

## Rural Roads and Other Rural Infrastructural Needs in Imo State: A Look at the Private Sector Capital Infusion Initiative

Uwazie, I. Uwazie & Obasi, M. N (Ph.D)

Department of Economics & Department of Geography  
Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri.  
[nwachukwu2005@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:nwachukwu2005@yahoo.co.uk)

**ABSTRACT:** A critical appraisal of the constraints imposed by the weak and poor rural infrastructure facilities in Imo State in particular and Nigeria in general was examined by this paper. Equally, the paper looked at the prospects of encouraging private investors to invest in the provision of rural roads, transport and other rural infrastructural needs. Although the study recognizes that rural roads and other rural infrastructural needs are public goods that should be provided by the government, several cases were cited to show that private sector initiatives in the provision of rural infrastructural facilities and services can be successful. The study equally suggested that the private sector can finance rural roads and other rural infrastructural through rural development levies, strengthening rural financial market and grants and aids to private investors. Government, the paper suggested should also improve on the present sorry state of our macroeconomic environment. When this is done, the paper concluded, it will generate the right incentives, improves efficiency and thereby eliciting the willingness of beneficiaries in rural communities to pay for services and facilities provided for them by private investors.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Generally, for a nation to develop there is need to construct and maintain roads both in urban and rural areas. With particular reference to the rural areas, a key element in rural development is the ability of the nation to overcome infrastructural constraints, especially that of rural roads in our rural areas. Hence, Balogun (1991) identified that these constraints relate to the acute shortage and lack of basic infrastructure and social amenities such as shelter, portable water, access roads, electricity, and education, among others. There is equally this general agreement that it is the responsibility of government alone at all the three tiers to provide these infrastructure needs in both the urban and more especially in the rural areas. This general belief according to many commentators on strategy for rural development is as a result of the huge capital outlay involved more especially in road construction, repair and/or maintenance. Anyanwu, Oyefusi, Oaikhenan and Dimowo (1997) observed that, "the provision of these facilities has often been perceived to be the responsibility of government alone but due partly to the large social overhead costs and in part to the high degree of social and economic externalities that they generate.

On its part, governments have been observed to indirectly discourage private initiatives and investments in this area. There is this feeling by the government that private sector user charges could be usury and discriminatory. More especially, it is often

argued that most rural beneficiaries of these infrastructures are poor and can ill-afford to pay economic rents, despite the advantages to be derived if provided by the private sector. Despite all these and more, evidence available within government finances and the ever-increasing demands on the poor and dwindling government revenue, rural infrastructural provision, especially rural roads is becoming a very difficult task for the government alone to undertaken. This fact was further buttressed by Balogun (1990) when he stated that, "the deteriorating revenues, coupled with weak administrative capacities have constrained the provision of road facilities by the government, rural areas being the worst hit". Hence, governments have been calling on private-sector initiatives to complement her efforts in rural development. It was as a result of this clarion call by the government that calls for the infusion of private sector capital to gear up the development of rural areas, especially rural roads and other rural infrastructures in a manner that is consistent with the overall national development aspiration and goals of the nation.

This paper, in the context of the above assertion will try to identify, apart from rural roads, other rural infrastructural needs that the private sector can invest into. Equally, the paper will discuss how the private sector can best finance rural roads construction, maintenance and other rural infrastructures, especially in Imo State. Lastly, the problems, challenges and prospects will be looked into before proffering some

solutions for consideration by the government.

### **1.1 Overview of the Economic Opportunities and Environmental Features for Private Sector Capital Infusion in Imo State**

One of the prime determinants of investment in a particular area, especially by private investors is the nature of economic opportunities to both the investors and the area in which the investment is to be located. Hence, the development of rural areas together with the road, transport and communication sectors of that rural area depends both on the environment and business opportunities. An attempt will be made to briefly examine and at the same time identify the economic opportunities in Imo State. Equally, the environment and social opportunities will be looked into. This will enable us to assess the rural infrastructural needs of the state in view of the present state of rural roads, rural transportation and other rural infrastructural needs.

### **1.2 GEOGRAPHICAL AND ENVIRONMENT FEATURES OF IMO STATE**

Imo, one of the states created during the military regime of General Murtala Mohammed on February 3, 1976 is one out of the 36 states in Nigeria. It was created from the old East Central State. Imo State occupies a land mass of 5,530 square kilometers. Imo State shares boundaries with Enugu and Ebonyi to the north, Anambra State to the west, Rivers state to the south and in the north, Abia, Cross River and Akwa-Ibom states to the East. It also has a local government area with coastline of over 30km. Average rainfall is measured at about 1990 mm to 2200mm and its daily temperatures ranges from a mean minimum of 20°C to a mean maximum of 32°C. There are also the dry and raining seasons. The climatic condition together with the temperature conditions of the state makes it an agricultural producing area. Presently, the state is made of 27 local government areas. There are more than 125 communities spread across the 27 local government areas. Majority of these communities live in the rural areas. The population of the state according to the 2006 census is about 2.9 million but the rural communities are inhabited by more than 60% of the population. This therefore suggests that 1.56 million lives in the rural areas. As usual, the urban population density is comparatively high. This situation has placed considerable stress on physical and social infrastructure in the urban areas. Erosion has also been identified as one of the environmental problems facing the state with some rural communities seriously threatened. The urban centers of the state, namely, Owerri, Orlu and Okigwe are suffering from environmental pollution due to the large concentration of the population in these areas. There is also the problem of acute shortage of housing and other social amenities.

### **1.3 RESOURCE ENDOWMENTS AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

The availability of arable lands lends itself to the cultivation of a wide range of crops; viz: maize, cassava, different kinds of vegetables. The cultivation of these crops cuts across all the local governments. It is instructive to mention here that Ohaji, Egbema, Oguta, Ngor-Okpala, Mbaize areas produce the bulk of the cassava, maize, yam, palm oil and vegetables that are consumed in the state.

Apart from the agricultural potentials of the state, there are also other natural resources such as clay at Okigwe, crude oil and palm plantations from Ohaji, Egbema and Oguta areas, etc. Opportunities therefore exist for profitable investment in rural agro-allied and other cottage industries. Due to the large area size of the state and population that live mainly in rural areas there are opportunities in road, motor transportation and related businesses. This is because Imo people travel very widely in search of business opportunities.

### **1.4 Infrastructural Needs and Government Achievement So Far**

On the basis of the environment and opportunities highlighted above, three major rural infrastructural needs can be identified. They are as follows:

- i. **Basic infrastructure:** Apart from the numerous other infrastructural needs of the rural areas, the basic ones include; rural roads, rural transportation, water supply and electricity.
- ii. **Social infrastructure:** The social infrastructures basically needed in the Imo rural areas in particular and others are; healthcare centers, educational facilities, recreation facilities, information and communication facilities, environmental sanitation facilities and rural housing scheme. When critically assess, with respect to the provision of these needs, data available show that the local government administrations, states ADP, the defunct DFRRI, IRROMA and other government agencies have played a dominant role in the provision of roads and other rural infrastructural needs of the people. It is also on record that the state ministries of health, information and environment cater mainly for social infrastructure.
- iii. **Economic infrastructure:** This type of infrastructure includes agro-service centers, allied industries, small scale industries, cottage industries, handcraft centers, rural banks, etc.

The only government policy/agency which has impacted greatly on rural roads and other rural infrastructure is the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI). Established by the then military President, Ibrahim Badamosi Babagida, this agency has been credited with proving the largest network of roads in our rural areas. The agency equally embarked on the provision of water, housing, electrification, etc. This fact was buttressed by Koinyan (1991) when he stated that, "it must be acknowledged, however, that DFRRI has played a dominant role in providing the infrastructures which are currently in place".

Despite all these initiatives by DFRRI and other government agencies till date, many rural communities are still without basic social amenities lack of funds are still stalling many initiatives of the state, hence the prospects of the provision of rural roads, rural transports and other infrastructural needs of our rural areas is not particularly too bright. This gives rise to the call on the private sector to join the government in the provision of these social amenities and other infrastructural needs of our rural areas. How then can the private sector generate the much needed funds to provide roads, transport and other infrastructural needs of our rural areas?

### **1.5 Mechanisms for Private Sector Capital Infusion in Rural Roads, Transport and Other Infrastructure**

There is no doubt about the fact that rural roads, transport and other infrastructure are partly public goods. It is equally subject to economics of scale which has resulted into natural monopolies. Hence, Inyang (1999) opined that, "this explains the overbearing dominance of government in the provision of rural infrastructure especially so since the private sector is unlikely to produce enough".

### **1.6 Rural Roads, Rural Transport and Associated Cost of other Rural Infrastructure**

According to Balogun (1989) when we consider the costs that are associated with weak infrastructure and the dwindling revenue of governments, there is sense in stimulating private sector investment to complement public efforts in the provision of rural roads and other rural infrastructural needs". This is because weak rural infrastructure including roads, water supply, housing, communication, adequate and comfortable transportation means etc., affects both the corporate and informal private sector more adversely in various ways. The key constraint is that it limits the integration of the rural with the urban markets which in turn seriously hinders accessibility to inputs and

services and increases costs. It also makes cost of business in urban cities expensive. Thus in turn encourages over concentration of industries and firms in urban cities, leading to over congestion, too much pressure on existing infrastructure and other social vices. Poor roads and transport have equally held back industrial distribution in different rural areas. This has affected the ability of many small industries to be sited in those areas.

A look at rents (especially house rents) in Owerri, Orlu and Okigwe urban areas shows that people are today spending a substantial part of their income in paying rents. Equally, many firms provide their own electricity, water, security, etc. the cost of such private facilities is estimated to be between 20 – 28% of what it takes firms to produce. This no doubt reduces the profitability and productivity of firms while increasing the selling cost of their end products.

### **1.7 Benefits of Private Sector Initiatives in Rural Roads and other Rural Infrastructural Needs**

According to the World Bank (1994) "the adequacy of infrastructure helps determine one country's success and another's failure—in diversifying production, expanding trade, coping with population growth, reducing poverty, or improving environmental conditions. Good infrastructure raises productivity and lowers production costs". This is in line with the fact that aside from cost savings and/or reduction in urban business transactions, several other externalities could result from encouraging private sector investments in rural roads, rural transport and other rural infrastructure. How then can private investors benefit in the construction and maintenance of roads, transport facilities (such as buses, motor parks, etc) and other infrastructural needs of rural areas?

Firstly, the productivity and efficiency of both urban and rural businesses could improve. Evidence worldwide shows that significant improvement and gains in efficiency were recorded in Malawi when community members began the planning, construction and management of their own roads, transportation, and other projects. Hence, if rural, communities can come together to help develop their areas, private investors can also liaise, with the rural communities in the provision of rural infrastructure at a cost that the rural communities can afford Secondly, Balogun (1990) highlighted that infrastructure, such as roads, motor parks, etc are long-lived, and as a rule inherently monopolistic. Governments must therefore take overall responsibility for it. But an important distinction can be made between the facilities and the services they provide. The private sector can play a useful role in managing the services, even when government builds and control the facilities. This role is even more urgent now than ever given the poor state of our highways,

urban roads and that of our rural roads that are worst hit. Among the set-backs in government-owned facilities Inyang (1999) opined, are “inadequacy, poor performance due to lack of a professional cadre of managers and technicians, pursuit of policies which fail to emphasize financial viability and service quality, under pricing which has led to delay and scarcity, and which manifests itself in wastes and shortages especially in rural areas. In many countries, especially in Sub-Saharan African countries, the failure of public services has forced individuals and companies to invest in electric generators, boreholes, radio-equipped couriers, among others. This demonstrates both the scope for private infrastructure services and the willingness of users to pay for such services.

Thirdly, it is possible for the cost of providing these infrastructural services and facilities to be considerably reduced for the rural dwellers by the private-private services providers. For instance, it is known that the costs to the public for infrastructure maintenance are very high when handled through public bureaucracy. The major cause is the poor public procurement and contract administration, low labour productivity and failure to take full advantage of the available small-scale, labour intensive procedures for developing, maintaining and supplying infrastructure services. This also contributes to stifling private sector initiatives in small scale infrastructure building, especially attempts to use local resources for road construction, irrigation, etc. (Uwazie, 2000)

Fourthly, the participation of private investors in the provision of rural infrastructural facilities may elicit the need for cost recovery. In the public sector, the urge for cost recovery and maintenance has often been low. It is public knowledge that those agencies charged with revenue generation for the three tiers of government have been notoriously poor in discharging their responsibilities. The reason is that they do not depend on the revenue generated to finance their yearly budgets. According to Balogun (1991), “This is more so when people cannot appreciate the value of the services being provided and indeed attempt to subvert the cost-recovery process for personal gains. “He further stated that, “where users themselves and /or private sector agencies have helped to operate and maintain infrastructure, they have collected charges successfully. Operational discipline would also be brought to bear to minimize capacity losses and services charges.

## **2. Other Areas in Which the Private Sector Have Successfully Participated in Rural Infrastructure Provision**

At this point, one would like to know whether there are other areas in which the private sector has successfully participated in the provision of rural

infrastructure needs. To this extent therefore, a careful examination of some other areas that the private sector has infused capital will enable us to determine whether they can succeed in road construction.

**2.1 Private Water Supply:** It is a known fact that most public water system have completed broken down since the last ten years. Especially in Imo State, the three major towns of Owerri, Okigwe and Orlu have been without public water supply. When taken into consideration, the rural areas are virtually without public water supply. Most of the water consumed by the rural dwellers is either from streams or private water bore holes. Infact, available evidence shows that water is today provided by private investors who drill bore-holes, power it with their private generating sets and sell to rural dwellers. They cover their cost and still make profit. What needs to be done by the government is to provide the enabling environment for them to operate (Ehinomen, 1998).

**2.2 Refuse Collection:** Most refuse and other wastes are today collected by the private sector. These people enter into private contracts with the occupants of a house to collect, transport and dispose of the full range of wastes. No doubt, these arrangements have been working without costing the government anything.

**2.3 Passenger Transport and Trucking:** Public transportation system today is the major provider of intra-rural and inter-city transport. They have made a huge success in transportation and trucking human beings and cargo respectively. Despite the non-availability of adequate finance and the sorry-state of our roads, individuals and other private firms have demonstrated considerable success in providing efficient transport services on many urban and rural routes at a profit and within recommended government tariff levels.

**2.4 Labour-Intensive Road Maintenance:** In constructing, rehabilitating and maintenance of roads, heavy equipments are intensively made use of. However, a lot of savings can be made if small scale village or rural-based contractors are given the opportunity to maintain them. Some developing countries in Africa such as Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, etc have successfully implemented such pilot projects in infrastructure services provision in their rural communities. As part of the initial public investments on rural road infrastructure, these contractors should be given practical training, followed by trial, contracts, so as to ascertain the extent of their commitment to



service. These contractors hire more than 200 - to - 250 labourers a day and can equally produce on the average two kilometers of high quality gravel roads per month. From evidence, rural roads rehabilitation can be done at 25 per cent cheaper than conventional methods, with up to a 40 percent savings in foreign exchange. Wages paid the rural labour contribute to cash earnings, which stimulate the rural economy.

**2.5 Rural Electrification:** In Imo State for instance, the provision of rural electrification has always been undertaken by the communities. This fact was buttressed by Balogun (1990) who stated that “community efforts have been instrumental in the provision of basic infrastructure for electricity supply. Most communities provide poles, cables, plants and plant sites and pay for installation charges.

**Social Infrastructures: Schools, Health Centres and Community Hall.** Community efforts are also very pronounced in the provision of social infrastructure in many rural areas of Imo State and Nigeria in general. Such facilities as schools, health centres, community halls, etc were built and financed solely through private and non-governmental communal efforts while the relevant government ministries which have overall responsibility for providing the social infrastructural services such as education authorities, health management boards are invited to take them over.

### 3. How Private Sector Can Source for Funds for Rural Infrastructural Provision

One of the major obstacles towards the development of our rural areas is the issue of finance. Due mainly to the dwindling revenue base of the government, it has become imperative that the public-sector must join hands together with the government to accelerate rural development. This has also given the present call for public-private sector partnership in service and infrastructural provision. What then are the sources available to the private sector for financing rural roads, and other rural infrastructural needs? This paper therefore suggests the following;

**3.1 Rural Development levies and taxes:** This can come through consumption taxes or levies on income. Such consumption tax on petroleum products and educational levies could form important sources of funds for investment in rural roads, transport and other rural infrastructural needs.

**3.2 Pricing of Infrastructure Services:** Government should adopt full-cost pricing of infrastructure services such as roads and drainage, rural electricity, water

supply, and telecommunication. Funds generated from these sources could help in infusing private sector capital into rural infrastructure provision. Charging for services will guarantee that most public infrastructure could generate revenue and create the urge to entrust and/or stimulate private sector commitment towards the provision of infrastructure services. Private sector’s willingness to pay for social services, especially health and education is very high even among rural people.

**3.3 Community Savings Mobilization:** There are two ways in which community savings can be mobilized. They are through cash savings or savings through the use of community labour. In Imo State and Nigeria in general, community development has been carried out through the use of community labour. Many communities utilize their people in the construction of basic, social and economic infrastructure. Equally, community labour is used in road construction, maintenance and repair. Motivation is usually very high as the direct beneficiaries are the people. Such projects according to Uwazie (2000) are “an effective means of using free and private sector non-governmental organizations’ resources to meet the community’s most urgent needs”. Example of these efforts abound in many parts of Imo State whereby community development efforts were used to provide rural roads, rural water, schools, electricity, health centres, etc.

**3.4 Strengthening Rural Formal and Informal Financial Markets:** The potential of mobilizing rural informal and formal savings in Imo State is very great. What the government needs to do is to strengthen the present savings pattern in our rural areas. Funds accessed through this medium can be channeled towards the provision of rural roads, transport and other rural infrastructure needs. With reference to the formal financial market, development bonds could be sold in the money and capital markets for the provision of rural infrastructures. Industries could be persuaded by the government to purchase these bonds. Government should also educate the rural beneficiaries to pay for the services as a way of repaying the money used in purchasing the bonds.

**3.5 Grants and Aids:** Financial assistance in form of grants and aids could be sought from many non-governmental organizations and agencies towards financing rural infrastructural needs. Multi-lateral agencies could also provide development assistance tailored towards providing basic amenities to the rural poor. Although this source might pose a little problem,

but such external assistance is contingent on the existence of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have demonstrated the will to commit such resources towards the cause of the rural poor (Balogun, 1991).

#### **4. Problems, Challenges and Policy Implications**

##### **4.1 Problems and Challenges:**

The potential for private sector investment in rural roads, transport and other infrastructural needs in rural areas of Imo State and Nigeria is very high, but realizing it will depend on the enabling environment, macroeconomic environment and incentives. Other factors on which the success of this venture depends upon includes; availability of adequate technology, adequacy of planning and implementation capacities, budgetry and financial constraints and the prospects of eliciting the peoples willingness to pay. These factors can be elaborated upon as follows;

When one talks about the enabling and macroeconomic environment under which private capital is expected to be used in the provision of rural roads, rural transport and other rural infrastructural needs, the Nigerian economic environment comes into the picture. The unstable economic environment is one of the problem area envisaged in infusing private capital in rural infrastructure needs. The unstable financial sector, policy somersaults and corruption posses lots of problems towards the achievement of this idea of using private capital in the provision of rural infrastructure. Despite the numerous economic reform agenda of the government, the Nigerian macroeconomic environment is still unstable for private investors to succeed as they may want to.

Another problem area identified is the lack of adequate and needed technology for the provision of rural infrastructural facilities and services. There is the need to improve on our local technologies needed for the development of our rural areas. For example, only very few local companies fabricate local equipments needed for road construction, maintenance and repair. In terms of transportation, no firm produces spare parts of vehicles used in both urban and rural transportation. All the technologies for road construction, transportation and provision of other rural infrastructure are all imported. The prospects of getting indigenous firms to undertaken the production and fabrication of these equipments is poor as only one research institute, PRODA (Products Research And Development Agency) located in Enugu is engaged in local fabrication of some equipments”.

Thirdly, in Nigeria, we have weak capacity for private sector infrastructure services investment planning and implementation. Some of the factors that are responsible for this include lack of and/or absence of well-articulated rural infrastructure development

plans and priorities. Since after the establishment of DFFRI and its subsequent abandonment there is no articulated rural development policy framework which has the issue of public-private partnership in rural development. To this extent, government needs to reactivate DFFRI as it is a veritable rural development policy framework for rural infrastructural provision. The issue of policy somersault of the Nigeria governments has earlier been mentioned. Hence, DFFRI needs to be resuscitated as it is the only comprehensive policy for rural development in Nigeria.

Another identified problem area is on the issue of funds and finance for investment in rural roads, transport and other rural infrastructural needs. We have earlier stated that the issue of private capital infusion in the provision of rural infrastructure in Nigeria is only to complement public investment by the government. However, Balogun (1991) opined that “evidence available shows that public investments on rural infrastructure have been inadequate”. He went on to posit that total government expenditure in rural development, both states, local and federal government is less than 5 percent of their total yearly budgets. It has been confirmed beyond any doubt that Nigeria spends less on rural development than other African countries. This is inspite of the fact that 80 percent of foods consumed in the cities are produced in the rural areas. Equally, agriculture, which is predominant in our rural areas accounts for over 45 percent of Nigeria’s total GDP.

Related to the above problems is the weak base for accessing credit needed for rural infrastructural provision by private investors. Among the key problems that have continued to poses severe bottlenecks are, high interest rates, inefficiencies in our banking system, apathy of banks towards financing rural infrastructural facilities due to the low returns associated with it, etc. All these have constituted serious problems towards generating funds for rural infrastructure in Nigeria.

The other major problem to be encountered in the infusion of private infrastructure hast to do with the willingness to pay by the beneficiaries of these projects. This is because our people, especially, the rural dwellers believes that government services are for free and even when provided by private investors, their thinking may likely be the same.

##### **4.2 Policy Implications**

Having carefully, reviewed the need for private investors in rural infrastructural needs, the paper is therefore of the view that a comprehensive policy review should be undertaken by the three tiers of government. In that line, the paper is suggesting that the policy framework of the then Directorate of Food, Roads, and Rural Infrastructure (DFFRI) should be

revisited with a view to resuscitating it and incorporating the contents into an enlarged and enhanced rural development policy.

The practice in which no budgetary provision is made in our budgets and the non availability of an integrated rural development policy framework will no doubt discourage private investors from investing in rural roads and other rural infrastructural facilities. Government has a duty to change this.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

With the present state of the finances of the three tiers of government, coupled with the expanding demands of the resources available to them, it is apparent that the private sector's contribution to rural infrastructural needs is very vital to the overall development of the nation. To achieve this will require a constructive effort by the government to overcome the problems and challenges enumerated in this paper. The present economic environment in which the micro and macro variables are operating needs to be restructured. Unless urgent national attention is paid to the banking sector, policy formulation, inconsistencies in policy implementation, corruption, etc., it will be difficult to attract private sector finance into rural infrastructure provision.

The present 7 points agenda, the deregulation policy and banking sector reforms should be overhauled with a view to making it more people oriented. This reform presently being witnessed in the banking system needs to be dropped as it is affecting lending to private investors. With this kind of reforms it will be difficult for private investors to invest (infuse) capital in rural infrastructure. No doubt, with the right business environment, right incentives and policy framework, private businessmen can be efficient providers of rural infrastructure.

The quality of policy can equally make a big difference in infusing private sector capital into rural infrastructure. A strong policy framework will increase the economic rate of return of investment on rural infrastructure and shift the current overbearing role of the public sector towards the private sector. Hence, this paper is recommending the following options that government should adopt in encouraging private capital infusion in rural infrastructural provision.

Government should as a matter of urgent national attention begin the process of private-public partnership initiative in the provision, maintenance, repair and management of roads, using rural roads as a test case. To this extent, all unnecessary barriers and bottlenecks should be removed and the way paved for private investors. With full deregulation in the education, health, transport and other sectors of the economy, government should fast-track the full deregulation in the road sector. This will definitely

encourage private sector capital in the provision of roads and other infrastructural needs in the rural areas. Secondly, the overbearing dominance of the government in the provision of rural infrastructure should be tuned-down. In its place; government should provide tax relief for private investors wishing to go into these areas. This is in line with the poor revenue base of government and the persistent call by the government for public-private partnership initiative in service delivery and management.

Thirdly, government information and planning processes should be improved upon through supporting financial and information systems led by the private sector. Government should from the on-set specify the desired roles for the private sector in our national plans. This will prepare private entrepreneurs who are willing to undertake projects under such plans.

Fourthly, there should be better access to credit for those wishing to develop rural infrastructure. The financing and refinancing of specialized agencies such as NERFUND, SME and such other related facilities should be provided for them. With the proposal to establish an Urban Development Bank, government should also set in motion the machinery for the establishment of Rural Development Bank. This will ensure the development of rural and urban areas simultaneously.

Fifthly, efforts should be put in place to encourage entrepreneurs wishing to exploit opportunities in rural infrastructure facilities and services. According to Uwazie (2009), government and donor agencies should encourage private investors by funding research facilities and by helping to disseminate commercially viable projects. Government should do this through higher institutions of learning by encouraging career that combine technical expertise with business skills. Programmes that bring research students in closer contact with local business initiatives in infrastructure services will help to build the necessary linkages between academic institutions and the business community.

When all this policy initiatives are fully implemented, it will definitely induce the private sector to invest in rural roads, rural transport and other rural infrastructure facilities and services. This would automatically lead to the emergence of a new set of private entrepreneurs with its attendant job creation opportunities in the rural areas. All that government needs to do is the creation of an enabling environment designed to release the potentials of the people to their full capacity for enhancing both rural and urban infrastructural facilities.

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