



NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT CRISIS AND INFRASTRUCTURAL PROVISIONS IN THE OIL PRODUCING AREAS OF NIGERIA, 2009-2017

Rebecca Ginikanwa Nnamani¹, Ezinwanne Ekekwe², Quentin Chukwuemeka Chukwu*³

¹Department of Political Science, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Nigeria, Nsukka

²Social Sciences Unit, the School of General Studies, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus

³Social Sciences Unit, the School of General Studies, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus

ABSTRACT

The study interrogates the Niger Delta development crisis and infrastructural provisions in the oil producing areas of Nigeria, 2009-2017. Data were generated using the documentary and survey methods. Findings revealed that the federal government interventionist structures are products of ethnic power calculation and not only elitist in nature but also specifically designed to protect the oil and gas interest of the elites of the dominant ethnic groups. This largely explains why the agency is under the tight control of the Presidency and its commissioners, politically appointed (mainly members of the ruling party). Invariably, NDDC like its predecessor is constrained by the placement of politics before the development agenda of the region. The study calls for the Commission to carry out a comprehensive review of their projects to determine their status. Where contracts have been abandoned, contractors should be prosecuted to enable the commission recover advances to them. Where a contractor deliberately delays a job with intention of obtaining price variation, such contractor should be made to deliver on the old agreed price or the contract should be cancelled and re-awarded.

KEYWORDS: Crisis, Government interventions programmes, Infrastructure development, Human Development, Niger Delta.

INTRODUCTION

Several studies have been carried out on the Niger Delta development crisis and the forces that have subverted government efforts at development. Dike (1986), presents a historical account of the British merchants and how the colonial administrations through their activities and policies laid the foundation for the underdevelopment of the region. According to him, the British came to the Delta for three main reasons: the search for raw materials, the need for cheap labour and the need to secure the market for their finished goods. These activities were detrimental to the subsequent development of the region. Ikimi (1969) locates the crises between the major ethnic groups in Western Delta in the policies of the colonial state. His work reveals that before the advent of colonial rule, the major ethnic groups had mutual relations, the discord and acrimony between the major ethnic groups resulted from their quest to regulate the price of palm oil, the major export during this period. The unending crises have tremendously retarded the development efforts of the State. Relatedly, Alagoa (1964) further reveals how the British disrupted the traditional, social and economic system of the region with its imperial forces. The British also subdued pocket of resistance in the region in a bid to protect its economic interest. This laid the foundation of the underdevelopment and poverty of the Niger Delta.

The preceding works suggest that the British trading companies and colonial state laid the basis for the Niger Delta Development crisis and the failure of State efforts. However, all of the studies seem to neglect the internal make-up of the communities. None of them examined the role played by local traditional allies who for their selfish interest collaborated with the Europeans to exploit their communities and their roles in sustaining the structure of underdevelopment laid by the Europeans, despite the efforts of the State.

It is from the foregoing background that Omoweh (2007) contends that although the colonial government as well as the trading companies put in place the modalities for capitalist exploitation and initiated the forces of underdevelopment, Shell Development Company and other multi-national companies concluded the process of the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta. He asserts that there is an intricate linkage between the relative reckless manner in which crude oil is explored and produced, the degradation of the environment of the Niger Delta host communities and the contemporary increasing incapacity of the people to reproduce themselves. This lies at the heart of the Niger Delta development crisis and failure of the State to initiate development in the region.



Chokor (2000) goes beyond the physical environment and attempts to integrate the environment with the social and economic forces in explaining the Niger Delta development crisis. He opines that in stratified societies there is likely to be a flow of surplus in favour of areas with political and economic power. He notes the existence of two fundamental structures which articulate the appropriation of the region's resources. First, there is the social structure defined by a set of federal rules and regulations which provides the basis for the exploitation of oil and gas resources and the physical structure consisting of the network of oil wells, pipelines, flow station and production terminal. These structures have been the bane of development efforts in the delta

Ekuerhareye (2004) in its contribution to the Niger Delta development issue and the State inability to initiate development gives a unique characterization of the Niger Delta. To him the region has increasingly emerged as a distinct social, economic and political formation characterized by huge resource extraction from it to the rest of the world and recycled for the development of the Nigerian people and communities minus the people and communities of the Niger Delta. Ekuerhareye also examines the nature of the Nigerian federalism *vis-a-vis* the development crisis in the region and observed that the crude oil era has been marked by extreme concentration of fiscal resources in the hands of the federal government while the component units including the oil producing state have been compelled to depend on the central government for financing. This approach has failed to address practical development policy issues. Therefore, the current deepening crisis of underdevelopment and poverty in the region has been a manifestation of the pattern of petroleum resource exploitation and the resultant distorted and perverse fiscal federalism in Nigeria.

Paki and Ebienfa (2011) argued that, oil has paradoxically become a curse rather than blessing to regions it is produced in Africa, especially Nigeria's Niger Delta region due to corruption and lack of political will, among others on the part of national government to efficiently and effectively promote development in the region. This becomes apparent when we consider the failure of development intervention agencies in Nigeria over the years to achieve the aim for which they have been established in the Niger Delta.

Yusuf (2008) proposes that international human rights law, in particular, provides a working template for achieving desired positive ends in the relationship of the state, the local communities and the MNCs through the institutionalization of economic, social and cultural rights with the active participation of MNCs. He however, notes that the Nigerian state, as represented by the federal authorities, who control the nation's natural resources, has exhibited mixed reaction to the situation. It hovers between repression and pacification. Successive military regimes receive the greatest blame for the current state of under-development and violent conflict in the Niger Delta. He argued that the Niger Delta development issue is as a result of the continued denial of economic, social and cultural rights to the oil-rich communities in the area. The author argues that this denial happened with the complicity and acquiescence of the international community. The Nigerian government as well as multi-national corporations operating in the area has not been responsive to the development needs of the people. Yusuf, (2008, p.105) concluded by noting that:

The operation and maintenance of rural infrastructure, within the entire rural development policy in Nigeria are faulted due to the technocratic reformist strategy of the state. Confronted with disparities in the provision of infrastructural facilities or utilities, the poverty-stricken rural masses have continued to migrate en mass to urban center; thus turning the policy into a colossal exercise in futility. Hence the key to success to curtail mass exodus and its accompanying consequences in the society, efforts should be geared for a pragmatic approach where all levels of the community are actively and psychologically involved to participate in every aspect of development schemes like planning, financing and maintenance. Furthermore, the conventional and erratic approach to rural development in Nigeria through the politics of provision of agricultural infrastructures should be shifted by recognizing the rural dwellers as equally and properly entitled to all components of social, institutional and physical infrastructures so as to stamp out the provocations and temptations of rural drain. The continuing trend of encroaching peasant land by the big armchair farmers should also be halted.

Studies have shown that infrastructure development is the basis of measuring the performance of democratic leaders and it is the foundation of good democratic governance. In this regard, as an agent of transformation and in accordance with government's ideology of development, the government intervention agencies assume wider roles in distribution, operation and maintenance of infrastructure, which is fundamental for rural development. It was in this sense, that the Willinks Commission Report, set up to ascertain the fears of domination expressed by the minorities in pre-colonial Nigeria, recommended the establishment of a Board to cater for the development needs of the Niger Delta, described as "poor, backward and neglected". The Willinks Commission Report declared the Niger Delta as a special area for development, and further noted that:

we cannot recommend political arrangement which would unite in one political unit the whole body of Ijaws; we do however consider that their belief that their problems are not understood could be largely met without the creation of a separate state, which we have rejected... the declaration of the Ijaw country as a special area would direct public attention to a neglected tract and give the Ijaws an opportunity of putting forward plans of their own for improvement (Willinks Commission Report, 1958, p. 95)



According to Ibaba (2005), the government eventually responded to the Willink's Report's recommendation by setting up the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDDB) in the immediate post-independence. The main function of the Board was to advise the governments of the Federation, Eastern and Western regions, with respect to physical development of the Niger Delta.

Etekepe, (2007) outlined responsibilities/the functions of the Board to include : (1) Causing the Niger Delta to be surveyed in order to ascertain what measures are required to promote its physical development; (2) Preparing schemes designed to promote the physical development of the Niger Delta together with the scheme into effect, and (3) Submitting to the Government of the Federation and the Government of Eastern and Western, Nigeria annually, reports describing the work of the Board and the measures taken in pursuance of its advice .

Ibaba, (2005) noted that the Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) was created to direct the 3 percent of the Derivation Funding Principle for the specific and particular development of the oil producing communities by Decree No.23 of 1992, to succeed the Presidential Committee. Ibaba, (2005, p.116) noted that the fundamental objectives of OMPADEC were:

- (i) the rehabilitation and development of oil producing areas;
- (ii) the tackling of ecological problems that have arisen from the exploration and exploitation of oil minerals;
- (iii) to identify...the actual Oil Producing Areas and embark on the development of projects properly agreed on with the local communities of Oil Producing Areas; and
- (iv) to tackle the problems of oil pollution.

However, OMPADEC also failed to actualize the developmental aspirations of the oil producing Niger Delta as it was entangled by structural defects, financial imprudence, contract proliferation, and lack of goodwill from major ethnic groups in Nigeria, faulty project ideas, maladministration and lack of funding, nepotism, corruption and faults in implementation strategy. According to *World Bank Report* (1995, pp. 53-54):

OMPADEC only provides infrastructure or equipment. For example, it builds health centers but does not support staff for them. The obvious problem with such a development programme is that, the communities may not have the funds or expertise to maintain a project and watch it break down.

As the *OMPADEC Quarterly Review* (1993) noted, what is clear is that the types of projects executed, and the beneficiaries of contracts, did not promote the interests of the oil producing communities; but the operators of the state, the Committee members and their collaborators. It also, suffered from lack of focus, inadequate and irregular funding, official profligacy, corruption, and excessive political interference, lack of transparency and accountability, and high overhead expenditure.

Claims have been made in some quarters that a cost of one kilometer (1km) road elsewhere in the country will be five times for the same distance in the Niger Delta. The same applies for every other project in the region. It is based on this that government's funding has been described as a balm that can only at best soothe the wounds of the people. Commenting on the insignificance of ₦241.5 billion gotten by NDDC from 1999 to 2006, Timi Alaibe cited in Ero, (2007, p. 61) avers that:

This may sound like a huge sum at face value, but if this is distributed among nine states, with projects into the most difficult and challenging terrain, this comes to about ₦27 billion per state for that period, or about ₦4.4 billion per state per year. This is far below what we need because of the enormity of development needs, from physical infrastructure to empowerment programmes.

There is a merit in the argument that difficult terrain requires more money for its development. This has been a plausible defense in justification for the Commission's underachievement with the resources available to them. The underneath fact remains that these officials standing on the pedestal of difficult terrain inflate projects costs to generate kick backs. The government indebtedness to NDDC by the end of President Obasanjo's tenure in 2007 of over ₦300 billion, notwithstanding, Agbo (2007, p. 23) was not wrong to argue that:

From 1999 to 2007, over ₦3 trillion flowed from the Federation Account to the Niger Delta. Seventy percent of this went to the state governments, twenty-two percent to local governments and eight percent to NDDC. From available data, what NDDC did with its eight percent is more visible than what was done with 92 percent between the state and the local governments.

Obagbinoko (2009) notes that one of the latest in the series of attempts by government to address the injustice in the Niger Delta is the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC). The establishment of the Commission was consummated by the enactment of the NDDC Act of 2000. The activities of the Commission have revealed the perfunctory approach and noncommittal attitude of government towards addressing the problem of the Niger Delta Region.

Contributing, Alphonsus and Mohammad (2015) reveal that the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) is set up by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2000 with a mandate to facilitate the rapid, even and sustainable development of the Niger Delta. To this end, the authors evaluate the socio-economic impact of the Commission's projects on roads, water and electricity in



Ohaji/Egbema, Oguta and Obowo communities in Imo State Nigeria. There have been lots of Niger Delta Development Commission projects in the Niger Delta and Imo state as a state in the NDR has benefitted from these projects right from the inauguration of the Board of NDDC in 2001.

THE PROJECTS OF THE NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

The NDDC sees to the implementation of its mandate by executing relevant projects in the oil producing areas of Nigeria. The projects are conceptualized, designed, and executed based on extensive consultation with locals, input from interested parties and critical analysis by experts. They are awarded based on their ability to give maximum impact to the local region and beyond the constraints of allotted budget. Tables 7 and 11 illustrate the typical projects and programmes embarked on by the Commission. While some have been completed, a large number of them were reported to be on-going. The projects include: education which encompasses books, scholarship and infrastructures; health including drugs, medical professionals and hospital infrastructures; transportation including mass transit on roads and waterways; road infrastructures such as bridges, landing jetty and land reclamation; electrification projects; skill acquisition and youth development; agricultural development programmes; security and logistics projects; environment and waste management; portable water projects, among others (NEITI, 2017). Tables 5 to 9 below present the breakdown of the NDDC projects between 2012 and 2016.

Table 1: Project Specific Breakdown in 2012

	CONTRACT SUM	ADVANCE PAYMENTS	TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS	OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT	MOBILIZATION RECOVERED	OUTSDING RETENTION	CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS
	N'000	N'000	N'000		N'000	N'000	N'000
GRAND TOTAL							
JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM	17,904,520	5,090,238	5,735,782	7,078,500	3,085,144	381,186	9,159,539
ROAD & BRIDGE	59,765,720	17,796,052	16,297,389	25,589,801	12,433,929	867,446	28,921,236
ELECTRICIFICATION	4,643,810	2,040,068	402,929	2,200,813	94,912	12,329	539,903
WATER PROJECTS	1,518,305	378,745	581,273	558,287	259,100	28,814	848,987
EDU. INFRAST & DEV.	247,922	91,809	111,646	44,467	78,004	488	189,750
HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL	49,103	10,439	27,888	10,776	8,214	781	39,585
AGRIC DEV. PROG	1,409,470	388,779	508,941	511,750	22,318	0	517,671
NDDC MASTER PLAN	32,000	16,000	16,000	0	0	0	32,000
OTHERS	396,631	60,726	306,478	29,427	17,500	0	338,078
	85,967,480	25,872,856	23,988,324	36,023,821	15,999,121	1,291,043	40,586,750

Source: NEITI (2017). *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies – Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*

**Table 6: Project Specific Breakdown in 2013**

	CONTRACT SUM	ADVANCE PAYMENTS	TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS	OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT	MOBILIZATION RECOVERED	OUTSDING RETENTION	CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS
	N'000	N'000	N'000		N'000	N'000	N'000
GRAND TOTAL							
JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM	5,330,304	1,309,097	1,685,050	2,336,156	565,432	94,016	2,274,562
ROAD & BRIDGE	7,051,895	1,100,147	1,827,559	4,124,188	527,260	101,058	2,474,939
ELECTRICIFICATION	145,750	132,519	11,246	1,985	52,924	0	64,170
WATER PROJECTS	337,985	28,379	276,036	33,570	12,572	6,929	292,109
EDU. INFRAST & DEV.	331,067	53,635	138,218	139,214	36,685	7,502	176,819
HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL	1,253,342	0	1,252,346	996	0	0	1,156,643
AGRIC DEV. PROG	573,611	11,750	515,461	46,400	0	0	515,461
NDDC MASTER PLAN	182,699	27,405	27,037	128,257	0	0	40,296
OTHERS	1,751,206	0	1,751,206	0	0	0	1,751,206
	16,957,859	2,662,933	7,484,160	6,810,766	1,194,873	209,506	8,746,205

Source: NEITI (2017). *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*

Table 2: Project Specific Breakdown in 2014

	CONTRACT SUM	ADVANCE PAYMENTS	TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS	OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT	MOBILIZATION RECOVERED	OUTSDING RETENTION	CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS
	N'000	N'000	N'000		N'000	N'000	N'000
GRAND TOTAL							
JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM	8,328,187	1,177,228	1,483,870	5,667,089	207,420	39,132	1,679,730
ROAD & BRIDGE	60,109,544	9,159,095	9,747,055	40,135,283	2,997,045	626,100	13,439,302
ELECTRICIFICATION	934,283	68,391	632,268	233,625	43,534	11,997	682,981
WATER PROJECTS	190,377	19,753	101,422	69,201	7,636	4,216	109,798
EDU. INFRAST & DEV.	2,217,839	400,578	200,983	2,217,069	26,576	1,205	258,743
HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL	217,176	0	217,176	0	0	0	217,176
AGRIC DEV. PROG	371,113	93,068	177,255	100,791	0	0	227,126
NDDC MASTER PLAN	49,835	7,475	0	42,360	0	0	
PROJ. SECURITY & LOGISTICS	105,252	15,788	64,716	24,748	13,887	4,058	81,154
OTHERS	787,200	50,992	566,828	178,040	16,999	2,460	571,413
	73,310,807	10,992,368	13,191,574	48,668,205	3,313,098	689,167	17,267,423

Source: NEITI (2017). *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*

**Table 3: Project Specific Breakdown in 2015**

	CONTRACT SUM	ADVANCE PAYMENTS	TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS	OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT	MOBILIZATION RECOVERED	OUTSANDING RETENTION	CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS
	N'000	N'000	N'000		N'000	N'000	N'000
GRAND TOTAL							
JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM	20,106,755	3,572,437	2,248,608	14,285,710	482,965	22,899	2,748,699
ROAD & BRIDGE	98,720,630	14,621,724	12,152,221	71,797,300	2,554,684	746,754	14,981,020
HOUSING TOWN HALLS	683,678	102,552	0	581,126	0	0	0
ELECTRICIFICATION	4,013,809	521,395	769,280	2,723,134	90,780	45,038	868,395
WATER PROJECTS	2,977,826	503,077	422,612	2,052,137	88,818	25,881	517,444
EDU. INFRAST & DEV.	547,522	76,728	36,000	434,794	16,203	1,000	57,353
HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL	1,223,713	94,331	594,841	534,541	0	0	594,841
SKILL ACQU/ YOUTH DEV.	995,000	149,250	0	845,750	0	0	0
PROJ. SECURITY & LOGISTICS	367,768	49,448	140,332	177,989	17,372	7,922	157,716
OTHERS	66,967,444	17,076,067	3,673,752	283,195	4,641	1,451	13,264,859
	196,604,146	36,767,008	20,037,646	93,715,676	3,255,464	850,946	33,190,326

Source: NEITI (2017). *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*

Table 4: Project Specific Breakdown in 2016

	CONTRACT SUM	ADVANCE PAYMENTS	TOTAL IPC PAYMENTS	OUTSTANDING COMMITMENT	MOBILIZATION RECOVERED	OUTSANDING RETENTION	CUMULATIVE PERMANENT WORKS
	N'000	N'000	N'000		N'000	N'000	N'000
GRAND TOTAL							
JETTY/EROSION RECLAIM	10,124,308	1,422,452	632,906	8,068,950	0	6,159	624,170
ROAD & BRIDGE	75,086,855	10,710,583	5,433,857	58,721,611	699,182	312,077	6,302,867
HOUSING TOWN HALLS	642,009	79,208	57,580	505,220	0	2,886	57,725
ELECTRICIFICATION	23,701,284	3,309,464	5,501,207	14,890,613	940,572	69,931	6,444,991
WATER PROJECTS	3,988,123	541,683	318,054	3,092,427	14,116	17,026	340,516
EDU. INFRAST & DEV.	791,754	33,438	436,396	178,683	146,205	502	439,760
HOSPITAL & O/MEDICAL	3,301,605	19,546	3,171,297	110,762	0	0	3,171,297
SKILL ACQU/ YOUTH DEV.	534,434	0	534,434	0	0	0	534,434
AGRIC DEV. PROG.	4,001,265	599,640	3,665	3,397,960	0	0	3,665
OTHERS	2,016,849	0	2,020,479	(3,630)	0	0	2,020,479
	124,188,486	16,716,014	18,109,875	88,962,596	1,800,075	408,582	19,939,903

Source: NEITI (2017). *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary Agencies– Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*



Table 5: The Project Performances Analysis of the NDDC State Projects, 2007 - 2015

Year	2007		2009		2011		2013		2015		CUMMULATIVE 2007-2015		Percentage
	CONTRACT AWARDED	WORK CERTIFIED	CONTRACT AWARDED	WORK CERTIFIED	CONTRACT AWARDED	WORK CER TIFIED	CONTRACT AWARDED	WORK CERTIFIED	CONTRACT AWARDED	WORK CERTIFIED	CONTRACT AWARDED	WORK CERTIFIED	
	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	N'000	
Abia	975,214	755,354 (77%)	29,996	29,996 (100%)	4,357,824	374,848 (32%)	3,484,125	209,509 (6%)	2,533,816	171,800 (7%)	11,380,975	2,541,506	22%
Akwa - Ibom	5,185,700	3,558,106 (69%)	4,860,659	1,338,611 (69%)	8,232,797	316,443 (69%)	9,396,995	1,615,623 (17%)	22,719,802	564,630 (2%)	50,395,953	393,413	19%
Bayelsa	49,445,344	21,838,312 (44%)	5,371,429	2,334,013 (43%)	9,322,133	3,516,748 (18%)	11,432,860	2,991,975 (26%)	2,914,250	845,504 (29%)	88,486,017	31,526,552	36%
Cross-River	481,873	515,173 (107%)	35,940	4,803 (97%)	3,377,107	537,375 (16%)	1,567,730	288,636 (18%)	2,717,233	179,014 (7%)	8,179,882	1,555,000	19%
Delta	1,648,012	1,365,428 (83%)	541,009	351,557 (65%)	1,662,473	764,760 (46%)	31,909,43831	2,170,709 (7%)	24,060,651	2,894,308 (12%)	59,821,583	7,546,762	13%
Edo	433,596	277,582 (64%)	359,789	311,983 (87%)	4,839,758	2,647,427 (55%)	5,841,727	105,041 (2%)	8,321,953	601,091 (7%)	19,796,823	3,943,123	20%
Imo	461,301	158,634 (34%)	119,231	118,458 (99%)	3,067,466	1,616,010 (53%)	18,709,530	2,128,576 (11%)	13,913,577	1,070,762 (8%)	36,271,106	5,092,441	14%
Ondo	309,143	9,047 (3%)	1,692,713	654,264 (39%)	1,255,477	65,520 (5%)	20,791,420	412,255 (2%)	3,106,013	760,969 (24%)	27,154,765	1,902,055	7%
Rivers	21,287,508	11,127,460 (52%)	609,577	501,220 (82%)	25,673,993	3,232,898 (13%)	33,470,615	9,537,998 (28%)	28,476,783	2,849,780 (10%)	109,518,475	27,249,357	25%

Source: NEITI (2017). *Report on Revenues, Deductions, and Analysis of Disbursement and Utilization of Funds of the Federal Beneficiary – Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*, p.38.



The projects and programmes profile of the Commission indicates that within the study period priority was placed on construction of roads and bridges, electrification and landing jetty/erosion/reclamation with the least emphasis on educational infrastructure and development, skill acquisition and youth development, water projects, hospital and other medical equipment, and Security and logistics and regional master plan. Table 11 presents project status and categories of project executed by the NDDC between 2012 and 2014, while Table 12 shows state by state summary of NDDC development projects since Inception.

Table 6: Projects Status Summary and Project Categories Report, 2012-2014

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	Project type
Project Type	No of Projects awarded in 2012	No. of projects awarded in 2013	No. of projects awarded in 2014	No. of projects above 90%	Total no. of projects completed	Total no. of projects commissionable	Total no. of projects commissioned	
Bridge	-	2	0	1	1	0	0	Physical infrastructure
Building	402	15	0	328	294	133	138	Physical infrastructure
Canalization	9	9	0	-	-	-	0	Physical infrastructure
Electrification	30	24	2	29	14	49	46	Social infrastructure
Flood control	1	-	0	1	1	1	0	Physical infrastructure
Jetty	41	6	0	32	32	16	11	Physical infrastructure
Road	40	17	2	25	19	14	4	Physical infrastructure
Water	51	25	2	38	77	34	21	Social infrastructure
Total	574	98	6	454	438	247	220	

Sources: NEITI, 2014; Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Project File, 2014. p. 5.

Table 7: State by State Summary of NDDC Development Projects since Inception

	ABI	AKS	BYS	CRS	DEL	EDO	IMO	OND	REG	RIV	TOT
<i>Roads/Bridges</i>	224	390	306	186	721	251	319	153	54	925	3,520
<i>Jetty/Shore Protection</i>	0	2	64	5	91	1	1	23	21	56	264
<i>Canalization/Reclamation</i>	1	5	40	0	120	0	9	13	7	10	205
<i>Electricity/Power</i>	152	237	165	96	317	89	101	218	10	189	1,574
<i>Water Supply</i>	92	184	125	65	180	110	85	122	1	209	1,173
<i>Buildings</i>	98	276	184	63	229	174	175	252	49	207	1,707
<i>Flood control/Erosion</i>	1	7	2	9	4	9	1	0	4	1	38
<i>Equipping/Furnishing</i>	0	8	2	6	13	1	3	1	13	21	68
TOTAL	568	1,109	888	430	1,675	635	694	782	159	1,618	8,558

Source: NDDC (2016), p.16.



The foregoing information shows government intervention efforts aimed at addressing the infrastructural challenges in the oil producing areas of Nigeria within the study period. It is evident that the major focus was on physical infrastructure. While social infrastructure was undermined, institutional infrastructure was completely neglected. We proceed now to examine how the NDDC projects have impacted on infrastructural development in the oil producing areas of Nigeria within the study period.

ADEQUACY OF INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE OIL PRODUCING AREAS OF NIGERIA, 2009-2017

The NDDC, as an interventionist agency, is meant to address decades of social and infrastructural underdevelopment in the oil producing areas of Nigeria. However, if underdevelopment, as Ekanem (2001, p. 53) has defined, is “inability, failure, refusal or structural prevention of a people to use existing mental, physical, and material resources available to society at a given time and space to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvement in standard of their lives” then the oil producing areas, despite numerous projects provided by the NDDC, is roundly underdeveloped socially and economically.

The available social development indicators in the oil producing areas of Nigeria point to inadequate, unavailable and poor quality infrastructure and social services, from water to telecommunication. The historical neglect of the region’s development poses a steep barrier to attaining socio-economic transformation and poverty alleviation (NDHDR, 2006). In the oil producing areas of Nigeria, the situation is similar to that at the national level. Except for Rivers and Bayelsa States, where poverty incidence seems to have stabilized at around 44% after an initial jump from 7%, poverty incidence declined between 1996 and 2004 (UNDP, 2006). Poverty has become a way of life due to economic stagnation; agricultural underdevelopment from soil infertility; unemployment; poor quality of life due to shortages of essential goods, facilities and money; isolation and poor communication; government insensitivity; unhealthy environment and malnutrition. Such conditions influence most members of the affected areas because it is not only income poverty that is the problem but also lack of access to social and physical infrastructure.

As poverty bites harder in the oil producing areas of Nigeria and concrete development retard rather than progress, so is basic amenities lacking. The status and availability of social services are low, despite the areas performing better than the national average in terms of poverty rates. Houses in the areas are usually of poor quality, e.g., mud-walled houses with a stilt foundation (UNDP, 2006). School and health care facilities are severely deteriorated, and there are shortages of qualified teachers and basic health services. Critics, such as UNDP have expressed concern that the oil producing areas of Nigeria have suffered neglect, particularly inadequate infrastructure at the hands of the government as well as the multi-national oil companies (UNDP, 2014). We proceed now to examine in details the challenges of inadequate infrastructure in the oil producing areas.

WATER SUPPLY

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics reveal that water in the majority of oil producing areas comes from unsafe supply facilities, including rivers, lakes or ponds, unprotected wells and boreholes. The Bureau classifies available sources of potable water for household consumptions as: pipe borne, untreated pipe, borehole, protected well, unprotected well, river/lake/pond, vendor trucks and other categories (see table 13 below). In five of the nine oil producing states, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Ondo and Imo-water problems are very acute and result in supplies of unsafe water in more than 50% of the cases. Therefore, poor access to adequate drinking water has had serious implications for the general health, environment, economic activity and sustainable livelihoods of people in the areas.

Table 8: Sources of Water to Households in the Niger Delta

State	Pipe-borne	Untreated Pipe	Protected Well	Unprotected Well	River Lake, pond	Vendor trucks	Other	Safe	Unsafe	Total
A’Ibom	7.37	5.36	33.48	-	9.15	31.92	0.22	12.50	46.21	53.79
Bayelsa	7.49	2.17	4.11	-	8.21	76.09	0.72	1.21	13.77	86.23
C/River	2.43	0.88	19.25	0.44	14.38	31.64	-	30.97	23.01	76.99
Delta	2.89	1.84	31.32	16.05	26.05	20.53	0.26	1.05	52.11	47.89
Edo	9.70	1.21	28.89	19.19	10.51	24.24	4.85	1.41	58.89	41.01
Rivers	12.42	4.04	23.60	10.25	31.99	16.15	-	1.55	50.31	49.69
Ondo	5.97	1.12	16.04	19.4	7.09	50.0	0.37	-	42.54	57.46
Imo	6.15	2.69	30.77	4.62	11.54	30.38	4.62	9.23	44.23	55.77
Abia	3.38	2.54	54.95	0.23	1.80	34.91	0.45	0.68	62.16	37.87
Mean	6.40	0.93	27.00	10.02	13.41	35.10	1.64	7.32	43.69	56.31
Nigeria	13.56	2.43	17.27	17.21	19.64	24.12	3.31	2.40	50.52	49.48

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2016).



TRANSPORT

According to the UNDP's Niger Delta Human Development Report (NDHR), (2006), most Niger Delta roads are in bad state of disrepair. Efforts by local government authorities to repair the roads have worsened them and left the local people with more hardship. Although urban road transportation development has been accorded some priority (NDDC Quarterly Report, 2016), less regard has been shown for rural transportation, especially water transport, which the majority of the rural populace depend on. Some roads have so many death traps that motorists avoid them. Analysts refer to transport and communication in the area as a source of misery.

TELECOMMUNICATION

The dearth of telecommunication infrastructure in the oil producing areas of Nigeria stifles the advancement of information technology and development as well as technical empowerment of the populace. Most rural communities are largely unconnected and completely unable to take advantage of modern trends in telecommunications and technology as tools for accelerated rural development. Available data show that the number of telephone lines (land lines) in the areas works out at about 38 per 10,000 people (NDHDR, 2006). Growth in the number of landlines has stalled in the last few years due to the introduction of the GSM (global system of mobile communication).

POWER AND FUEL

Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (see Table 14) show that across the region, on average, only 34% of people use electrical lighting; 61% use kerosene or a lantern. Less popular sources of lighting are gas (1.2% on average), generators (1.5%), batteries (0.2%) candles (0.6%), firewood (1.8%) and others (1.2%). The general sources of household fuel are firewood, charcoal, kerosene, gas, electricity, and others. The modal fuel or primary energy source in the region is firewood (a mean of 73%), followed by kerosene (24.8%) and gas (1.2%).

Table 9: Percentage Distribution of Sources of Light

State	Kerosene	Gas	Electricity	Generator	Battery	Candle	Firewood	Others	Total
A'bom	71.5	1.7	22.1	0.5	0.2	-	3.7	0.2	100.0
Bayelsa	86.7	1.3	3.5	4.5	-	0.5	1.3	2.1	100.0
C/River	78.2	1.1	18.9	0.2	-	-	1.6	-	100.0
Delta	43.0	0.9	53.3	1.1	-	-	1.7	-	100.0
Edo	24.6	1.1	70.7	0.4	-	0.7	1.3	1.1	100.0
Rivers	77.6	2.5	18.3	2.9	-	-	2.2	2.5	100.0
Ondo	59.7	0.2	38.3	-	-	-	-	0.8	100.0
Imo	58.6	0.8	38.1	1.2	-	-	0.8	0.4	100.0
Abia	49.9	1.0	45.4	0.8	-	0.5	1.5	1.0	100.0
Mean	61.1	1.2	34.3	1.5	0.2	0.6	1.8	1.2	100.0
Nigeria	62.5	1.1	31.6	0.5	0.1	0.2	3.5	0.6	100.0

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2016).

HOUSING

Housing in the oil producing areas of Nigeria is predominantly of poor quality, especially in the swamps and creeks where dwellings are made up largely of mud walls, and stilt or strip foundations. A survey of 40 locations by the Niger Delta Environmental Survey (NDES) that included Warri, Port Harcourt and Sapele revealed that 30.4% of houses had mud walls, 53.8% had corrugated – iron sheet roofing, and 46.6% had a strip foundation. Flooring materials vary widely, but are predominantly concrete followed by mud.

Table 10: Type of Housing Construction by Households

State	Mud	Cement	Burnt Bricks Or Concrete	Stone	Iron sheets	Others
A'Ibom	32.96	49.44	0.67	2.67	0.45	13.81
Bayelsa	33.73	41.20	1.45	0.48	3.86	19.28
C/River	61.06	35.18	0.88	0.66	1.33	0.88
Delta	17.06	68.77	3.67	0.79	0.26	9.45
Edo	17.98	76.97	4.04	0.20	0.20	0.61
Rivers	24.53	58.70	2.48	0.93	0.93	12.42
Ondo	56.34	35.45	2.24	0.37	0.37	5.22
Imo	11.54	76.92	2.31	1.54	-	7.69
Abia	11.24	82.47	2.47	0.22	-	3.60



Mean	29.6	58.34	2.2	0.9	1.1	8.1
Nigeria	52.85	36.90	2.37	0.70	0.50	6.67

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2016)

Table 11: Housing Requirements Projection for 2007-2015

State	2003	2007	2011	2015
Aba	50,895	60,693	72,378	86,312
Uyo	13,240	23,935	27,044	30,556
Yenagoa	6,561	11,862	13,402	15,143
Calabar	34,664	39,907	47,589	56,751
Warri	17,669	31,942	36,069	40,779
Benin	41,257	74,585	84,273	95,218
Owerri	15,672	28,331	32,012	36,169
Akure	17,561	31,748	35,872	40,531
Port Harcourt	71,575	85,354	101,786	121,382
Totals	269,094	388,357	450,425	522,841
Region:	1,630,717			

Source: Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan, 2014/2015

Despite the huge amount of money claimed to have been expended on building, it is seen from Table 16 above that Housing Requirements Projection for 2007-2015 was one million, six hundred and thirty thousand, seven hundred and seventeen (1,630,717) housing units, still needed.

EDUCATION

Statistical estimates have put the proportion of children attending primary school at 80% (which compares favourably with the estimated national average of 54%) (NDHDR, 2006, p. 32). But across the oil producing areas, nearly all school facilities are in a state of extreme disrepair, requiring major rehabilitation. The secondary school systems has been seriously afflicted by shortages of quality teachers, a regional pattern is becoming increasingly acute due in large part to discordance between investments in infrastructure outside a well-coordinated planning process. While 76% of Nigerian children attend primary school, in the areas, the figure drops appallingly to between 30 and 40%. Revealing the immense challenge to development and provision of social amenities for sustainable livelihoods, an NDES report (2003) noted that in some of the oil producing areas, covering some 30,000 square kilometers and an estimated eight million people, there were only 2,169 primary schools. This implied one primary school per 3,700 people serving an area of 14 square kilometers, and one school for every two settlements. For secondary schools, the ratio is one school per 14,679 people serving an area of 55 square kilometers, and one school for every seven settlements.

HEALTH AND HEALTH SERVICE DELIVERY

Due to dismal health and health service delivery, hospitals, clinics and primary health care centers; and a lack of effective operational plan for holistic health management, the majority of Niger Delta communities living in isolated areas lack the most basic modern medical care, including first aid. There is also the absence of formal health care services in much of the hinterlands (the NDDC Regional Master Plan, 2014/2015). According to an NDES (2003) report on primary health care, there is a ratio of only one health care facility for every 9,805 people, with the average facility serving an area of 44 square kilometers. There is one facility for approximately every 43 settlements. The numbers worsen for secondary health care. There is only one facility for every 131,174 people, serving an area of 583 square kilometers. A single facility serves an average of 48 settlements.

Poor access to health care reduces people's quality of life and increases their poverty. To illustrate, available figures show that there is one doctor per 82,000 people, rising to one doctor per 132,000 people in some areas, especially the rural areas, which is more than three times the national average of 40,000 people per doctor. Only 27% of people in the Delta have access to safe drinking water and about 30% of households have access to electricity, both of which are below the national averages of 31.7% and 33.6%, respectively. Only 6% of the populations of the oil producing areas have access to telephones, while 70% have never used a telephone (NBS, 2016). For added measure, apart from a Federal Trunk B road that crosses Bayelsa State, the State has only 15 kilometres of tarred road. Poverty remains widespread, worsened by an exceptionally high cost of living created by the petro-economy.

Given the social and economic conditions described above, it is of interest, considerably, to see how the oil producing areas of Nigeria fares on human welfare indices. The incidence of poverty in the areas has been on the increase since 1980 (see Table 17). Except for Rivers and Bayelsa States, where poverty incidence seems to have stabilized at around 44 per cent after an initial jump



from seven per cent, the poverty level increased between 1980 and 1996, but declined between 1996 and 2015 in line with the national estimate.

Table 12: Incidence of Poverty in the Niger Delta, 1980-2015

	1980	1985	1992	1996	2015
Abia	14.4	33.1	49.9	56.2	22.27
Bayelsa	7.2	44.4	43.4	44.3	19.98
Cross River	10.2	41.9	45.5	66.9	41.61
Delta	19.8	52.4	33.9	56.1	45.35
Edo	19.8	52.4	33.9	56.1	33.09
Imo	14.4	33.1	49.9	56.2	27.39
Ondo	24.9	47.3	46.6	71.6	42.15
Rivers	7.2	44.4	43.4	44.3	29.09
Nigeria	28.1	46.3	42.7	65.6	54.4

Source: National Bureau of Statistics (2016).

What is evidence from the foregoing is that several Federal Government initiatives including the NDDC have so far failed to address the fundamental problems of exclusion, deprivation and marginalization, which have thrown up the crisis of development in the region. The fact is that most of the Federal Government interventionist policies, actions and structures were not based on the understanding that the issues at stake in the oil producing areas of Nigeria are interwoven, multidimensional and complex. No simplistic and palliative measures can in any way resolve such structural and fundamental issues.

The point being made is that the NDDC has not recorded meaningful improvement in the welfare of the oil producing areas. As presently constituted, the NDDC gives room for financial misappropriation and this is one of the strong factors fuelling the continuing crisis of youth restiveness and resistance against the Nigerian state. Like the previous developmental agencies, the Commission has been highly incapacitated in addressing the myriad of developmental challenges in the region. For the most part, the legacy of these schemes translates into a picture of missed opportunities, low value for money and, not least, enormous disappointment for the oil producing states whose hopes and aspirations have been raised and then repeatedly shattered (Ayapere, 2015).

These Federal Government interventionist structures, to say the least, are products of ethnic power calculation and therefore not only elitist in nature but also specifically designed to protect the oil and gas interest of the elites of the dominant ethnic groups. This largely explains why the agency is under the tight control of the Presidency and its commissioners, politically appointed (mainly members of the ruling party). Invariably, NDDC like its predecessor is constrained by the placement of politics before the development agenda of the region.

CONCLUSION

The Niger Delta development debacle can be situated within the locus of the character of the Nigerian State and those at the head of it. Within this ambit; all efforts have been directed at the conventional practice of treating the symptoms of underdevelopment and poverty instead of arresting the root cause. Hence the approaches of various development intervention agencies have been mainly palliatives. The study calls for the Commission to carry out a comprehensive review of their projects to determine their status. Where contracts have been abandoned, contractors should be prosecuted to enable the commission recover advances to them. Where a contractor deliberately delays a job with intention of obtaining price variation, such contractor should be made to deliver on the old agreed price or the contract should be cancelled and re-awarded.

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