



Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa



Community Entry and Stakeholders Mapping Report

Prepared by

Academic Associates PeaceWorks

Godson Jim-Dorgu, Tega Edeki and Ken Omavuayenor

www.aapw.org

for

**Ugborodo Community in Warri South-West LGA,
Delta State. Nigeria.
September 19, 2022.**



Funded by The European Union



Picture Showing How Rise in Sea Level Destroys Shoreline Vegetation in Ogidigben Community

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations	4
Introduction.....	5
Brief History and Location	5
Socio-Economic and Political Context	5 - 6
Ogborodo Governance System	6
Gender Equality	7
Ogborodo Community Institutions, Governance and Functions	7
Environmental and Climatic Characteristics	8 - 9
Livelihood Systems and Analysis.....	10
Agricultural Livelihoods.....	10 - 11
Non - Agricultural Livelihood	11
Challenges of Livelihood Systems	12 - 13
Climate Change, Vulnerability and Conflict Analysis	13 - 14
Causes of Conflicts, Severity and Frequency	14 – 15
The Role of Oil companies and Community Relations	15 - 16
General Observation and Lessons Learnt	17
Recommendations for Intervention.....	17 - 18
Conclusion	18

Disclaimer!

This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Academic Associates PeaceWorks and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.

List of Abbreviations

AAPW	Academic Associates PeaceWorks
ADP	Agricultural Development Program
CC	Climate Change
CDC	Community Development Committee
CDP	Community Development Plan
CSN	Community Stakeholders Network
DESPADEC	Delta State Oil Producing Areas Commission
DPO	Divisional Police Officer
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
EU	European Union
ECOWAS	Economic Community for West Africa
FAIMM	Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile
HOMEF	Health of Mother Earth Foundation
IRDC	Itsekiri Regional Development Council
PIA	Petroleum Industry Act
LGA	Local Government Area
LGC	Local Government Council
SPDC	Shell Petroleum Development Company
WANEP	West African Network for Peacebuilding

Introduction

Academic Associates PeaceWorks (AAPW) is implementing a project with three partners, referred herein as consortium members, namely Fondazione Accademia Italiana della Marina Mercantile (FAIMM), Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), and West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) with support from the European Union (EU). The title of the project is “Coping with Climate Change as a Cause of Conflict in Coastal Communities of West Africa (C7-WA). The aim of the project is to strengthen West African Coastal Communities’ resilience to cope with climate change and conflict by developing innovative tools related to conflict sensitive climate change (CC) adaptation and prevention of environmental crimes that exacerbate climate change impact on communities as well as monitoring of the impact of climate change as a driver of conflict.

To achieve this, the project intends to develop tools, based on innovative research and global best practices, which will be tested through the establishment of a Community Stakeholders Network, constituted with highly influential community stakeholders’ by AAPW. The CSNs will then be trained to deliver nature based innovative solutions to the CC challenges in the region, through a large-scale capacity building program, targeting communities and local actors. Information about climate change and conflict will be used to update the ECOWAS regional framework for Conflict prevention and early warning.

While, the CSNs will be trained to advocate and mobilize resources to address the CC challenges, the project will also finance climate change mitigation or adaptation interventions of the project targeted communities in the Niger Delta through a small-scale grant scheme.

Brief History and Location

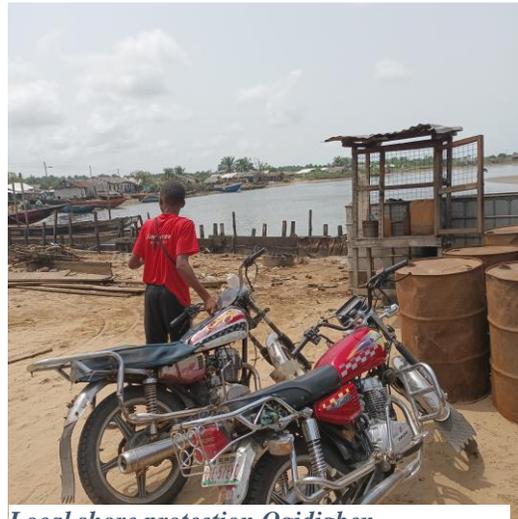
Ugborodo communities in Warri South-West Local Government in Delta State comprises of sub-communities namely; Ode-Ugborodo, Ogidigben, Ajudaibo, Madangho and Ijaghala. According to the people, Ugborodo refers to dry land in the sea, meaning an Island with Ode-Ugborodo as the traditional headquarters of the other sub-communities. They are Itsekiri and among the first people to come in contact with Europeans, initially the Portuguese. An Itsekiri prince- Olu Dom Domingos was educated in Portugal in 1600-1611 and was the first graduate in sub Saharan Africa. The Itsekiri’s have a very structured and central traditional administration. Ode-Ugborodo is located at the bight of the Atlantic Ocean, and can be accessed from Benin through the Benin River and through Warri by boat.

Ode-Ugborodo is located on Latitude 5°35'40"N and Longitude 5°10'27"E. See link for map. <http://static.maphill.com/12/img/t.gif>

Socio-Cultural, Economic and Political Context

During festive periods, various communities in the clan would organize social events for entertainment. The Ise festival is also a very popular cultural activity for cleansing, protection and unity of the kingdom.

Ode-Ugborodo is host to SPDC and Chevron oil companies. The famous Escravos Oil Terminal owned by Chevron and the abandoned Export Processing Zone project of Delta State Government are located in Ugborodo community. Apart from oil resources, the people are also blessed with marine, mangrove and forest resources. The area is located at the bight of the Atlantic Ocean; thus, fishing is the predominant occupation. Other economic activities include farming, canoe carving, artisans, hunting and petty trading, general construction skills, such as welding, pipe fitting, plumbing, painting etc. Ugborodo is a centre of Nigeria's crude oil and natural gas production and petroleum refining. The main town Warri (a multi-ethnic metropolis) forms the industrial and commercial nucleus of that region of Delta State



Local shore protection Ogidigben

The Itsekiris are mostly educated and exposed to western civilization. Thus, they are spread across Nigeria and are endowed with different accomplishments in business, industries, civil service etc. They are politically conscious and outstanding in their resolve to foster development in Delta State. The level of political participation among the Itsekiris is high and profound.

Ugborodo Governance System

Ugborodo has an exceptional governance system. They have the Ugborodo Council of Elders. Membership is by lineage. The eldest Man in each sub-community becomes the head of the Community called, the Olare-Aja and the eldest woman Olare-Ebiren.

The next in authority is the Ugborodo Community Trust. This body is comprised of persons nominated to represent each sub-community. A minimum of 2 persons each are nominated by the sub-communities as their representatives. Members of the Ugborodo Community Trust, are then required to agree on executive positions among them. Thereafter, they are inaugurated and mandated to engage all oil companies and other development partners within and outside the community. Their decision making process is collective; for instance, various institutions within the governance system of Ode-Ugborodo are consulted on key issues that affect the community. Hon. Thomas Ereyitomi, representing the Warri Federal Constituency in the National Assembly was the immediate past chairman of the Ugborodo Trust body.

There is the National Youth Executive, a body of those in the youth category from the five communities to handle some form of employment issues. Members of the National Youth Executive serve as a hub of information on community issues which are disseminated through the Community Youth Chairman and his executive members for implementation.

The Eldest in the community inaugurates the community Youth Executive. The Youth Body when inaugurated would constitute a Task Force in charge of security, maintenance of law and order.

The highest decision making body in Ugborodo community is the General Meeting or Congress of Ugborodo people, usually summoned by the Eghare-Aja or the Olajor. However, in the absence of the Eghare-Aja, during a General Meeting or Congress, the oldest person will be appointed to chair the said meeting.

Gender Equality

Delta State generally is a patriarchal society, like other Niger Delta States. However, there are women chiefs and women participation in the decision making process of communities. Women are recognized and given representative functions in the community governance system but they are still subservient to the men in the leadership and decision-making process of the kingdom. They perform auxiliary roles in the leadership, decision-making and implementation. They are not expected to question decisions of the men. According to some, this has changed tremendously as women now agitate for their rights.

Ugborodo Community Institutions, Governance and Functions

S/ No	Institution	Functions
1.	Ugborodo Council of Elders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headed by the traditional head of Ugborodo community the Eghare-Aja • It is an Advisory Body • Mediate between parties in conflict, Intervene for peace and stability in the kingdom
2.	Ugborodo Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is in charge of administration in the community • Engage government, oil companies on behalf of the community
3.	Ugborodo National Youth Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle matters of employment • Advocate for employment opportunities • Allocate employment opportunities to sub-communities • Inaugurate the community Task Force
4.	Women Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent the women and implement decisions that affect women • Disseminate information to the community-based women executives • Coordinate the women at the community level • Organize programs targeted at women development
5.	General Meeting or Congress of Ugborodo People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest decision making body of Ugborodo community

Environmental and Climatic Characteristics

Climatic conditions of coastal settlements tend to be similar in nature. Ugborodo community is surrounded by estuaries linking the Atlantic Ocean. The area is covered by mangrove vegetation with fresh water forest in the hinterlands. According to the people, their forest is endowed with economic trees, animals and other forest resources. Nypa palm invasion in the area is predominantly high and the people complained, that apart from the use of mangrove trees for fire and wood, nypa palms have also contributed to the loss of mangrove in the trees area. According to Aloroye O. Numbere, in his publication; Impact of Invasive Nypa Palm (*Nypa Fruticans*) on Mangroves in Coastal Areas of the Niger Delta Region, Nigeria: Coasts in Crisis. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326608415>, Nypa palms are a major threat to mangroves and coastal systems in the Niger Delta region in Nigeria, apart from oil and gas exploration. The palms were first introduced as foreign species to curb coastal erosion over a century ago (i.e. 1906). They later became invasive and started multiplying in the last 30 years. The palms have acclimatized to the coastal environment by developing a superior root system, which they use to tap available nutrients. They also have tough and buoyant seeds, which aid in their wide dispersal. These qualities of the palms have given them an edge over the mangroves.

Another issue that was raised by community members is the issue of oil and gas exploration; according to them, oil activities, including exploration, bunkering and artisanal refining in the area is the major cause of oil spillages, that has polluted the environment and has destroyed the ecosystem. Aquatic lives, mangroves, etc. are decimated. This according to the people has reduced livelihoods in the community.

The weather condition in Ogidigben is generally similar to most coastal communities in the Niger Delta. The Temperature hovers around 29°C to 35°C during the day and at night it falls to about 24°C. The area gets 394.71mm of rain and approximately 21 rainy days in the month. Humidity is close to 86%. For instance, Ogidigben climate weather average forecast on Friday 10th June 2022 was Temperature around 30°C and at night 24°C. with 391.26mm of rain and approximately 22 rainy days in the month.

Ugborodo is surrounded by several creeks and rivers. It is the linkage of River Nun, River Forcados and the Atlantic Ocean. It has both freshwater swamp forests and mangrove swamp forests with an altitude of about 12.00m/39.37ft. The area is characterized by the following climatic conditions:

Flood and Erosion:

Communities of Ugborodo area are experiencing continuous rise in Sea water coupled with heavy rain fall resulting in serious flooding, which has destroyed many houses along the coastline. Natural fresh water lakes used for fresh water fish conservation that take sometimes up to three years' interval before harvest are no longer viable for stocking of fish, due to flooding as a result of the sea surge and salt water infiltration into the lakes. Fresh water fish cannot survive the alkalinity or salty water from the sea. Similarly, farms are flooded with salt water from the sea, destroying plants. "The speed of sea surge has never been experienced in the past. We were never worried about sea surge because it will increase sometimes and it has a way of filling back sand to areas it has washed away but

this time, it is washing away houses in short periods. Local efforts for shore protection cannot stop the surge”. This was the explanation of a community leader.

Salty Ground Water: According to the people, arable land, used for farming activities in the area has become swampy. Apart from that, underground water has become salty. A woman said: “most households in Ogidigben and other sub-communities in Ugborodo used to boast of gardens in the past around their houses, where we plant short term crops and vegetables such as okro, ugu, bitter leave, pepper, etc and we used to enjoy fresh vegetables harvested directly from our farms and gardens for cooking at home but such plants no longer grow or do well any longer in the community. What could be causing it if not the salt water that has risen underground?” The women with her at Ogidigben Health Centre supported what she said by explaining that, in the past, one will dig the soil up to about 2 or more feet in some places before water gushes out of the soil, but currently, water surges less than a foot digging and it’s salty, raising their curiosity and suspicion that the sea water level is high even in the soil.

Rainfall Pattern: Rainfall in the area was mentioned as a major concern to the farmers and fishermen. They complained of the unpredictable and incessant rainfall pattern in the area, associated with heavy storms that destroy farm lands, properties and so on.

Rise in Temperature (Heat): This was another issue raised by the community. The high level of temperature according to them is unbearable, particularly during the dry season.



Map of Delta State showing the twenty-five local government areas.

Livelihood Systems and Analysis

Agricultural Livelihoods

Agriculture is the main livelihood of the people of Ugborodo community. According to the people, oil exploration and exploitation activities have affected agricultural practices and most people, who were known to be wealthy from fishing particularly crayfish fishing and farming, cannot earn a good living these days.

Fishing: Fishing is still the main occupation of many in the area. The coastline serves as a fishing hub, with most natives and non-natives in the fishing business value-chain settle. Women are mostly involved in fish processing, preservation and selling to buyers in the city. Fish traders based in the city (Warri) sometimes loan money to the fisher folks, including those in the processing and preservation value chain. Such loans are paid in instalments through the supply of fish and discounts on services rendered in processing and preservation of fish. Agreements for repayment of such loans are mostly unwritten; however, witnesses are appointed and the amount of money is usually noted with the understanding that the recipient of the loan will not sell fish to any other client until the creditor has collected equivalent quantity of fish. The fish business value chain has a union that is well structured and guided by unwritten rules and regulations. Interested fish traders are required to join the union with the payment of a fee and are introduced. Non-members who are fish traders, find it difficult to have the opportunities that members have.

A fisherman said:

“we used to collect loans from our customers to buy nets and other fishing gears, even engines and sometimes for construction of boats, amounting to millions and we are sure that by the end of the fishing season, we can pay back through the supply of fish, but these days, we are not able to meet up with payments anymore due to low catch. Most fishermen and women are having conflict with those they collected loans from, thus, as part of a resolution strategy, when such conflict arise, the community task force, will seize fishes caught by defaulters of loan repayment in a bid to pay back their loans. Consequently, most fishermen, can’t provide for the upkeep of their families. At times, some fishermen and women resort to selling part of their catch to other fisher folks in the sea, just to have some money for the upkeep of their families and return with little to service their loans.”

This has been observed and it has led to disagreement between fisher folks and task force as well as creditors of the loan. The community task force also collects rates from the non-indigenous fish business men and women. According to the task force team, it is one of the sources of income generation to the community.

While giving some insight to the fishing business, the task force team said that fishing and its associated value chain businesses were very lucrative in the past. Several businesses were booming such as firewood, baskets weaving, transportation, fish trading, local cold room business with the use of refrigerators, hotel, catering, and so on. Ogidigben used to be heavily populated due to booming businesses that are mostly associated to fishing in the area. But today, Ogidigben community has become very quiet like a Ghost Town. Due to

very low fish catch, most fisher folks have migrated to other areas in search of alternative livelihood, others have resorted to casual jobs, provided by oil companies. Those that have opportunities in the city have moved out of the community.

Periwinkle: Periwinkle is another major source of livelihood. The women pick periwinkles in the mangrove, process them and sell to earn a living. Presently, due to the rise in sea level, mangrove areas where periwinkle is sourced are now covered with water which they suspect has contributed to the increasing depletion of periwinkles in the mangrove forest. According to them, the sea water ebbs and flows every six hours, allowing periwinkle to have heat from the sun and also feed from mud. However, presently there is constant stagnant water covering habitats of periwinkle, which is likely to kill it or cause migration to other areas. They can only find periwinkle in low quantity in areas that water has not covered.

Farming: The people have a culture of farming short term crops and vegetables. Potatoes, pepper, fluted pumpkin, maize, okra, as well as cassava, water yam, cocoyam, etc. are the major crops and vegetables planted in the area. Farming is subsistence, and so most people also engage in other economic activities. Unfortunately, the people complained that farm yield is very poor; the plants are experiencing stunted growth and most cases wither.

Timber: Wood is required for construction of houses, boats and so on. It is a lucrative business. In the past, people sourced for wood locally for construction. Presently, people import wood from other places, indicating that hard wood is scarce in their forest. Big mangrove trees are becoming alternative sources of timber for construction of houses, due to the depletion and extinction of forest trees.

Hunting: Men used to be known for their hunting prowess. Hunting was a major livelihood. Most hunters have abandoned their livelihood in search of other economic opportunities to earn a living. Animals such as iguana, bush pigs, antelopes, monkeys, grasscutters, monitor lizards etc. were the common sources of meat for households and catering businesses in the community. Currently, cows and goats imported from Warri are the sources of meat.

Non-Agricultural Livelihood System

It was noted that while the communities feel marginalized in the crude oil exploration and exploitation in the area, they have no choice but to look up to jobs provided by the oil companies. One of the speakers, said that the main source of non-agricultural livelihood is employment from the oil companies such as Chevron and SPDC. The people are engaged mostly in short-term skilled and non-skilled jobs, such as electrical works, plumbing, pipe fitting, boat driving, mechanics, carpenters, welding, bricklaying, local contractors, etc. However, it was mentioned that few members of the community, particularly the women, are involved in trading, weaving, hairdressing, craft/artisans, tailors etc. which are other sources of non-agricultural livelihood in Ogidigben.

Challenges of Livelihood System

According to the people, agriculture was the main source of livelihoods in the area. However, today, their livelihood system is affected by climatic changes and environmental pollution from oil exploration activities. Consequently, most people have made efforts to resort to alternative livelihoods which on the other hand are limited in the area. It is also pertinent to note that, apart from fishing and its related businesses, economic activities are generally low in the community. Though, there are literatures on the challenges of livelihoods in the Niger Delta, it is important to note the viewpoints of community members during AAPW community entry visit to Ugborodo community as below.

The challenges:

- Flooding due to continuous increase in sea level and heavy rain falls resulting to a reduction in fish catch and farm yields.
- Increasing erosion and sea surge being aggravated by the daily operational activities of the oil companies' marine equipment. Erosion washes away the top soil, resulting in low fertility of the soil. Also loss of habitats along the coastline, thus, pushing inhabitants further inward and sometimes the resettlement process leads to conflict over land.
- Unpredictable seasonality; rainfall pattern presently is unpredictable and it falls almost all year round, making it difficult to plan fishing and farming activities.
- Inadequate knowledge of climate-smart agricultural practice
- Poor knowledge of alternative livelihood systems
- Crude oil spills and underwater gas pipeline leakages are frequent occurrences in the area, killing and destroying the aquatic environment where fish breed and dwell
- No good drinking water in the community. SPDC supplies water in water tankers to designated areas where water reservoirs are located in Ogidigben, Ajudaibo and Madangho communities. While, the water supply by SPDC is helpful, community complained that staff of SPDC does not drink from the supplied water which is a concern to them.
- Ode-Ugborodo community which is on the land mass where Chevron Escravos Tank Farm and EGTL facilities are located, the pipe borne water to the community commissioned in about 1998 by Gulf Oil Company remained as it is without extension. People in Ode-Ugborodo pay emergency water vendors who struggle to get water from a point near Chevron. The attempt to extend the water and increase distribution is taking unnecessary long time.
- Piracy and other related maritime crime



Flood and Nypa Palm invasion Madangho Community

- Poor primary health care system
- Very high cost of living and cost of materials due to lack of economic activities
- High cost of transportation, fishing gear, boat construction etc.
- Poor access to credit and financial facilities
- Absence of community development plans
- High rate of migration of work force especially the youths
- No direct electricity supply to the communities from the facilities of the oil companies

Climate Change, Vulnerability and Conflict Analysis

Climate Change Issue	Vulnerability	Associated Conflict	Adaptation
Flood due to Rain and rise in sea level	Loss of Habitat	Land disputes	Build temporary houses that are elevated and detachable to allow for dismantling when threatened by sea surge or coastal erosion
	Loss of Farm lands	Land disputes	Depend on alternative sources of income e.g. skilled/unskilled labour and trading
		Land disputes	Planting on very high portions of land
Unpredictable rainfall pattern	Skewed Farming and Fishing calendar resulting in loss of livelihood	Crime and associated conflicts	Continuous nursing of crop seedlings and planting for farmers, while fishermen and woman, tend to embark on fishing trials, which sometimes result in boat mishaps and loss of direction in the sea and death.
Salty/Polluted underground water	Loss of crops	Land dispute	Alternative agricultural practice to crop farming such as livestock being planned but not established due to lack of investment capital
	No good water source for drinking	Dispute over supplied water collection	Local water filtration system, procurement of water, domestic use of rain water which is dark in colour suspected to be as a result of carbon emission into the atmosphere from gas flaring, carbon from artisanal refining process, burning of artisanal refining products by the Joint Task Force (JTF), etc.
Rise in sea level and sea surge eroding houses	Loss of fishing ground	Conflict over limited fishing grounds and overfishing	Fishermen and women are establishing networks that will enhance mutual fishing relationship, information dissemination on type of fish/the movement of fish when observed, amongst fisher folk. The aim is to encourage fisher folks to obtain appropriate fishing gear and set out for fishing immediately or plan for fishing in line with

			the time frame subsequently until that particular fishing season is over.
	Loss of Habitat	Land disputes	Build temporary houses that are elevated and detachable to allow for dismantling when threatened by sea surge or coastal erosion
Increase in Heat Wave	Loss of crops/plants	Frustrations, unusual irritations and annoyances leading to actions that result in conflicts.	Personal adaptation mechanisms adopted, no electricity in community, use of mosquito nets at night while windows and doors are kept open.
Nypa palm invasion	Loss of mangrove trees and other associated resources	Low income security and personal crisis	Digging of Nypa Palms from the roots. This is only done in areas allocated for projects. Thus, the adaptation strategy does not contribute significantly to reducing the expansion of Nypa palm in the area.

Causes of Conflicts, Severity and Frequency

S/N	Causes of Conflicts	Severity of Conflict	Frequency of Conflict	Remark
1.	Itsekiri and Ijaw conflict over land ownership	High	High	The Itsekiri and Ijaw conflict is like a keg of gun powder exposed to fire. The people live in apprehension over the issue of location of the proposed gas project
2.	Domestic conflicts between and within families	High	Low	Community leadership resolves such disputes. Criminal cases are handed over to the police
3.	Conflict between oil companies and community	High	Low because most people are not aware of the behind the scene deals	Oil companies use security agencies to suppress conflicts

4.	Youth restiveness leading to conflicts	Low	Low	Ugborodo community organized. There are rules and regulations and disciplinary bodies established to enforce such rules with punitive measure.
5.	Conflict over oil contracts, employment sharing etc.	High	Low	Kingdom and Community leadership engage companies to agree on opportunities and understand terms. However, sometimes, the leadership is accused of accepting shut-up allowance and in turn oppress other community folks leading to disputes
6.	Cult related conflicts	Low	Low	Community proscribes cult activities
7.	Inter personal conflicts	High	High	Community leadership resolves such disputes. Criminal cases are handed over to the police
8.	Conflict between indigenous and nonindigenous fishermen and women	Low	Low	Community administration involves nonindigenous business people in decision making.
9.	Conflict between fishermen and their clients/creditors	Low	High	Community resolves such conflict and facilitate repayment process. Punitive measures also enforced.

The Role of Oil Companies and Community Relations

The beginning era of oil exploration and exploitation in the Niger Delta witnessed harmonious relationship between communities and the oil companies. Communities willingly gave part of their land to oil companies for paltry sums. Communities were also not interested in the operations of oil companies. However, as knowledge of oil exploration and exploitation increased, communities, began to demand for fair share of oil proceeds. It was stated that, in the past, fishermen and women were stopped from fishing in certain areas known for good catch after oil pipelines are installed with the inscription, “Oil Pressure Pipeline, Do Not Anchor” According to them, most fishing grounds were lost to the oil companies. Communities did not have such knowledge that, their fishing grounds would be drastically affected by the oil operations in the area.

In addition, the purported compensation of fisherfolk, when there was an oil spill was not adequate and majority of the fisher folks were denied. Thus, the relationship between oil companies and host communities gradually changed to that of a conflict. For instance, it was said that the oil company workers used to stay in the communities in the past. Presently, they are flown in and out from their station in Lagos with an airplane. Staff of Chevron living in Warri for instance have to fly from Osubi to Lagos to board an airplane to the Chevron base to Escravos in Ugborodo.

This has further contributed to decline in the local economy. Most youth are unemployed either in the oil companies operating in the area or in agricultural livelihoods due to environmental and climatic impacts from the oil company's operations. The major concerns expressed by the youth include:

Underwater Gas and oil Spills: A community leader mentioned during a discussion with him that underwater gas leakages from oil company facilities frequently occur due to expiration and corrosion of their pipelines. The process of clamping leaks takes weeks and communities are not compensated. According to him, the challenge is not about the compensation but the pollution that has destroyed the environment and their livelihoods. At Ogidigben, the women said they don't have a good source of water for drinking. The only source of water is supplied by SPDC in a tanker and SPDC staff do not drink from it. It is suspected that underground and surface water tables are contaminated from oil and gas spills. This shows that communities have become conscious of the environmental challenges.

Gas Flares: The continuous gas flares resulting in serious air pollution, without good medical facilities, has caused serious medical challenges in the community. The people lamented that they need a health audit and good medical response to emerging illnesses and health challenges in communities. As a follow up, AAPW team met with the medical team of Ogidigben general hospital and we were told that they lack basic health equipments and facilities to carry out their work. There are no laboratory equipments, beds, no electricity, no ambulance, etc. Patients can only be stabilized and transported through the available transport boat to cities for better medical attention. They reported that sometimes, patients with serious health cases that could have been treated if required medical equipments were available, die on their way to Warri.

PIA Act: Communities expressed concerns about the Petroleum Industry Act. They feel that the PIA is an instrument designed to further enslave communities in the Niger Delta by the oil companies and the Nigerian Government. They are of the view, that the Act should be reviewed and communities should be made to participate effectively in the oil exploration and exploitation.

The GMoU: The Global Memorandum of Understanding of SPDC and the Regional Development Council of Chevron were perceived to be good corporate social responsibility models that enhance community engagement and participation in their development process, but they complained that the companies are not sincere in their implementation.

Thus, the role of oil companies in community engagement has contributed to the conflicting relationship between communities and oil companies. Ranging from deprivation and poverty, environmental degradation induced livelihood depletion and productivity losses without corresponding alternative livelihood system, lack of good and holistic compensation payments to victims of oil spills and other damages caused by oil exploration activities, unsuccessful community development projects and programmes by oil companies, etc.

General Observation and Lessons Learnt

Observations

- Ugborodo community understands its challenges and has established leadership roles to deal with such challenges in the governance structure of the community
- The people are disappointed about Federal Government abandonment of the EPZ project in Ogidigben
- Ugborodo leadership structure is a combination of traditional and modern governance system. The Elders Council for instance is an advisory body made up of the five sub-communities of Ode-Ogborodo, Ogidigben, Ajudaibo, Madangho and Ijaghala.
- Most of the community youth depend on employment opportunities from the oil companies; thus, the craving for other livelihood prospects is not realized.
- There is the challenge of benefit captors expressed by the youth in the community.
- Leadership tussle over community leadership position is high.
- The people are suspicious of strangers, they are inaccessible in terms of divulging information.
- There is a high level of crude oil bunkering and artisanal refining going on along the creeks in the community and the creeks are highly polluted, resulting in inferno and destruction of the mangrove trees and resources.

Lessons Learnt

- Cost of living in the community is very high
- Cost of labour and transportation is high
- Strangers are perceived as oil workers at first instance
- Drugs abuse is high among the youth
- Entitlement syndrome is very high
- High Legacy issues against NGOs

Recommendations for Intervention

- There is an urgent need for the review or formulation of holistic and practical environmental law(s) that will establish regulations on climate change adaptations, resilience and mitigations at the State and Local Government Levels.
- Policy and development needs assessment should be conducted by the State and Local Government in a bid to develop a practical policy framework on environmental protection and management, climate change adaptation, resilience and mitigation, livelihood strategies, conflict, conflict management and conflict resolution, etc.
- A scientific study on the impact of climate change to provide baseline data that will enable development planning and intervention
- A community development plan should be established based on the needs assessment

- Entrepreneurship policies that will build synergy between agriculture and non-agricultural sectors should be passed at the Local Government level. This will complement livelihood relationship and promote economic activities in the community
- Establish partnerships and mentorship for environmental conservation, protection and management at the community level
- Build capacity of community members to improve their adaptive capacity to climate change, environmental pollution and degradation.
- Training on climate change adaptation, resilience and conflict management: Mainstreaming climate change adaptation and resilience mechanism into community governance system.
- Training on fishing techniques and fishing business value chain as alternative livelihood strategies
- Training and establishment of micro credit scheme to support entrepreneurship and enhance socio-economic activities.
- Training on simple community based waste management and waste recycling process for income generation should be carried out as a climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy
- Leadership training and community development/crises management programmes for the leaders.
- Training on conservation and opportunities for partnerships
- There is need for a dialogue and training of community leadership on the Petroleum Industry Act (PIA). There are concerns over the PIA in general and in particular the community governance section of the PIA.
- There should be a periodic stakeholders dialogue on governance, including the extractive industries and community development.

Conclusion

Ugborodo is a business hub that can serve the entire Delta State and beyond. The economic potentials are enormous. Crude oil and its associated economic activities is on one hand and the fishing industry value chain on the other hand. Developing economic potentials in the value chain of fishing and agriculture in the area will restore economic activities and reduce the impact of climate change on the livelihood of communities.

Report Researched and Written by:



Academic Associates PeaceWorks

B35, Trans Amadi Facilities Ltd.,
129132 Trans Amadi Industrial Layout,
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
Tel: +234 915 310 7741,

Email: aapeaceworks@yahoo.com;

www.aapw.org