

HAS NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ACHIEVED ITS FUNCTIONS?

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ABSTRACT

Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) enabling law was enacted in 2000 and in 2004 the commission was set up with the main purpose of ameliorating the impact of environmental degradation and development of the oil-producing region. The enabling law identified the ten major functions of NDDC, which were further subdivided into twenty. This paper examined the level of achievement of these functions by NDDC. Purposive sampling was adopted to select thirty estate surveyors and valuers with the knowledge of the region and were required to rate the level of achievement of the functions. Out of the questionnaire administered online 73 percent was returned and were analysed using weighted mean score. The results revealed that of the twenty functions of NDDC assessed 14 (70%) were not achieved while the remaining 6 (30%) were not adequately realised. Some of those not accomplished were transportation infrastructure, healthcare, physical and socio-economic development. Agriculture, electricity and preparation of master plan and schemes for physical development of the region were not adequately realised. In conclusion there is need for detailed appraisal of the commission to correct lapses for greater performance in meeting the needs of the Niger Delta region.

Key words: Assessment, Function, Impact, Niger Delta Development Commission

INTRODUCTION

The Niger Delta region of Nigeria consists of diverse ecosystems of mangrove swamps, fresh water swamps, rain forest and is the largest wetland in Africa (Eregha & Irughe, 2009). According to Okonofua (2011), it has the largest oil deposits in Africa and some of the highest quality oil in the world. The oil resources has economic significance and value on the mainstay of the Nigerian economy (Watts, Okonta & Dimieari, 2004; Watts, 2009). The Niger Delta region is blessed with abundance of human and physical resources, including oil and gas deposits, agricultural lands, extensive forests, as well as excellent fisheries. According to UNEP (2011), agriculture was the mainstay of the economy prior to the discovery of oil in the 1950s, with agricultural produce exported to the more industrialized regions of the world. It is worthy of note that the

main occupation of the people of this region were subsistence farming, cash crop production, fishing and hunting games. In addition more than seventy percent of the people depend on natural environment for their livelihood

Egbulem, Ekpe and Adejumo (2013) posited that the region is home to more than 10 million people. Machunga-Disu & Machunga-Disu (2012) noted that oil pollution from spills, oil well blow-outs, oil ballast discharges and improper disposal of drilling mud from petroleum prospecting have resulted in problems such as: the loss of the aesthetic values of natural beaches due to unsightly oil slicks; damage to marine wildlife, modification of the ecosystem through species elimination and the delay in biota (fauna and flora) succession; and decrease in fishery resources. Similarly,

Kadafa (2012) reported that oil exploration by seismic oil companies involves clearing of seismic lines, dynamiting for geological excavation, which affects the aquatic environment. The Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC) established in 1992 lost its credibility and the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo initiated Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to replace OMPADEC. The enabling law creating NDDC was enacted in 2000 by the Act No 6 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria with the aim of dealing with the roots of oil related unrests in the Niger Delta area which was centred on environmental degradation (Okonofua, 2011). The aim of this paper is to examine the level of achievement of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in amelioration the impact of environmental degradation caused by oil exploration in the Niger Delta area.

Materials and Methods

In 2004, the NDDC was set up with 2.9 billion dollars multi-sectoral master plan. The functions of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) are:

- (a) formulate policies and guidelines for the development of the Niger- Delta, area,
- (b) conceive, plan and implement, in accordance with set rules and regulations, projects and programmes for the sustainable development of the Niger-Delta area in the field of transportation including roads, jetties and waterways, health, education, employment, industrialisation, agriculture and fisheries, housing and urban development, water supply, electricity and telecommunications;
- (c) cause the Niger-Delta area to be surveyed in order to ascertain measures which are necessary to promote its physical and socio-economic development,

- (d) prepare master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Niger-Delta area and the estimates of the costs of implementing such master plans and schemes;
- (e) implement all the measures approved for the development of the Niger- Delta area by the Federal Government and the member States of the Commission;
- (f) identify factors inhibiting the development of the Niger-Delta area and assist the member States in the formulation and implementation of policies to ensure sound and efficient management of the resources of the Niger-Delta area,
- (g) assess and report on any project being funded or carried out in the Niger-Delta area by oil and gas producing companies and any other company including non-governmental organisations and ensure that funds released for such projects are properly utilised;
- (h) tackle ecological and environmental problems that arise from the exploration of oil mineral in the Niger-Delta area and advise the Federal Government and the member States on the prevention and control of oil spillages, gas flaring and environmental pollution,
- (i) liaise with the various oil mineral and gas prospecting and producing companies on all

matters of pollution prevention and control.

- (j) execute such other works and perform such other functions which in the

opinion of the Commission, are required for the sustainable development of the Niger- Delta area and its peoples.

In Table 1, selected journals on the development of Niger Delta from 2007 to date were reviewed to assess the condition of the region as a result of the oil exploration.

Table 1: Review of literature on Niger Delta development

AUTHOR	TITLE	RESULT	REMARK
Kakulu, I.I. (2007)	Distortion of land value trends and growth patterns in rural communities in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria.	On and off-shore exploration and production; oil refining; transportation and marketing processes are facilitated by a maze of pipelines criss-crossing oil producing communities. Oil pipelines in Nigeria most of which traverse rural communities has land administration issues and implications for property development and land values. The restrictions of vehicular access over buried or surface pipelines rights-of-way has resulted in slow; uncoordinated and haphazard development patterns within rural and semi-urban communities in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This has resulted in distortion of land use patterns and land values.	The functions first, second, third and fourth have not been addressed as observed in this article.
Babatunde, A. (2010)	The impact of oil exploitation on the socio-economic life of the Ilaje-Ugbo people of Ondo state, Nigeria	The study observed that oil exploitation, through environmental degradation, depleted the fishing and farming output, resulting in the subsequent loss of income base, thereby accentuating poverty, which in turn created divisive tendencies leading to endemic social conflict. In general, participants at the focus group discussion sessions, communities' leaders, youth, and women leaders of the sampled communities interviewed were unanimous in their responses that NDDC and Osun state oil producing areas development commission (OSOPADEC) have not made any significance impact on their communities.	The second function of NDDC on employment has not been significantly addressed.
Udoudoh, F.P. (2011)	Oil spillage and management problems in the Niger Delta, Nigeria	The author revealed that oil spillage contaminates has resulted in environmental degradation, devastation, pollution and other form of ecological disaster in the area. These environmental problems are expressed in the forms oil spillage, soil and water contamination, flooding, crumbling social infrastructure and poverty of the highest order.	The second function of NDDC has not been significantly addressed.

		With the region's water and land contaminated, which has destroys both aquatic and terrestrial lives, thereby rendering fishermen and farmers in the Niger Delta jobless and homeless.	
Ordinioha, B.& Brisibe, S. (2013)	The human health implications of crude oil spills in the Niger Delta, Nigeria	The authors opine that oil spills lead to a 60% reduction in household food security and capable of reducing the ascorbic acid content of vegetables by as much as 36% and the crude protein content of cassava by 40%. These could result in a 24% increase in the prevalence of childhood malnutrition. Animal studies indicate that contact with Nigerian crude oil could be hemotoxic and hepatotoxic, and could cause infertility and cancer.	This paper suggests that eighth function of NDDC on the problem of exploration is still persistent.
Okonkwo, E.C. (2014)	Oil spills in Nigeria: are there social and economic impacts?	In the Niger Delta Region, oil spills impacts take different dimensions such as deaths, destruction of farmlands, destruction of fishing industry, destruction of tourism facilities and cultural areas. The spill and subsequent pollution is believed to be one of the main causes of militancy in the Niger Delta. One of the formidable options available to the victims isto make the spillers accountable and responsible.	This paper suggests that eighth function of NDDC on the problem of exploration is still persistent.
Akujuru, V. A. & Ruddock, L. (2014)	Incorporation of socio-cultural values in damage assessment valuations of contaminated lands in the Niger Delta	Contamination of a wetland involves damage to both economic and socio-cultural values which when combined with the ecological values of the environment indicate the total economic value(TEV) of the contaminated land. Niger Delta contains both economic and socio-cultural values like non-tradeable forest products and cultural beliefs. There is a complex interaction between social, cultural, economic, and environmental factors affecting ecosystem goods and services. Cultural values include the traditional religion and beliefs of the people and may manifest as a sacred site. The author opines that paying compensation based on TEV that embodies socio-cultural values, the oil and gas companies will be purchasing an operational license, which will assist in providing an enabling environment for their operations and minimise their perceived high-handedness in dealing with their host communities.	The first and third functions of the NDDC on adequate compensation has not been given attention which will ensure sustainable development in the region.
Nwanyanwu, D. H. Fred-Nwagwu,	Oil and gas multinational companies activities in	The study revealed high devastating environmental impacts of waste management of oil exploration methods adopted such as on-site burial, ocean dumping, landfills, surface discharge	This paper opines that ninth function has

F.W. & Yousuo, A. (2015)	Nigeria: The challenges in methods of waste management in Niger Delta.	and deep-well injection approaches,	not been implemented.
Anyadiegwu, C.I.C. & Uwaezuoke, N. (2015)	Benthic studies and environmental assessment in the oil producing area of the Niger Delta	Following the spill, soil organisms were much reduced or absent from two of the sites sampled in previous years since they are pollution sensitive despite the expected high presence of macrobenthic organisms that are pollution tolerant (resistant) and could have served as food. The steady apparent reduction in the amount of crustaceans (e.g. crayfish and crab) in the Niger Delta area which used to be in abundance could be attributed to the level of pollution in the area. Also, it was discovered that baseline reports are lacking and should be developed by sampling the benthic population and their patterns with supernatant fluids in the Niger Delta locations that could be used in case of spills since gaps in sampling efforts exist.	This paper suggests that third, eighth, and ninth functions are not addressed adequately.
Bello, M.O. & Olukolajo, M.A. (2016)	Claimants' classification of Heads of Claims for oil spill damage assessment in Ondo State, Nigeria	This study assessed the oil spill victims definition of heads of claim based on Total Economic Value concept in Abereke community of Ilaje. The results indicate that compensation for loss of fish harvest, other aquatic life, source of drinking water and food/crop production ranked high among the direct use of land and environmental resources. Flood control, biodiversity maintenance and shoreline protection are least among the potential head of claims among the private claimants. Therefore, there is need to redefine heads of claim considered in awarding compensation to oil spill victims to mitigate the effect of oil spill on the claimants and promote peace in oil producing communities.	The first and sixth functions on sustainable development was not adequately addressed as indicated in this paper.
Ogundipe, S. & The Natural Resource Governance Institute, (2017)	Special report: How Nigerian law contributes to abject poverty in Niger Delta communities despite decades of oil wealth	Gbaramatu Kingdom (Delta state) is without any real medical care, receives an average of N140 million per month, and has officially been given more than N10 billion in budgetary allocations from the federal government within the past six years. A clinic was constructed in Oporoza in 2012 but not operational. The high school building has dilapidated with broken plywood roofing. In Kokodiagbene - Gbaramatu the high flames from the incineration of the poisonous gases can be seen	This second function of NDDC has not been addressed as reported in this paper.

		in Jones Creek. They breathe carbon in the locality the area is hotter than Warri despite the breeze from the river. Also, no access to potable water or medical care. The situation is the same in Tebijor-Okpelama apart from experiencing flooding from Escravos river. Ikpokpo has no school or clinic or potable water. Evidence of repeated oil spills from damaged pipelines can be found in the surrounding bushes and farms were destroyed by oil drilling which has affected their livelihood. Oil producing communities in Rivers and Akwa-Ibom faced the same challenges of abandonment and abject poverty.	
Olukolajo, M.A. (2017)	Monetary compensation for oil spill damage in Niger Delta region, Nigeria: A question of adequacy	Data were randomly collected from residents of five oil producing communities in the region using questionnaire. Out of the questionnaires administered and returned 1,125 (57.99 %) were found suitable for the analysis. The results showed a significant difference in the residents' description of compensation adequacy across the selected communities. Also, there is significant difference between the expected and actual compensation paid based on the current practice in each of the selected communities. Many of the people in the region are dependent on the land and environment as their source of income and livelihood, the interest of people cannot be waived aside.	This paper observed that the third function of NDDC was not addressed adequately.
Akinyoade, D. 2017	Doing both harm and good: The nature, dynamics and implications of the Niger Delta Development Commission's (NDDC) interventions in Odi, Bayelsa State, Nigeria	The study adopted a grounded theory research approach. It was observed that the resource-status of the interventions enjoy compels competition from actors at various levels, in a socio-political and cultural space characterised by bad governance and endemic corruption. The competition begins with shady deals among influential actors as they appropriate the resources, constituting black hole of interactions. The combined effects of the resource-status of intervention, black hole of interactions and bad governance and endemic corruption provide sufficient conditions for spirals of negative impacts such as likely deprivation, the malevolent charity-beggar relationship, oppressiveness and divisiveness of intervention—down the intervention programming stages. Thus, the potential positive impacts of the interventions are significantly reduced.	This paper observed lack of cordiality between NDDC and the study area with the effect of significantly reduced positive impact.
Ebeku, K.S.A.	Assessing the performance of	The disappointment with OMPADEC generated intensified protests by the people of the region,	The review of literatures

(2020)	the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) 2001-2020: Another failed dream	leading to the establishment of the NDDC in 2000 with the same mandate as OMPADEC. The author's review revealed that there is no significant change in the welfare of the people of the region or in the status of infrastructural development in the region. In addition he opines that the same factors (corruption and poor project execution) that caused the failure of the OMPADEC are presently militating against the NDDC and have produced lacklustre performance. The review indicates that many scholars suggested that the NDDC has failed.	on the impact of NDDC this paper opined that the Commission has failed.
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The literature reviewed above highlighted functions that have not been adequately achieved by NDDC from 2010 to date. The inadequacy affects socio-economic, health and compensation. In addition, the affected communities lack the financial capability to carry out laboratory tests of contaminated sites, engage registered estate surveyors and valuers and legal profession that can proof their case beyond reasonable doubt by ensuring that the communities are not worse off after the spillage and that they are adequately compensated based on the principle that polluter pays.

Furthermore, Odeyemi in Tribune online (May 29, 2020) reported that the forensic audit of the NNDC ordered by the acting managing director Professor Kemebradikumo Pondei revealed that the 2019 budget of the commission was inflated with over five hundred non-existing projects. The report added that 2019 budget terminated on the 31st May 2020 without any project executed in the region for the period. The acting manager observed that the agency's role as a major intervention agency was reduced to erecting streetlights and construction of drainages which were the duties of local government.

Methods: Questionnaire was administered to registered estate surveyors and valuers who are mostly members of the faculty of environmental valuation of the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV) familiar with Niger Delta area. Hence, they were adjudged to be able to assess the achievement of Niger Delta Development Commission for the past sixteen years of operation using the commission mandate as spelt out in the enabling Act of 2000. The respondents were asked to rate the level of achievement of the functions of NDDC on a scale of not achieved as zero, lowest achievement as 1 and 5 as achieved. Thirty questionnaire was administered through purposive sampling technique because not all registered surveyors and valuers in Nigeria in general and Niger Delta area are conversant with the activities of NDDC. Twenty-two (73%) was retrieved. The retrieved completed questionnaire was analysed with descriptive statistics. The weighted mean score of 0 -2.49 point indicates non-existence or not achieving the function; 2.5 – 3.49 point weighted mean is reckoned as not adequately

provided or achieved and 3.5- 5 points as provided or achieved.

Results and Discussion

The data was analysed using frequency and weighted mean. The results are presented

in Table 2. All the respondents were familiar with the activities of NDDC and are full members of Nigerian

Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV). Also, twelve had attained the fellow grade and have over 20 years experience in practice. The remaining has 10 to 15 years in practice. These calibre of respondents were considered to be sufficiently knowledgeable and experience to provide requisite assessment of NDDC

Table 2: The level of achievement of NDDC functions

Function	Frequency	W. Mean	NB
(a) formulate policies and guidelines for the development of the Niger- Delta, area,	66	3.0	B
(b) conceive, plan and implement, in accordance with set rules and regulations, projects and programmes for the sustainable development of the Niger-Delta area in the field of:	22	1.0	A
i. Transportation including roads, jetties and waterways			
ii. Health	22	1.0	A
iii. Education	22	1.0	A
iv. Employment	11	0.5	A
v. Industrialization	11	0.5	A
vi. Agriculture	55	2.5	B
vii. Fisheries	55	2.5	B
viii. Housing and Urban development	22	1.0	A
ix. Water supply	55	2.5	B
x. Electricity	66	3.0	B
xi. Telecommunications	11	0.5	A
(c) cause the Niger-Delta area to be surveyed in order to ascertain measures which are necessary to promote its physical and socio- economic development,	11	0.5	A
(d) prepare master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Niger-Delta area and the estimates of the costs of implementing such master plans and schemes;	66	3.0	B
(e) implement all the measures approved for the development of the Niger- Delta area by the Federal Government and the member States of the Commission;	22	1.0	A
(f) identify factors inhibiting the development of the Niger-Delta area and assist the member States in the formulation and implementation of policies to ensure sound and efficient management of the resources of the Niger-Delta area,	11	0.5	A

(g) assess and report on any project being funded or carried out in the Niger-Delta area by oil and gas producing companies and any other company including non-governmental organisations and ensure that funds released for such projects are properly utilised;	22	1.0	A
(h) tackle ecological and environmental problems that arise from the exploration of oil mineral in the Niger-Delta area and advise the Federal Government and the member States on the prevention and control of oil spillages gas flaring and environmental pollution,	33	1.5	A
(i) liaise with the various oil mineral and gas prospecting and producing companies on all matters of pollution prevention and control.	33	1.5	A
(j) execute such other works and perform such other functions which in the opinion of the Commission, are required for the sustainable development of the Niger-Delta area and its peoples.	22	1.0	A

Source: Field Survey 2020

Key:

NB =Note

W. Mean= Weighted mean

A = Function Not Achieved

B = Function Not Adequately Achieved

C = Function

Achieved

The results from Table 2 revealed that NDDC formulation of policies and guidelines for the development of Niger Delta area, implementation of agricultural projects, fisheries projects, electricity projects, water supply projects as well as preparation of master plans and schemes designed to promote the physical development of the region are not adequately achieved. While all other functions according to the average weighted scores were not achieved. The analysis revealed the inefficiency of NDDC after twenty years of establishment and about sixteen years in operation.

These results substantiate the findings of Akpan (2007) that observed structural and operation defects as factors causing non-performance of NDDC as well as Ebeku (2020) study that reviewed

previous literatures on NDDC performance and observed that the change in name from OMPADEC which was a failed dream has not changed the performance of the commission as NDDC.

The respondents adduced that the poor performance of NDDC as an intervention agency for Niger Delta area was because it has served more as a source of political finds.

Conclusion

Assessing the performance of the functions of NDDC has revealed that the commission regrettably has not fulfilled its mandate as expected in the last twenty years of establishment. Hence, there is need for overhaul of the commission. Also, the reformation of the Commission for effective

performance should ensure strict adherence to the enabling law and close monitoring by the Ministry of Niger Delta and Presidency.

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