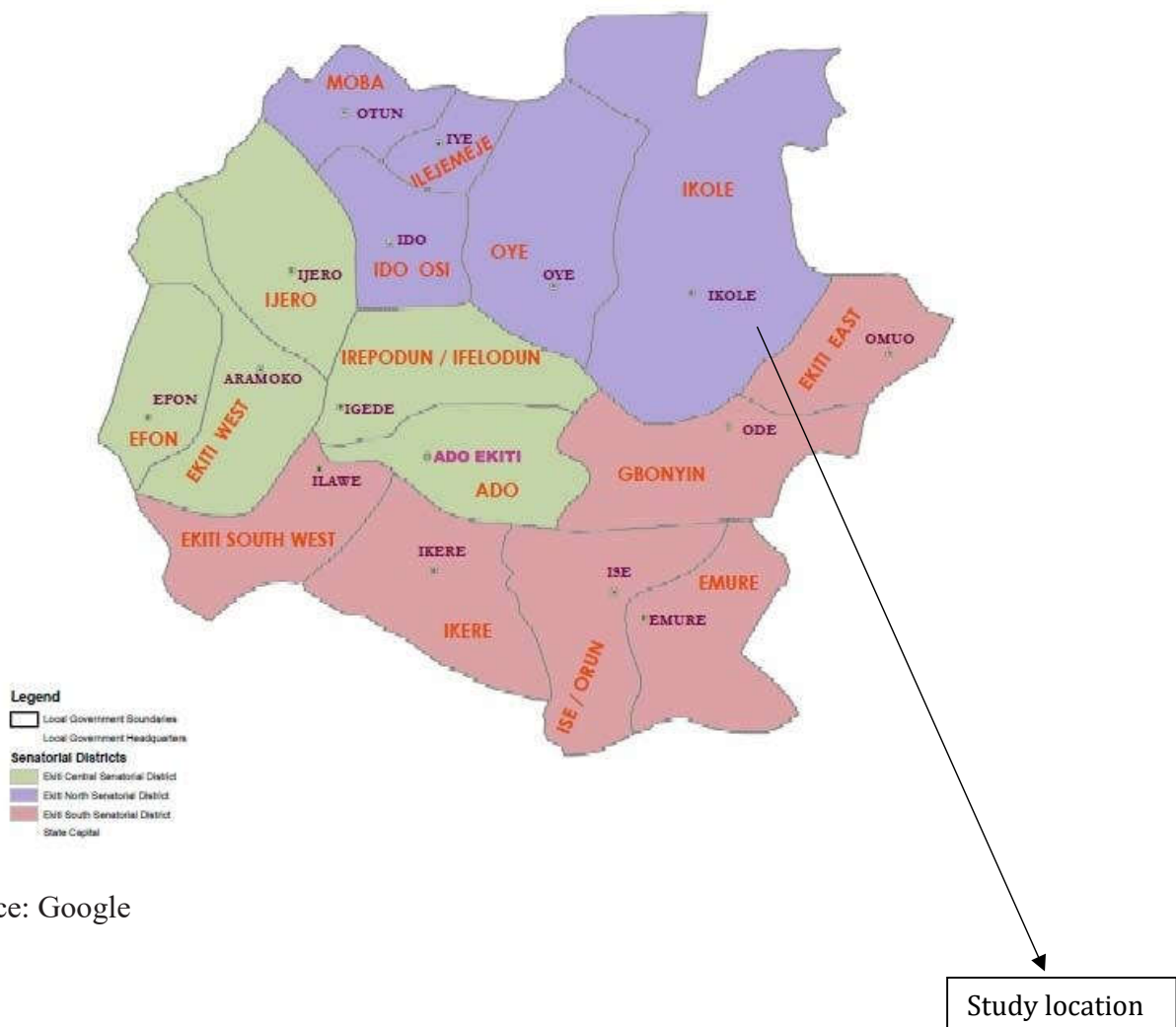
#### **3.3.2 Content Analysis**

A content analysis was carried out to show the patterns of how participants in Ikole interact with the resources available in their communities. This was necessary for better understanding of divergent experiences of the participating communities in Ikole.

### 3.4. Location

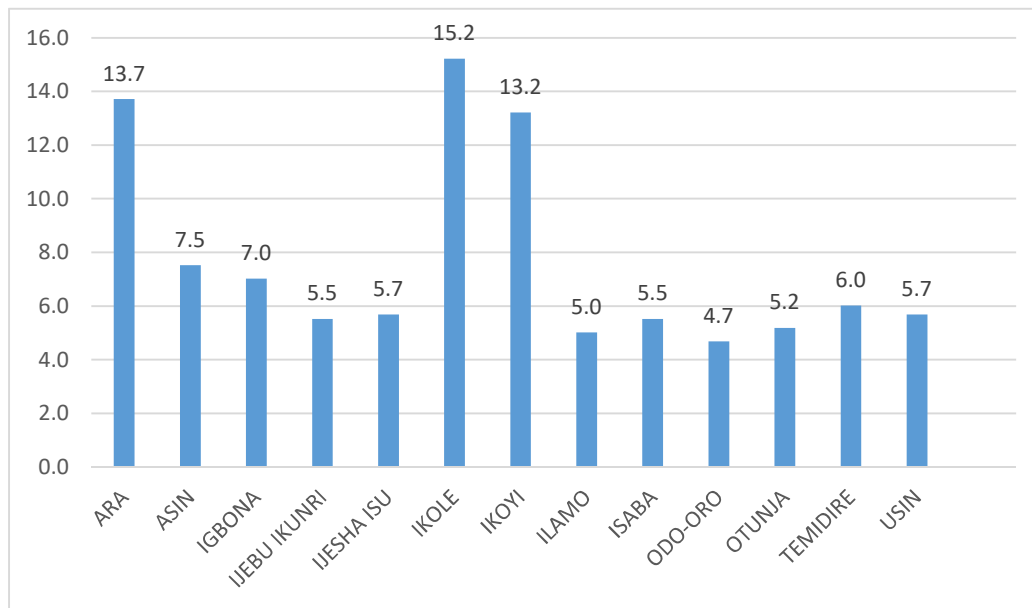
The study was conducted in Ikole local government area (LGA) of Ekiti state. The choice of the location was informed by its status as a single entity yet with divergent autonomous communities organised under 24 kings which translated to what the people call *Egbeoba Kingdom*. Similarly, Ikole belongs to the mainstream Yoruba: history has it that Akinsile, one of the first 16 princes blessed by Oduduwa founded the town.<sup>3</sup> One important thing to note here is the fact that Yoruba is predominantly patriarchal and the system of leadership had been by selection or ascription before the advent of modern democracy.

**Figure 3.1: Map of Ekiti State, showing the study location**



Source: Google

<sup>3</sup> The Nigerian Tribune, October 17, 2017. "When Ikole Celebrates its Uniqueness". [www.tribuneonlineng.com/ikole](http://www.tribuneonlineng.com/ikole)



**Fig. 3.2: Sampled Communities in Ikole LGA**

#### 4.0 Data Presentation and Discussion

This section is devoted to presentation of data and discussion.

##### 4.1. Socio-Demographics

The background information of respondents and participants in the study are presented in this section. The listed individuals in the study were selected according to their social and economic status like gender, age, years of stay in the community, position occupied and knowledge about the subject matter of the study, among others. While table 4.1 below shows the socio-demographics of respondents, those enlisted for key interviews were individuals occupying various important positions in the society like kings and high chiefs, in-depth interviews were administered among members of the communities which was inclusive of people across all walks of life, and the focus groups were essentially made up of homogenous groups of men, women, youths and inter-community members.

S/N	Variable	Categories	Frequency N=598	Percent %
1	Sex	Male	365	61.0
		Female	220	36.8
		No response	13	2.2
2	Age	18 – 27	137	22.9
		28 – 37	127	21.2
		38 – 47	120	20.1
		48 – 57	81	13.5
		58 – 67	45	7.5
		68 – 77	26	4.3
		78 – 87	7	1.2
		88 +	5	.9
		No response	50	8.4
3	Marital status	Married/cohabiting	378	63.2
		Separated/divorced	25	4.2
		Single	143	23.9
		Widowed	25	4.2
		Others	2	0.3
		No response	25	4.2
4	Educational Status	No formal education	40	6.7
		Primary school completed	54	9.3
		Primary school not completed	25	4.2
		Secondary school completed	214	35.8
		Secondary school not completed	51	8.5
		Tertiary completed	139	23.2
		Tertiary not completed	54	9.0
		No response	20	3.3
5	Professional occupation	Student	74	12.4
		Civil servant	80	13.4
		Lawyer	7	1.2
		Unemployed	59	9.9
		Teacher	23	3.8
		Social worker	13	2.2
		Politician	6	1.0
		Media personnel	1	0.2
		Others	81	13.5
		No response	21	3.5

6	Length of stay in the LGA Monthly Income	1 – 10 years	74	12.4
		11 -20 years	108	18.1
		21 – 30 years	113	18.9
		31 – 40 years	96	16.1
		41 – 50 years	77	12.9
		51 – 60 years	42	7.0
		61 – 70 years	20	3.3
		71 – 80 years	17	2.8
		81 +	6	1
		No response	45	7.5

**Table 4.1: Socio-Demographic characteristics**

Table 4.1 above shows various characteristics of the respondents that participated in the study. Majority of the participants were males with 61.0% while 36.8 were females and 13 persons did not declare their gender status. This shows that men readily participated in the study more than women; this could be resulting from the patriarchal social formation of the society<sup>4</sup>. Majority (66.4%) of the respondents fall below 48 years indicating that majority of the respondents were young people, which of course is a pointer to the urgency of youth inclusion in the processes of governance and development. It can also be seen in the table that not so many of the respondents were single (23%) or belonging to other groups (8.7%) other than being married or cohabiting with 63.2% of the sample size. The respondents were also made up of people with different educational statuses but in all the result shows that those without formal education (6.7%) and those that were unable to complete secondary school (22%) formed the minority as majority (68%) had at least secondary school education. This shows that the level of literacy in Ikole is moderately high. While the respondents spread across various occupational activities, civil servants with 13.4% formed the highest, followed by students who constituted 12.4%, meanwhile 13.5% chose not to disclose their occupational status. Finally, the table shows that while 7.5% of the respondent did not indicate their duration of stay in Ikole LGA, only a meagre 12.4% had been there for less than 10 years; an important indication that most of the respondents participated based on experience and knowledge gathered over time in their respective communities.

<sup>4</sup> As earlier discussed in the study, Ikole belongs to the main stream Yoruba community which is traditionally patriarchal.



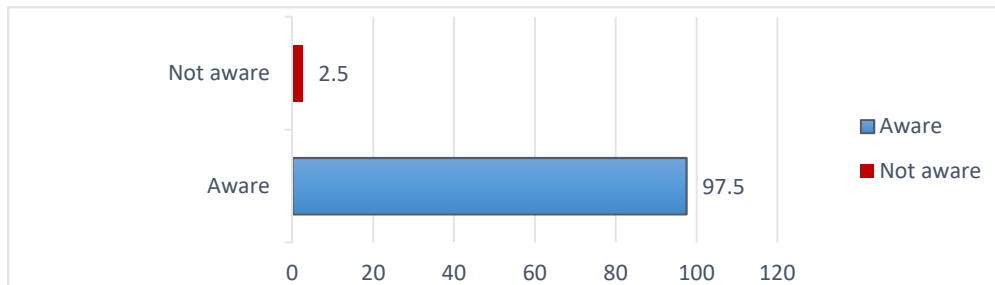
## 4.2 Available Assets/Resources in Ikole

The importance of resources cannot be over-emphasised in contemporary development discourse, especially in connection with the SDGs. At this juncture we shall examine some of the natural, social, physical and other forms available at the disposal of Ikole community. But first, the consciousness of the people is examined.

### 4.2.1 People's Consciousness/Awareness Level

According to Kabeer (2000), people's consciousness about resources to some extent determines how their interests would be protected both in the short and long runs. To ascertain the consciousness of the people about the quality and quantity of the resources and assets available at their disposal for development purpose, respondents were interrogated as to whether or not they were aware of the forms of resources available in their communities.

**Fig. 4.1: People's Level of Awareness of the Resources Available Ikole LGA**



As depicted in the graph presented above, virtually all (97%) the respondents had an idea of the available assets their communities. This implies that the level of consciousness of the people is reasonably high. Participants readily enumerated what they considered what they considered inducible sources of wealth to their communities, howbeit with a thing of distraught feeling due to perceived neglect of these resources by concerned authorities who continued to promise to facelift majority of the resources that are already in a decrepit situation. Unfortunately, no help had been forthcoming<sup>5</sup>. Apart from the water dam in Itapaji<sup>6</sup>,

<sup>5</sup> Examples are: abandoned borehole and absence of electricity in Itapaji due to some technical faults yet to be rectified (IDI/Male/70/Itapaji/2017; KII/Male/Igbona/2017); the general lamentable condition of roads in Ikole communities (IDI/Male/Ikole/2017) of which the experience in Ara community is the most pitiable (FGD/Elders/Ara/2017; Observation);

the most common asset in virtually all the communities is farming. In Oke-Ijebu for instance, aside few people who are involved in other “*menial jobs like lumbering*”, the community prides itself in farming and market activities (IDI/Female/Oke-Ijebu/2017; KII/Male/Oke-Ijebu/2017). The same claim applies to virtually all the communities in Ikole as quoted below:

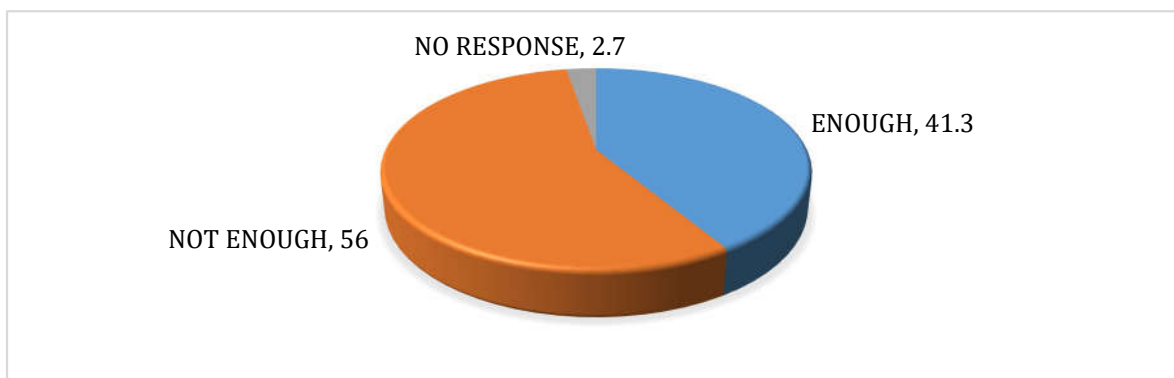
*Existing resources in our communities are agricultural products such as yam, plantains, bananas, Plantains, cocoa, palm-trees, palm kernel trees, clay soil for moulding. Pharmacies, schools, borehole water, agricultural lands etc. are also available but not in good quality and quantity. (FGD/Male/Intercommunity/2017).*

Beyond awareness in contextual analysis of available resources in Ikole is the extent to which the people can relate their views on the quality and quantity of these resources. This is the crux of our thrust below.

#### **4.2.2 Assessment of the Available Resources**

Major resources available in Ikole, as identified by participants and depicted above, are farmland, agricultural products, markets, schools, markets, health facilities and road. The quality of life and trajectory of development directly hinge on the efficacy of these assets. The worldviews of the people, who are of course the target users/beneficiaries of these resources are quite indispensable in contextual in determining the efficiency and sustainability of governance, policies, programmes and leadership in the community. The diagram below shows a graphical representation of how residents in Ikole perceive their available resources.

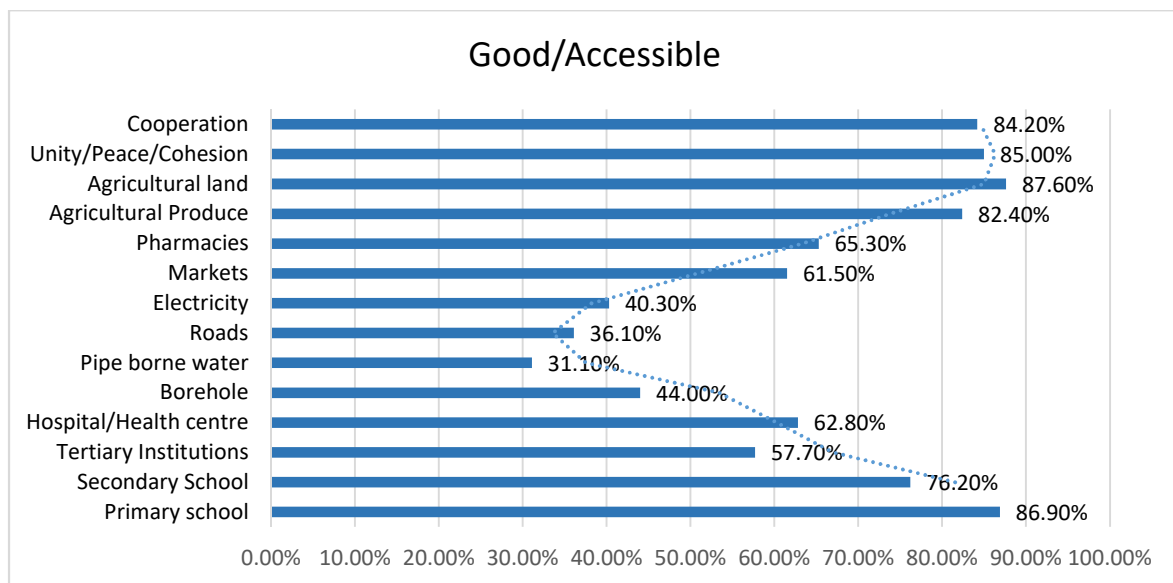
**Fig. 4.2: Users’ Perception on the Available Resources in Ikole LGA**



<sup>6</sup> IDI/Male/70/Itapaji/2017

Figure 4.2 above simply shows people's perception about the quantity of assets available in Ikole communities. Accordingly, majority (56%) of the people seem discontented with the volume of available resources while 41.3% expressed some level of satisfaction with the volume. However, 2.7% of the respondents did not respond to this question. The next graph gives further insight on how individual resource was ranked by the respondents.

**Fig.4.3: Ranking of Some of the Available Resources/Assets in Ikole**



According to the above graph (figure 4.3), resources like agricultural land, agricultural produce, cooperation, primary and secondary schools were ranked very high as good and accessible to the people. Health facilities, pharmacy, tertiary institutions and markets ranked average. The least ranked facilities are road, pipe borne water and electricity. The ranking reveals, to a large extent, the missing links in the developmental strides in Ikole. Apart from Odo-Oro<sup>7</sup>, most of the communities in Ikole lack good access roads. Poor access road is a recurrent deficient resource decried by many of the participants: from Itapaji (as in IDI/Male/70/Itapaji) to Ara (as in KII/Male/Ara/2017), to Igbona, Asin, Isaba, Igbona, Ipao, Ijebu-Ikunri, Oke-Ijebu, Temidire (as in the harvested and back to Ikoyi and Ikole (as in FGD/Youth/Temidire/2017; KII/Female/Ipao/2017; KII/Male/Otunja/2017; IDI/Femlae/54/Oke-Ijebu/2017; and FGD/Chiefs/Ikoyi/2017), the critical importance of good road to both social and economic development of Ikole was seriously emphasised. As observed by the research team, the case of Ara road which has the worst road network makes

<sup>7</sup> It was revealed in an interview has good road with the vicinity of the community (IDI/Male/84/Odo-Oro/2017)

the complaints about poor roads in Ikole palpable. The participants across communities in Ikole also noted that poor roads make the transportation of agricultural products from the villages to the market very difficult. The following is the view of one of the female participants:

*We don't have so many social amenities provided by the government. Our road is bad; it was before the last coronation of our king that the road was graded. Each time they grade the road it gets washed away by erosion leaving potholes. We thank God that government gave us a primary school classes one to five. Also, HEPSIDAH is providing funds to build the primary school. The health centre building is about to be completed and we pray that the government will employ workers to work there because they've always been saying no staff. (IDI/Female/65 years/Temidire/2017).*

Just like poor road, scarcity of good water also poses a great challenge to the general survival of people in Ikole. For instance, it was gathered that:

*On water issue, I am using this medium to implore the government like I have said times without number that any government that has not tapped water from dams and install pipes from house to house like the ones constructed years back has not done a successful water project. These boreholes that are being constructed are just to embezzle money by their party members. Most of the boreholes dug within two or three weeks do not have water and if they manage to get water, it will be in small quantities and before you know it, it has dried up. We are pleading that they should use dams to supply water to the community. At least in Ekiti, we have about four dams –Itapaji dam, Ero dam, Ureje dam and Egbe dam. If these dams should overflow, it can flood the entire community and destroy lives and properties. Let us retrace the steps of our veterans like Awolowo, Ajasin. It was during their time that the dam was last used. Considering our environment being a rocky one, it gives no room for drilling good wells or boreholes (KII/Male/Igbona/2017)*

In a focus group from another community, a discussant explained that:

*We have sharp sand, cocoa, palm trees and many more in this town. Previously, Ara used to be the largest community producing cocoa, but when the government neglected the town, it was abandoned but now people are trying to resuscitate farming, we also have yam, plantain, cocoyam and others. They've said well, but the challenges of transportation have affected our resources. We have markets but the bad roads make mobility and life difficult. On power supply, we used to have light but for over fifteen (15) years now, we have not had light. There is no water too, it's just one borehole we have through an individual philanthropic intervention though still not enough. (FGD/Male/Elders/Ara/2017)*

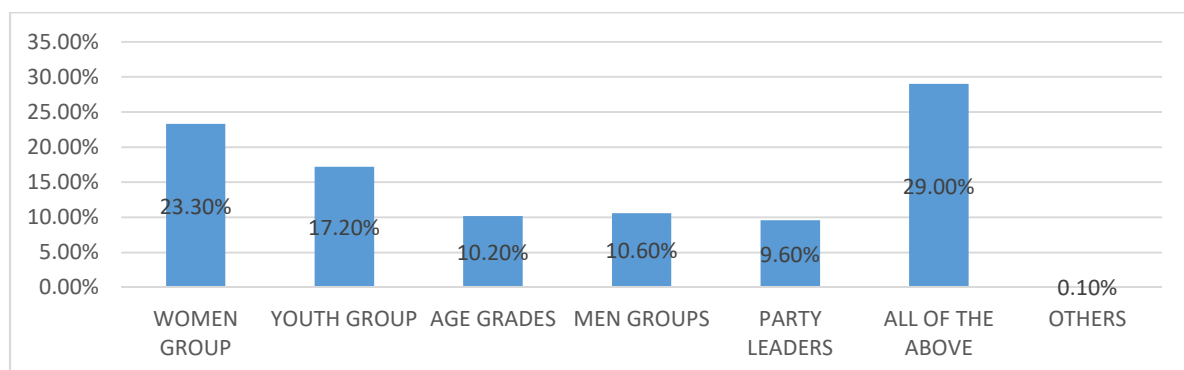
Contrary to the opinion of many, however, some of the participants expressed some level of satisfaction in the available assets in their community, for instance, the following excerpts reflects a sharp contrast in opinion over available resources in Ikole:

*We have boreholes, electricity, a general hospital, health centre for children, schools both primary and secondary schools. However, we do not have electricity supply in the past two years. Well, the electricity issue is one major problem, our boreholes usually run dry in period like this (Dry season), though we are trying to fix this issue. The health centre, though they are well run, but we still need the help of government to assist us further. (IDI/Male/45 years/Ijesha-isu/2017)*

#### 4.3 Inclusion/Good Governance in Ikole LGA

It cannot be overemphasised that participation is contiguous to good governance in contemporary global context of leadership. Hence, within the rubric of governance, representation or inclusion of various stakeholders in all facets of policy-decision, budgeting and development programmes and action serves as a major measuring stick for effectiveness of governance (Kabeer, 2000; Sparc, 2012; Osborn, Cutter and Ullah, 2015; Alizar, 2016). This aspect especially forms the kernel of this study. The diagram below is a graphical representation of groups that study participants believe exist in Ikole communities.

**Fig.4.4: Types of groups available in the community**

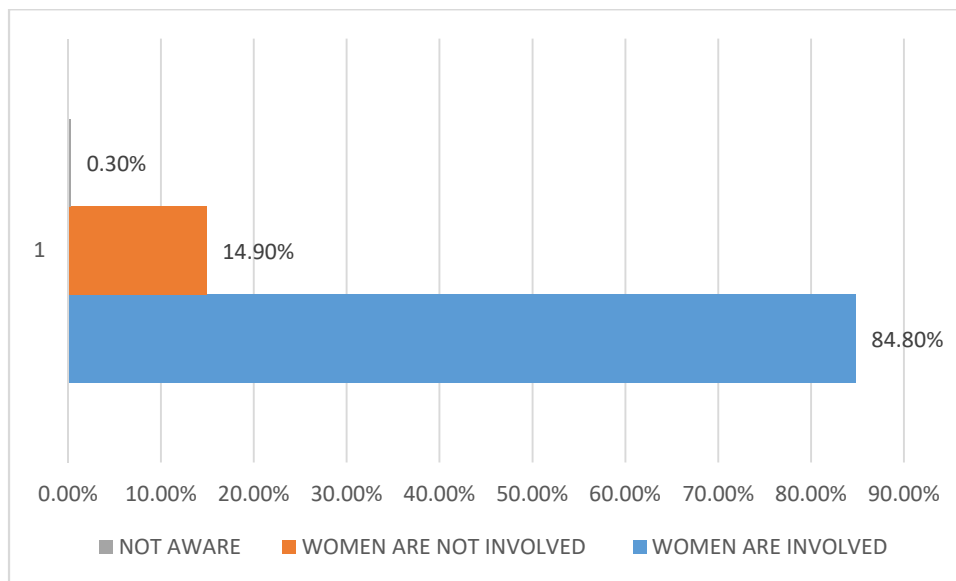


The simple interpretation of the graph above is that while majority of the respondents agreed that Ikole has groups of men, youths, age grades, women and political party, it is important to note that the preponderance of women groups in the communities is evident with 23.3% as against those of men with 9.6%, age grades with 10.2%, and youth with 17.2%. This is a vital pointer for engendered discuss in Ikole. As would be seen in the subthemes below, even

though groups can be termed important graphically, in-depth interrogation of their significance is usually fraught with ambivalences and contours.

#### **4.3.1 Gender**

The role women play in Ikole makes gender exclusion intractable even within the ambit of inclusive governance. The defence of the liminal right of women in the political and cultural realms is a norm that was observed among the participants across both gender. Accordingly, apart from certain restricted traditional positions, “women are the ones playing the most vital role in politics ...they constitute the most active group participating in virtually all the spheres that men are also operating, yet they are more active” (FGD/Intercommunity/2017). Women groups are actively pronounced in all the communities in Ikole and their activities cut across agribusiness, marketing and politics, and down to infinitum. In fact, some of the participants, without any sense of equivocation, said that women groups “contribute more than men” to community development “because they are very keen about seeing the community growing/developing” (KII/Male/Igbona/2017). More so, women usually “partake in political affairs of the community and their opinions are not just welcomed but also taken seriously” (IDI/Male/70/Oke-Ijebu/2017). In bringing the significance of women to bear, it was gathered that there are “up to ten women groups” in Ijesha-Isu who hold regular meetings and that “if there are any issues facing them, they are given speedy attention (IDI/Male/45/Ijesa-Isu/2017). In the same vein, in a group discussion with chiefs in Ara community, the participants unanimously pointed out that they held women in high esteem in their community. According to them, “*the women are effectively involved... the head of the community women is unavoidably absent because of an important meeting she has to attend*”. (FGD/Male/Elders/Ara/2017). This claim that women actively participate in governance in Ikole is further evidenced in the diagram below.

**Fig. 4.5: Perception about the involvement of women in government**

The percentage of those in favour of adequate involvement of women in governance, 84.8%, in Ikole makes the debate around gender exclusion in the area less plausible. Even though, the marginalisation of women was readily displaced by most of the participants, under-representation of female gender was still shrouded in the existing pattern of leadership at the community and local government levels. This is explicable when we consider the ratio of men to women in leadership positions. It must also be noted that there are some leadership functions in which the involvement of women is completely rescinded or obviated. For instance, in Otunja, and by extension the entire Ikole traditional institutions, “women are not allowed into Oba-in-council”, (the highest decision-making body in the community); they have their own line of authority and hierarchy headed by the women chief” (KII/Male/Chief/Otunja/2017). This traditional classification of functions by gender, no doubt, has implication for women in respect to decision-making processes on matters of their interest and general development of the community. In addition, the chance of women gaining political relevance is small compared to that of their male counterpart<sup>8</sup>. In reality, however, results of the finding reveal minimal exclusion of women in governance in Ikole, especially since of the problem associated with group exclusion in the local government applies to various groups alike save the ruling political parties and that “there is hardly anything men do that women cannot do” in most communities in Ikole (IDI/Male/2017).

<sup>8</sup> A participant narrated her personal experience in this regard saying “hardly do women contribute... it was once I was asked to join a committee and since then, no woman has been asked to join in governance” (IDI/Female65/Temidire/2017)

### 4.3.2 Youths

The youth component of Ikole is a vital lens from which inclusion in governance can be viewed. As such, beaming the searchlight on the youth of Ikole, it was gathered that youths are supposedly loosely integrated to the extent that they are seen as the future of Ikole (IDI/Male/54/Oke-Ijebu), force for social integration, unity and community development (KII/Male/84/Odo-Oro) in the way they engage in clearing of laybys and conflict resolution. However, the daunting challenge that however make youth exclusion palpable in Ikole is gross unemployment. Interrogations with different participants makes this claim substantive. For instance, it was a general consensus, among the participants drawn from various Ikole communities, in a group discussion that “the youth must be fully involved” (FGD/Intercommunity/2017). Decrying the menace of unemployment among youths, a participant exclaimed that he “had a meeting sometimes last September (2017) with our people (community residents)... I collected about 70 CVs of graduates who are jobless, even though I have been trying relentlessly since then to see them fixed up, nothing much has been done because the jobs are not readily available” (IDI/Male/70/Itapaji).

The foregoing depicts picture of reality confronting an average Nigerian youth – joblessness. This aligns with the submission of Ayinde and Yinusa (2016) and Offerdahl, Evangelides and Powers (2014) that employment opportunities for youths have not significantly increased with increasing level of literacy both at national and global levels. It is noteworthy that youths, if not properly integrated into the social system can generate tension for the system.

### 4.3.3 Budgeting

The importance of inclusion in the budgeting process cannot become trite in matters of inclusion and debates on good governance. It is in this light that various dimension that x-tray how popular participation in Ikole are examined in this section.

**Table 4.2: Dynamics of participation in Budgeting in Ikole: People’s Perception**

S/N	Variable	Categories	Frequency (N=598)	Percent (%)
1	The extent to which local government officials give feedback to citizens of this local government on the budget implementation.	To a large extent	141	23.6
		To some extent	84	14.0
		Rarely	84	14.0
		Never	258	43.1
		No response	31	5.2
2	Degree of participation of community members in budget	To a large extent	77	12.9
		To some extent	79	13.2



	process of the local government	To a little extent	137	22.9
		Not at all	285	47.7
		No response	20	3.3
<b>3</b>	Individuals commonly invited to budget meetings in the LGA	Political allies	328	55.7
		Opposition party members	26	4.4
		Civil society organisations (CSOs)	21	3.6
		Everybody	25	4.2
		Nobody	127	21.6
		Community leaders	53	9.0
		Others	9	1.5
<b>4</b>	The commonly excluded (not allowed) groups in budget processes in the community/LGA	No one	2	0.4
		Ruling party members	149	28.9
		Opposition party member	226	43.8
		Community leaders	29	5.6
		Everybody	106	20.6
		Other	4	0.8
		No response	82	13.7
<b>5</b>	Loudest voices (voices usually taken seriously) in budget issues in this community/LGA	Ruling party	342	58
		Opposition party	26	4.4
		Kings	82	13.9
		Chiefs	40	6.8
		Every community member	16	2.7
		Nobody	61	10.4
		CSOs	9	1.5
		Others	13	2.2
<b>6</b>	Criteria for participation/inclusion in budget process	Politics/party membership	373	75.5
		Level of education	29	5.9
		Age	26	5.3
		Sex/gender	16	3.2
		Indigeneship	18	3.6
		Others	32	6.5

Table 4.2 above reveals that various criteria are always used in to either include or exclude members of the society in budgeting process in Ikole Ekiti. One major liminal factor for exclusion as observed in the table is information: 43.1%, and of course the highest percent, of the respondents indicated that they do not get feedback from the local government regarding budgeting processes. This same trend is observed when the respondents were asked the extent to which the people of the community were allowed to participate in the budget design: 71.6% of the respondents said they had little or no opportunity to get involved in the process. When asked about those who usually participate in the budget design, 55.7% said it was political allies, 21.6% said nobody while a scraggy 4.2% said everybody was involved. In fact, politics (with 75.55 was ranked highest amongst the perceived criteria for inclusion in budget-related matters by the respondents.

Going by the numerical data above and general perception of people, it appears that contribution to budget and budgetary issues is not a matter of popular inclusion in Ikole.

Many of the participants resonated this in varying ways: some said budget is a matter that pertain only to those in the government circle, with majority referring to the local government; some decried inaccessibility of the budget plan; some contended the genuineness of the entire process as the wishes, wants and most importantly needs of the people are hardly reflected in the budget; a more pathetic view assigned deep politicisation to the entire process of budget planning and implementation in the area.

In his explanation on participatory budgeting, a participant, remarked that he had only witnessed an occasion “it was during Segun Oni’s (formal governor of Ekiti state) Administration that a pro forma, a questionnaire, was sent out that all communities should at least itemize what they need in order of priority. That was the first time it happened. Since then it has never happened” (KII/Male/Otunja/2017). He went further to explain that many of the heads of administration in the local government do “what they feel like” without informing the people to articulate their needs in their order of priority. This position aligns with the view of another participant from Itapaji whose view is directly quoted as:

*...Active participation in budgetary process will aid development. You see there are so many things to offer the people that are planning the budget, reasonable and brilliant ideas that can improve the standard of the community and not even the community alone that will boost the name of the local government if the recourses are properly utilized. (IDI/Male/70 years/Itapaji)*

The diagram below represents how Ikole is ranked by its people in terms of inclusive or participatory budgeting and accountability.

**Figure 4.6: Ranking of Ikole LGA in Key Areas on Inclusion by Its Citizens (5 being the highest)**

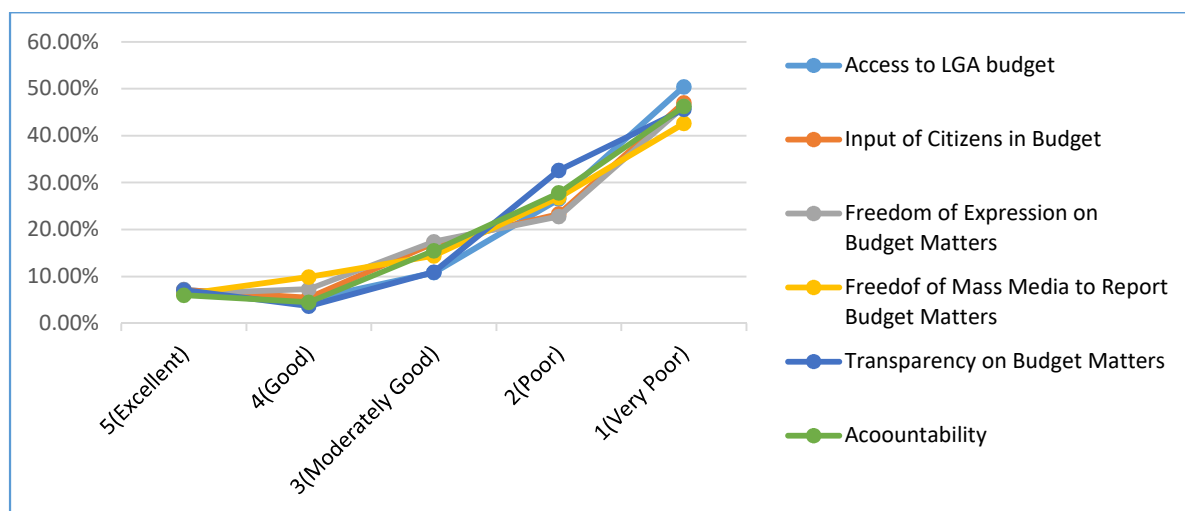


Figure 4.6 above shows that Ikole scored very woefully in all indicators of inclusiveness used in the diagram above. The diagram illustrates how citizens of Ikole scored Ikole poorly on access, freedom and feedback system of budgeting, transparency and accountability. Without missing words, the diagram shows that Ikole has a long way to go in giving its citizens a sense of belonging in matters associated with budgeting and accountability.

#### **4.3.4 Development Plan**

In Ikole, decisions on development plan does fall within the purview of popular participation at the local government level even though majority have idea about various community projects that are usually discussed and agreed upon in occasions like the end of the year festivals and town hall meetings. Construction of town hall, kings' palace and maintenance of public facilities are some of the development-related plan of activities embraced by Ikole residents. It is a common practice for most of the communities to aggregate their opinions and seek the consent of the people as to what community project they want to pursue at a point in time (IDI/Male/Ikole/2017; IDI/Female/54/Oke-Ijebu/2017; KII/Male/Otunja/2017; IDI/Male/70/Itapaji/2017). For instance, one of the participants from Ikole said:

*We do our things by ourselves: we do environmental sanitation and the head of that unit coordinates the work. Just as it is with other units of work in the community. For instance, we did not have toilets in our houses before but now most houses have toilets. And for those that do not have yet, plans have been made and the execution is already reaching completion stage under the charge of the head of sanitation.*  
(IDI/Female/ 65/Temidire/2017)

At Oke-Ijebu and Odo-Oro, the ongoing planned community project is the building of their king's palace (KII/Male/Oke-Ijebu/2017; KII/Male/84/Odo-Oro/2017). Aside getting the consent of the generality of the people in the community, it was however observed that final decision about project funding and implementation is a reserve of those in the topmost echelon of traditional chieftaincy in the communities (IDI/Male/50/Oke-Ijebu/2017)<sup>99</sup>. This is typical of what was meant when a participant said: "*We have Ile-kole council, they're the one*

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<sup>99</sup> This is also the view of majority of the participants who constantly referred to either their high chief of the royal king when asked about how projects were implemented in their various communities

*that deliberate on cogent matters regarding the growth of the community”* (IDI/Male/Ikole/2017).

The most worrisome aspect about inclusion with respect to project planning and execution in Ikole is that even though many of the participants lent credence to the fact that they are constantly kept abreast of intended and ongoing projects conceived at the community level, the local government, which is the closest of all the tiers of government to the people are indicted of shutting the people away from project plans meant for them. According to Afandi (2016), denial of citizens’ right to participate in governance will lead to distrust, increasing demands (that can ordinarily be met), stress and ultimately tension. This suitably describes the reality of Ikole local government administration.

#### ***4.3.5 Cross-cutting Issues and Other Challenges Associated with Inclusion in Ikole***

Several cross-cutting issues emanated from the study of inclusive governance in the communities that make up Ikole local government of Nigeria which are germane for evolving policies and programmes that can lead to ensuring proper inclusion/participation of various stakeholders and foster sustainable social, political and economic development in the area.

##### ***4.3.5.1 “We Want to Go...”***

A number reasons can be attached to people’s determination to vacate a place. In the case of this study, the outcry for departure is a subtle expression of exclusion. It was discovered that Ikole community, apart from being the administrative headquarter of the local government, also plays host to other communities like Ikoyi, Igbona, Usin, Ijebu-Ikunri, Isaba, Otunja and Temidire, amongst others who have been using Ikole land for several decades now. Meanwhile, the notion of hostility is quickly replaced with warm hospitality implied and expressed by Ikole people who claim to treat other surrounding communities with mutual respect and understanding<sup>10</sup>. Many of the neighbouring communities quickly displaced this pretext. Giving an example of an occasion in which Otunja made the second highest

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<sup>10</sup> For instance, a key interviewee from Ikole (KII/Male/Ikole/2017) said the location of project in the local government is not usually influenced by Ikole king as long as it was going to benefit the local government.

contribution to the pool of fund that was used for electrification of the local government, a participant narrated how Ikole had electricity since 1971 but “Otunja was excluded” until 2003 when an individual from Otunja took a bold step to intervene<sup>11</sup>. A similar story was relayed by some of the participants from Temidire, Ijebu-Ikunri and Temidire, to mention but few. In the case of Ijebu-Ikunri, it was gathered that many a time, the community does not benefit from empowerment programmes brought to Ikole (IDI/male/50/Oke-Ijebu).

The historical antecedent that bonded the communities in Ikole together, as narrated by one of the participants<sup>12</sup>, came about as a result of the need for contiguous but yet scattered towns needed to form a formidable force in Ikole. It was gathered that the then king summoned a meeting of all the heads of the towns and suggested their coming together; this was seen as a good suggestion by all the heads of the towns, hence the evolution of *Egbeoba*<sup>13</sup> kingdom which, ab initio, describes the solidarity of Ikole as an entity. With the passage of time and the demise of the kings that entered into the agreement, the agreement was purportedly subverted giving room to the subsequent inter-community marginalisation. “*That is the crux of the problem ... so the land we are on does not belong to us*”, was the way the participant described it. This development is consequential for the whole gamut of both inclusive and exclusive practices immanent in Ikole in contemporary sense, with special regards to discrepancies in holistic development of the communities. While some of the participants suggest separation or division of the local government, others feel the issues can be redressed (FGD/Ikoyi/2017; FGD/Youths/Temidire/2017; IDI/Male/Igbona/2017). Put differently, distrust is a major issue pre-empting people from participating in the collective development of Ikole. It must however be noted that the distrust is essentially not among the community members but an expression of lack of confidence in those at the administrative helms of authority in the local government administration. For instance, virtually all the participants scored the LGA poorly on transparency, accountability and inclusion of people in budgetary process and governance. Many of the communities outside Ikole, more often than not feel cheated in terms of project execution, allocation of resources and inclusion in development/budgeting processes. What is important here goes beyond the notion of completion or rivalry between or among the communities in Ikole but the need to tap into the benefit of pluralism such that the strength of one will compensate for the weakness of

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<sup>1111</sup> IDI/Female/52/Otunja

<sup>12</sup> KII/Otunja/Male/2017

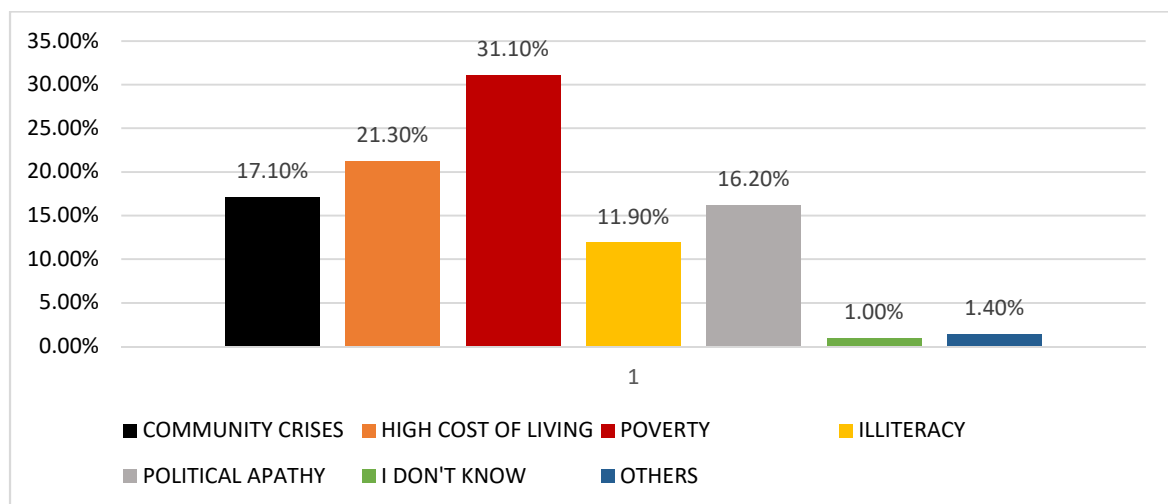
<sup>1313</sup> Egbeoba refers to coming together of kings ([www.tribuneonline.com](http://www.tribuneonline.com))

another. The uniqueness of Ikole, paradoxically, lies in the fact that it is the only LGA with as many as 24 communities with individual kings in Nigeria.

Aside the threat of separation, a more sinuous challenge is perceived politicisation of processes involved in governance resulting from this inter-community competition and exclusionary relations. Since the allocated resources to local government is never sufficient in the first place (Arowolo and Aluko, 2012), it could not have been surprising that element of favouritism will filter into sharing of resources like employment opportunities, citing of projects, appointments and other social and economic resources among the constituent communities. Very close to the challenge of favouritism is the issue of corruption, which, of course, has become an all-permeating cankerworm in Nigerian political and leadership space for some time now. The problems associated with poor electricity, water supply, group exclusion and other forms of anomaly in Ikole have been tied to pervasive corruption in the realms of governance (FGD/Intercommunity/2017).

In a more statistical term, although there are other challenges confronting the developmental strides in Ikole, poverty, high cost of living and political apathy rank as top three among the challenges identified by the respondents. This is represented in the diagram below.

**Fig. 4.7: Perceived Indicators Challenges/Weaknesses in Ikole**



Having examined some of the challenges undermining inclusive governance in Ikole, the next section goes further to show certain facile attributes imbued in Ikole social, economic and political spaces.

#### 4.4 Opportunities in Ikole

One critical issue associated with the current level of development in Ikole is possible ignorance or deliberate neglect on the part of administrative organs about the abundant potentials with which Ikole is endowed. Many of the participants pointed this out repeatedly. For instance, a chief in Igbona (KII/Traditional Chief/2017) lamented how many of the farm products from Igbona Ile perish in the farm due to the absence of access roads. He explained further that those who struggle to bring their agricultural products to market do so defining apparent challenges of using motorcycles, trekking long distance, high cost of transportation, poor proceed, and other forms of discouraging circumstances. This is the same experience of residents in Ara.

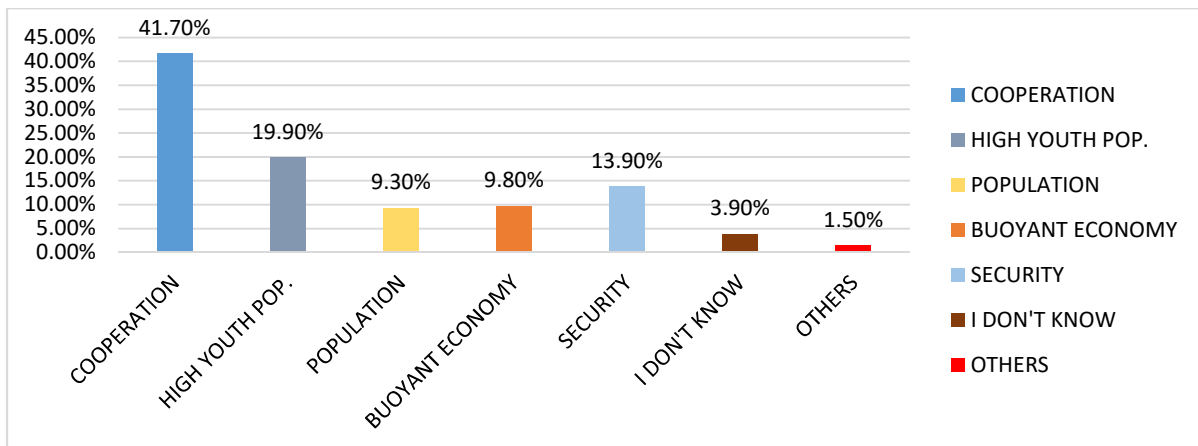
In the same vein, the demographic composition is another way to examine the chances of Ikole at upscaling the social and economic development of the local government. Ikole is blessed with relative youth and women demographics who have high potentials for active involvement in the development of their community<sup>14</sup>. When we consider the youth demographic component for instance, it will be revealed that the popular saying that an idle hand is the devil's workshop will hold true in a situation where the youths are poorly integrated into the system of governance.

There is relatively high level of intra-community cooperation and group cohesion in Ikole. In fact, this attribute ranks high among other things Ikole people attach premium value to (IDI/Female/41/Ipao/2017). As narrated by a participant, there is a system of sanction that helps in the maintenance of group cohesion, using Itapaji as an example, those who flout simple instructions, for example an instruction to converge for a meeting, do not go scot free: such individual(s) will have his/her mortal seized so they that they are not able to eat *iyam* (pounded yam) which, of course is the special delicacy of every Ekiti indigene (IDI/Male/70/Itapaji/2017).

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<sup>14</sup> See table 4.1 and figure 4.3 for graphical explanation of level of literacy in Ikole

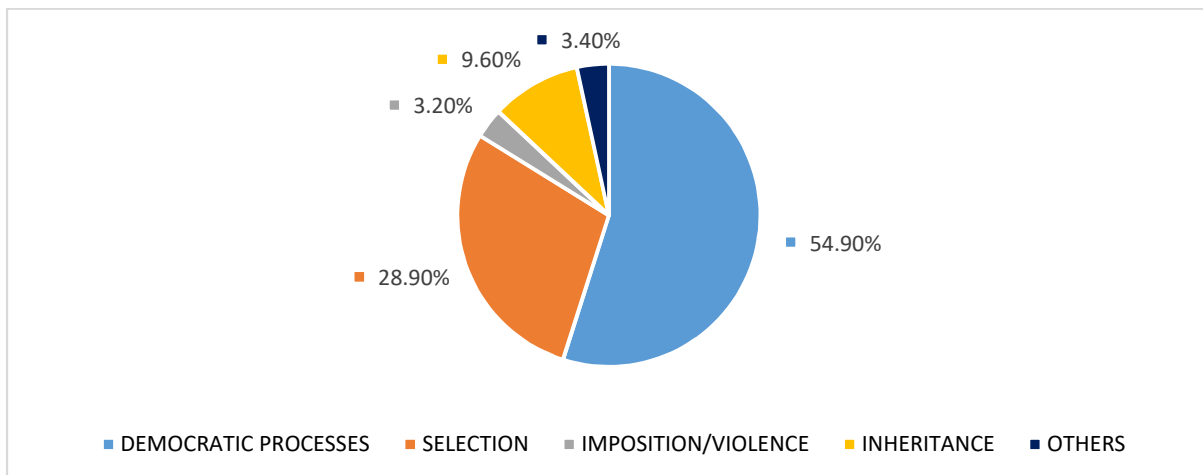
**Fig. 4.8: Perceived Opportunity Indicators for Community Development**



Level of literacy is an important component of Ikole that can serve as a lever for orchestrated development in the area. As shown in figure 4.7 and alluded to severally by participants (IDI/Female/Otunja/2017; KII/Male/Ara/2017), Ikole people are, at least on the average, educated.

It was discovered that Ikole people have preference for democratic mode of selecting their leaders across various groups over other means. This is illustrated below:

**Fig. 4.9: Perception about how group leaders emerge in Ikole**



As shown in figure 4.9 above, respondents indicated that group formation and choice of leadership hinge on democratic values which is tantamount to inclusiveness within the social structure. Considering the majority (54.9%) who indicated that group leadership emerges through democratic process, even though as much as 28% noted “selection” as a means of



choosing group leaders, we can suffice that group participation is to a large extent promoted at the group-level social intercourses. This can as well be seen as an enabler of development in Ikole.

Itapaji dam is another goldmine that has not been tapped into in Ikole. The challenge of complete or partial absence of electricity in most of the communities in Ikole can be tackled if Itapaji dam can be fully utilised “for generating hydroelectricity power”, irrigation purposes to cater for scarcity of water for farmers during the dry season, and water supply to various communities; but “it is quite unfortunate that we have a surplus pool of water but there is none to drink” (IDI/Male/70/Itapaji).

Participants were vocal about the neglect of groups like the physically challenged, women, farmers, and youths who formed the core of Ikole LGA in budget-related decisions. The following excerpt is an excerpt from a group discussion involving representatives from different communities in Ikole:

*Nothing like participation in budgeting is allowed at the local government level; everything comes directly from the state and what they give us is what we get. In addition to that, what government does is just to sit and strategise about a particular amount and call it the budget since no one is allowed to take part. (FGD/Intercommunity/2017)*

Given the above situation, it is therefore apparent that inclusion in budgeting remains a mirage within the context and practice of governance in Ikole. What is more to this situation is the tendency of those in governance to embark on projects and policies that may not have direct bearing to the needs of various groups in the area. For purpose of inclusive implementation and sustainability of project, for instance, agricultural development or poverty eradication programme as was the case of youth empowerment in Oke-Ijebu<sup>15</sup>, it is sine qua non that various stakeholders be given a good sense of belonging and active participation<sup>16</sup>, otherwise, and the budget will not deliver on its expected ends.

#### **4.5 Good Governance in Ikole Community**

The consciousness of the people of Ikole is commendable and shows that there is growing awareness among Nigerians about the impact of government even at the local government level. Again, it has been explained that there is consensus amongst contemporary scholars of

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<sup>15</sup> IDI/Male/50/Oke-Ijebu/2017

<sup>16</sup> In the view of Malena and Khallaf (ND), participatory budgeting (PB) is key to ensuring competitive bidding, monitoring of implementation of approved projects/investment decisions and general cooperation is project sustainability.

development that good governance is not only intertwined with development but also closely linked to adequate appropriation of “resources effectively to create wealth and, in addition, induce economic growth and engender sustainable development” (Arowolo and Aluko, 2012:803). And it is scarcely possible to comprehend this nucleus without taking into account the impact of governance on the governed in terms of physical and social amenities, economic advancement and general inclusion of the people in the process of governance. It is, therefore, clear that good governance is a comprehensive and yet deliberate process of providing for the needs of the people. Hence, opportunities, available infrastructures, level of inclusion of the people in development and other issues that have direct bearing or impact on the lives of the people, often serve as indicators that reveal whether the government in place is good or otherwise.

#### **4.6 Summary of Major Findings**

The major findings of assets, budget and inclusion in Ikole Local Government can be summarised as follows:

- Ikole is made up of homogenous group of Ekiti indigenes who differ in terms of traditional authorities - 24 communities with their respective sovereign kings.
- The communities in Ikole have good potentials for development due to the availability of good and accessible agricultural land, agricultural produce, local markets and symbiotic cohesion to which 87.7%, 82.6% 61.5% and 84.2% of the total respondents acceded to respectively.
- Residents of Ikole communities decry poor and inaccessible facilities like pipe borne water, roads, and electricity which they see as very critical for the development of Ikole local government.
- The people of Ikole have greater level of confidence in their traditional leaders and chiefs while they seem to have lost confidence in the local government administration.
- Ikole communities are moderately literate with, at least, 3 out of 5 people possessing at least secondary school certificate and 4 out of 5 having at least primary school educational qualification.
- Intra-community cooperation, security and communal cohesion are held in high premium in Ikole.
- Ikole communities possess high potentials for development given their level of communal cohesion and resilience and readiness to influence governance positively.

- Result of finding show that women are actively involved in governance in Ikole even though patriarchy still constitutes a snag in their full inclusion at the top echelon of authority at the community level.
- Youth unemployment is pervasive in Ikole and inhibits their full participation in all the processes of betting and governance.
- Inclusion of various groups in the society in development plan and budgeting processes is yet to assume wider coverage of all the constituent groups, especially with regards to involvement of women, the physically challenged, youths and those who do not play active role in party politics.
- Inter-community rivalry makes it difficult for all the communities in Ikole pursue development with a united front.

#### **4.7 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The baseline study on inclusive governance is expository in many ways. The communities in Ikole share some common attributes which help to strengthen their shared identity. These include local government area, historical background and cultural identity. Agriculture is a defining feature of virtually all communities in Ikole. Pervasive intra-community tranquillity, cohesion and cooperation make Ikole habitable for all and sundry, in fact it was discovered that some elderly people had spent their entire lives in Ikole due to relative peace they enjoyed. In the same view, resource like Itapaji dam give Ikole an edge over many other LGAs in Ekiti. It was also found out in the study that Ikole has high appreciation for engendered representation in governance and also score relatively high on democratic selection of group leaders at the level of communal relations.

Conversely, the study is explicit about some of the challenges undermining the development of individual community and the local government of Ikole as a whole. For one, the road network in Ikole is number one among the inhibitors of development in Ikole because since majority of the population of Ikole are predominantly farmers, lack of access road will make the transportation of their farm produce to the point of sale difficult. Many of the communities, especially Ara, lament partial or complete absence of electricity. Lack of good water, job opportunities for the teeming youth population and discounted popular participation in local governance constitute technical hiccups to development in the area.

The study symmetrically explored germane issues of inclusion in Ikole in line with the set objective. Having deciphered various indicators of inclusion and exclusion in the area, the study engaged thematic issues emanating from the data gathered, presented and analysed. The crux of the major findings is the revelation of the fact inclusion at various processes of begetting and development is inadequate. It is on this note that the following recommendations are advanced:

- Those in governance should try as much as possible to build or regain, as the case may be, the confidence of the people so as to make them participate actively.
- Since Ikole people are predominantly involved in agricultural activities, policy makers must tailor their policies to capture this demographic in the area.
- The challenge of inadequacy of electricity can be met by harnessing the resource of Itapaji dam that lies fallow. The dam can also be used to solve the problem of irrigation for farmers and water scarcity in various Ikole communities.
- If possible, the barriers limiting the involvement of women in all strata of authority, especially at the traditional level should be removed.
- Going by the realisation of the presence of high level of youth unemployment in the area, the need for intervention is quite recommended to prevent youth restiveness and other forms of urban unrest.
- The challenge of bad roads should be tackled head-on with the required urgency.
- Even though high level of cooperation is pronounced in respective community, for Ikole local government to achieve sustainable development holistically, inter-community rivalry must be minimised if not eradicated. This can be possible through re-orientation of people and projects. Lop-sidedness in the level of development across the communities should also be addressed.

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