

Nigerian State and Development in the Niger Delta: A Critique of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)

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Abstract: - Nigeria's Niger Delta has a disreputable history of poor living conditions despite its rich human and natural resources. Since the findings of the Willink's Commission in 1957, the precarious development condition of the region has continued to be poorly addressed, over sixty years after. Various development interventions have been made by the Nigerian state supposedly to tackle the development conundrum of the region. Latest of such programmes is the Niger Delta Development Commission established in 2000. Despite this latest effort, the Niger Delta continues to be trapped in the vicious circle of underdevelopment. Given that many factors may be responsible for the failure of the Commission and its inability to facilitate development in the region, this study attempted an interrogation of the impacts of the character of Nigerian state on the poor performance of the NDDC, and by implication, other such interventions in the area. Marxian Political Economy was adopted as the theoretical framework for this study. Data collected from secondary and primary sources were analysed using the Content Analysis method. It was found that the abysmal performance of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in the development of Niger Delta could be safely attributed to the nature of the Nigerian state. The Commission failed to facilitate development in the region because it was not structured to do so. It was conceived and designed as an avenue for creating the order in which the interest of the ruling class to accumulate capital in the region is favoured and protected. The study therefore recommended that the NDDC legal framework be reviewed to accommodate such people-centred provisions as making membership of the management and governing boards of the NDDC a community elective affair, as well as making the advisory and monitoring committee of the NDDC independent bodies composed of members of the local communities.

Keywords: State, Capital, Development, Interventions, Niger Delta, Ruling Class.

I. INTRODUCTION

The immense development need of Nigeria's Niger Delta is incontrovertible, just as its economic significance to the Nigerian state is no longer in doubt. The precarious development condition of the region has been observed, even before independence. First of such observations was made by the Willink's Commission of 1957. The Commission in its report in 1958 observed that the Niger Delta region was a special area that required special interventions to tackle the

development challenges of the region, among other things. Some of the identified development challenges included difficult communication arising from the geographical location of the region whose people mostly lived in the creeks and swamps; poor education; and high cost of erecting buildings (Willink's Commission Report, 1958). This led to the establishment of the first development intervention in the Niger Delta: The Niger Delta Development Board which formed part of the Nigeria's Independence Constitution in 1960.

From then till date, many other programmes of development intervention have been established by the Nigerian state purportedly in response to the deepening poverty and underdevelopment of the Niger Delta, occasioned by oil production activities and terrain of the region. Latest of such interventions is the creation of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2000 by virtue of the Niger Delta Development Commission (Establishment Etc.) Act 2000, No. 6, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, on the 12th day of July, 2000. The Commission was created over forty-three years after the first major official report on the squalid condition of the Niger Delta. Eighteen years after, very vociferous agitations about the poor development condition of the region continues to exist.

In 2006, the United Nations Development Programme observed that the Niger Delta was still faced with a condition of neglect, poverty, lack of welfare facilities and requisite infrastructure. It was further noted that the region was bedevilled by social deprivation, filth, squalor, crumbling social infrastructure, abject poverty, high unemployment rate and administrative neglect, with more than half the population living below poverty lines (UNDP, 2006). Niger Delta's poverty was recorded to be well above Nigerian and African standards.

NDDC's Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan (NDRDMP) in 2006 also noted that greater percentage of the population of Niger Delta lived in abject poverty which was operationalised in terms of inadequacy of healthcare and educational attainments, access to safe sanitation and potable drinking water, gainful employment, shelter and disposable income (NDDC, 2006). Moreover, Tom (2010) observed that

available statistics on social, political, economic and infrastructural development in the Niger Delta revealed the unavailability, inadequacy or poor quality of such development infrastructure, as most of the population of the region still lived in unacceptable development conditions. Some people in the region drank from untreated water wells and contaminated surface and river waters with very high risk of contracting water-borne diseases common with the people of the region. Others lacked transport and telecommunication facilities with the attendant constraint on economic development. These have meant that Nigeria's Niger Delta, which was supposed to be a huge reservoir of both national and international significance, owing to its massive oil and gas endowments, is paradoxically lacking basic conditions precedent to sustainable development.

The huge oil and gas resources of the Niger Delta and its economic importance to the Nigerian state are not contestable. According to Lubeck, Watts and Lipschits (2007) quoted in Ogon (2017), there were over 600 oil fields, about 5,282 oil wells, 275 flow stations and 10 export terminals in Nigeria, all located in the Niger Delta. Crude oil from the region has also been the mainstay of Nigeria's economy for the past four decades now. National budgets are based on oil proceeds which prices are used as benchmarks (Sagay, 2001). Between 1970 and 2006, the federal government of Nigeria earned over US\$350 billion from oil production (UNDP, 2006; Ogon, 2017) while it earned in excess of US\$415 billion from oil between 2010 and 2014 only (OPEC, 2015). One hundred percent of these oil earnings come from the Niger Delta.

In spite of the rich endowments and contribution to the economic growth of Nigeria, the Niger Delta has remained predominantly and perpetually poor. In 2008, the 45-member Technical Committee on the Niger Delta, inaugurated by the then Vice President Goodluck Jonathan to make proposals that could assist the federal government achieve sustainable development in the region came up with certain observations. It observed that the Niger Delta had a special development need, corroborating Willink's Commission report. Also, the region was noted to be characterised by infrastructure deficit and environmental degradation which may have led to the evident volatility of the region.

The foregoing studies show that majority of the population of the Niger Delta still live in unacceptable standards, despite the creation of such state interventionist programmes as the NDDC and other efforts that came before it. While the Commission has awarded contracts valued over ₦ 2.5 trillion since inception (Ogon, 2017), between 2010 and 2014 alone, the Commission has been allocated over US\$4.69 billion (₦ 923 billion) (NEITI, 2013) – figures massive enough to attract huge socio-economic transformation of the region. Yet, the region has remained neck-deep in poverty and underdevelopment. The study is therefore aimed at investigating the impact of the NDDC on the development of

the Niger Delta, and examining the link between its performance and the nature of Nigerian post-colonial state.

II. METHODOLOGY

The Niger Delta that the NDDC is to help develop occupies about 112,110 square kilometres with a projected population size of about 40 million people (NDDC, 2006). In this space are all the oil bearing States of Nigeria. This study relies on the descriptive/historical research design. Data were collected from both secondary and primary sources. The primary data were collected from various sessions of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) organised across five out of the nine Niger Delta States. Within each State, local oil producing communities were purposively selected. Venues for the discussion sessions were also selected to accommodate other relevant communities whose inputs were adjudged useful to the study. Data elicited were analysed using the content analysis method.

III. THEORETICAL, CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL CLARIFICATIONS

3.1 A Theoretical Note

Issues of the effect of the Nigerian post-colonial state on the development of Nigeria generally and her oil-rich but penurious Niger Delta in particular is best situated within the Marxian variant of political economy, as a tool of analysis. It is impossible to appreciate the nature of Nigerian post-colonial state, just as many other post-colonial states of Africa, without digging into the root of its existence. In other words, its colonial history, as well as socio-economic implication on its politics, is very important in the understanding of the nature of Nigerian state. This state is literally the creation of colonial imperialism. It is, therefore, only when an objective account of the history of the state is taken that the economic foundations can be easily appreciated. Given that economic needs are man's fundamental needs and economic activities man's most important activities, an understanding of the economic disposition of the managers of the Nigerian state is very important and key to the comprehension of their socio-economic activities in the rich regions of Nigeria. This, by extension, explains the roles played by such development interventions as the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), which are designed and packaged by these state managers supposedly for the people of the Niger Delta region.

The political economy approach to the study of the state, development or underdevelopment attempts an analysis of the laws governing development of the society on the basis of social relations of production – the economic relations of people in the production, distribution and consumption process. This probably explains Okolie's (2009) position that political economy method of analysis is deeply rooted in the basic production and distribution processes, as well as the pre-eminence of material (economic) conditions in the explanation

of social life. Therefore, it is the production, distribution and consumption of economic resources that propel every other aspect of the society, including political processes. That is to say that the nature of the economic base (substructure) of a society determines, to a very large extent, the character of the superstructure. Thus, an understanding of a society's mode of production, distribution and social relations of production facilitates understanding of the laws and politics of that society (Ake, 1981). Economic factors characterise social relations and propels every political process. It is within this context that socio-political actions of the state are safely located in the economic disposition of its managers. That is to say that the laws emanating from the state to establish development interventions in the Niger Delta are reflective of the nature of the state.

The class element of political economy system of analysis is also instructive here because any discussion of the state is invariably also about the social class and property relations. The structure of property relations reflects the distribution of power, resources and opportunities in the society and defines the mode of production (Eteng, 1987; Roberts & Sutch, 2004; Adams & Dyson, 2007; Ogon, 2017). Largely, the roots of political power reflect the structure of the economy. This is true of every state. Even if in the post-colonial state, the contours of the economy and especially the motive force of that economy stretch into the bowels of imperialism and do not always present a clear line of analysis. For our purposes here, it is not necessary to go into this except to echo the fact that here the managers of the state use their privileged access as means for accumulation (Ekekwe, 1986).

3.2 *The State*

A clear understanding of the state in respect of its role in the capital production and accumulation process is key to understanding the performance of the NDDC in the Niger Delta. Much as various views of the state exist, our interest here is in the general Marxist conceptualisation of the state. According to Marx and Engels, the state is an outcome of contradictory social class struggles over the control of the affairs of the society. Affairs of the society in this context entail the economic activities which are fundamental for every other aspect of the society's life, including politics. The state is an expression of the domination of one social class over another; hence, it is the modality of class domination (Ake, 1985). This domination at times expresses itself in the policies and programmes of the state, certainly in its overbearing and authoritarian tendencies. When it is said that the state confronts its citizens and treats them as though they were subjects, it is reference to the crudity of the inherent class element.

3.3 *Development and Interventionist Development: An Overview*

Development means different things to different people, based on their ideological leanings and the particular issue under discussion (Obinozie, 1991). Be that as it may,

there is reasonable agreement in the literature that development is a multidimensional process geared towards the improvement of quality of life and living standards through progressive activities that put highest premium on the people's interests and choices. We accept that one of the best ways to measure it is with regard to the reduction of poverty, inequality and unemployment (Seers, 1972; Nwaorgu, 2005); with regard to improvement in the society's capacity to invent tools for the manipulation of the environment, productively (Okowa, 1996; Ohale, 2018); the attainment of increasing satisfaction in the basic human needs of a society (ILO, 1976; UNDP, 2001); reasonable control over the productive forces of the society (Anikpo, 1984); access to basic social amenities and institutionalisation of democracy (South Commission Report 1993); realisation of greater levels of civilisation (Ake, 1996; Ijere, 2014); enhanced education, improved productivity and advanced infrastructure (Onuoha, 1999); attainment of long and healthy lives, decent standards of living and active participation in community life (Okafor, 2004); human capacity building, empowerment of disadvantaged groups as well as decreasing unemployment and inequality (Ekekwe, 2015).

It is discernible from the foregoing that development, which requires collaborative efforts of all stakeholders, has various important elements. It is multidimensional; a process; involves improvement in living standards of people; increases access to basic social amenities; increases people's participation in social life; enlarges people's choices, enhances people's freedom; encourages sense of belonging; flows from bottom to top and not the other way round; reduces inequality; bases on the people's needs and interests; and derives from the people's choices. In other words, all these elements must be present in whatever should pass for development, be it usual or interventionist.

Interventionist development is supposed to be a process that entails a set of well-articulated programmes tailored to assist communities and individuals acquire skills, attitudes and orientations needed for their participation in solving their problems in the order of priority and as determined by their improved competence level (Omotola, 2010). That is to say that development interventions should aim, first, at improving the people's competence with which they can determine, prioritise and then begin solving their problems. Against this line of thought, it is interesting that the Niger Delta people seem to prefer educational interventions in their communities as will be shown later. For, generally, development entails deliberate and conscious actions geared towards the achievement of reasonable improvement in the political and socio-economic life of the people. To describe a development programme or plan as interventionist development suggests that it is focused to comprehensively address multilayered issues (Kubish et al, 2002). To achieve this, all stakeholders must commit to harmony and mutual respect in their interactions. They must also agree to comprehensively plan and manage resources and

energy. Programmes of development intervention, therefore, have to be fully integrated into the socio-economic, political and cultural environment of the people they are meant to serve (Mabogunje, 2002).

We observe that whichever way one looks at it, the interventionist role of the state such as is discussed here is actually part of its legitimation function. If it plays the interventionist role successfully, the post-colonial state masks its class character by appearing to meet every community at its point of need. Now, let us attempt an analysis of what the Commission has done in the name of development in the Niger Delta, using data from secondary sources and the Focus Group Discussions.

3.4 The Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) is born

Repression and interventionist programmes function separately but sometimes complement each other in manufacturing the stabilising legitimacy for the state's expropriation activities in the Niger Delta. In other words, the state's response to the Niger Delta question is situated in the repressive and interventionist functions of the Nigerian state (Ojefia, 2004). Interventionist programmes are sometimes used as viable alternatives to repression and this may explain the creation of NDDC in 2000.

The Nigerian state suffered huge national and international reputational damage in the 1990s as a result of the heavy-handed way it responded to the struggle of the Ogoni people. This damage which endangered oil production in Nigeria's Niger Delta was partly caused by activities of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), necessitated in part by inability of Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) to solve the environmental degradation and other development problems in the region. The MOSOP international campaign and especially their insistence that Shell must leave Ogoni land was likely going to be copied by other Niger Delta communities. This would endanger oil production. In a desperate measure, Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others were executed, in addition to other state's repressive actions in Etche and Ogoni. Thus the state was determined to subjugate the people of the Niger Delta in order to continue the crude rapacious capital accumulation of the state and its managers in the region.

Given that Saro-Wiwa's crime probably was that he made very vociferous agitations against the injustices, human and environmental, meted out on people of the Niger Delta by the Nigerian state and international Oil Companies (IOCs), it therefore follows that OMPADEC, which was the substantive programme of intervention at the time did not serve its purpose, hence, capital accumulation was threatened. In order to salvage this eventuality, managers of Nigerian state created the NDDC to, once again, placate the people in order to continue the mindless plundering of the region, since repression had failed.

The NDDC was created by virtue of Act No. 6 of 2000, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria with the core mandate of conceptualising, planning and implementing projects and programmes, in accordance with set regulations and rules, for the sustainable development of the Niger Delta region (FGN, 2000). The project areas were transportation, health, agriculture and fisheries, employment, industrialisation, housing, electricity, water supply and telecommunications. A cursory look at some parts of the Act will suffice here.

Section 2 subsection 2 (a) of the NDDC Act provided that the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria appointed all members of the management board of the NDDC, despite the fact that the people were in better position to decide who represented their interest better. If the primary function of the NDDC was to facilitate real development in the Niger Delta, the people would be allowed to choose those that better represented their interests, to say the least, given the real meaning and essence of development as will be shown shortly. The board was, by section 12 (3) (a), empowered to employ as many staff as it deemed necessary. This resulted in an observed over-enlargement of the bureaucratic architecture of the Commission probably to serve political patronage purposes (Nextier, 2015). It was also given powers in sections 14 (2) (e) and 17 to obtain such amounts of money through loans as it deemed fit for the running of the Commission. In sections 7 (3) and 23, the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria reserved the right to give directives to the board of the Commission. By the provisions of sections 10, 11 and 21 of the principal Act, management, advisory and monitoring committee were to be made up of the ruling class and other members appointed by the President.

In what appears to give credence to Ake's and Ekeke's position that the post-colonial state is at once an instrument for personal accumulation and class domination, section 24 of the Act provided for legal cover for the exploitative activities of the state in the Niger Delta region. The section protects the managers of the programme of intervention against any form of legal redress in the course of their work in the Niger Delta. All the obvious dubious provisions of the Act, non-inclusion of community participation provisions as well as lack of institutionalised accountability of NDDC to the people makes the Commission appear to play any role but development intervention.

IV. FINDINGS

4.1 NDDC and Development in the Niger Delta

The NDDC is one of the critical channels through which development funds have been channelled to the Niger Delta, since 2000. According to NEITI (2013), the NDDC received about US\$4.69 billion (₦923 billion) from the Nigerian state between 2010 and 2014 (see Table 1). As at

31st December 2016, available data show that the Commission had awarded about 8,558 infrastructural development projects across the region. Table 2 shows that

Delta State received the highest number of projects within the period, followed by Rivers, Akwalbom, Bayelsa, Ondo, Imo, Edo, Abia and Cross River.

Table 1 Funds allocation to the NDDC, 2010 – 2014

Year	Federal Government Accounts (₦ billion)	Oil and Gas Producing Companies (₦ billion)
2010	44.93	89.77
2011	56.08	111.58
2012	48.67	131.53
2013	61.35	152.39
2014	61.94	165.04
Total	272.97	650.31
Grand Total		923.28

Source: Compiled from NEITI (2013) and Nextier (2015)

The performance statistics of these projects, as shown in Table 3, reveal that only 41.3 percent of the total projects were completed; 26.9 percent were ongoing; 3.4

percent were abandoned; 27.4 percent were yet to be mobilised; 0.6 percent were terminated and about 0.4 percent were taken over by government and other agencies.

Table 2: NDDC Infrastructure Projects in the Niger Delta, 31st December 2016

Category	AB	AK	BY	CR	DT	ED	IM	OD	RV	Total
Roads/Bridges	224	390	306	186	721	251	319	153	925	3,529
Jetty and Shore Protection	-	2	64	5	91	1	1	23	56	264
Canalisation and Reclamation	1	5	40	-	120	-	9	13	10	205
Electricity Energy/Power	152	237	165	96	317	89	101	218	189	1,574
Water Supply	92	184	125	65	180	110	85	122	209	1,173
Building Facilities	98	276	184	63	229	174	175	252	207	1,707
Flood and Erosion Control	1	7	2	9	4	9	1	-	1	38
Equipping and Furnishing	-	8	2	6	13	1	3	1	21	68
Total	568	1,109	888	430	1,675	635	694	782	1,618	8,558

Source: Culled from NDDC (Project Monitoring and Supervision) (2017)

Table 3 Performance statistics of NDDC Projects, 31st December 2016

Description	Number of Projects	Percentage of Total (%)
Awarded	8,558	100
Ongoing	2,302	26.9
Completed	3,536	41.3
Stalled/Abandoned	292	3.4
Yet to be mobilised	2,349	27.4
Terminated	49	0.6
Taken over by State Governments and other agencies	30	0.4

Source: NDDC (Project Monitoring and Supervision) (2017), Ogon (2017)

These performance statistics were corroborated by findings from Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sessions. They both seem to offer some explanation to the abysmal performance of the NDDC in the Niger Delta. Discussants in the various FGD sessions showed high level of dissatisfaction with the performance of NDDC in the development of their communities. Data from these discussions revealed that the local communities were not privy to the planning of developmental projects brought to them. As a result, their priorities were utterly misplaced. For instance, available data from the FGDs and some secondary sources revealed a high prevalence of road and bridge projects that have very little impact on the lives of the local oil producing communities such as Emeyal 1 (Bayelsa State), Ugbonla (Ondo State), Biara

(Rivers State). But the people's preferences were clearly at variance with what was brought to them in the name of development, and this seems to explain why such projects had no positive impacts on their development. While Emeyal 1 community would prefer potable water projects to roads, Ugbonla community had preference for electricity over roads. Biara community's preference was scholarship programmes, not internal road project. Also, in a study conducted by the UNDP in 2006, it was glaring that the people of the Niger Delta had preference for educational projects with a high demand rate of about 82.5 percent. This was against road facilities' 0.1 percent as shown in Table 4. Yet, road facilities dominated the NDDC's project schemes.

Table 4: Niger Delta household preferences for development facilities, 2006

School %	Health %	Road %	Water (Well) %	Water (Pipe) %	Transport %	Sanitation %	Agric. %	Police %
82.5	17.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Source: Culled from UNDP (2006)

Concentration of efforts in the award of road infrastructural projects in a region in dire need of educational advancement and concomitant poverty reduction leaves much to be desired. This is another source of suspicion and distrust. It also leaves one to wonder whose development interest the NDDC exists to serve. It seems that the ruling class who manages the state and its programmes of intervention choose to foist those projects, in which they derive more benefits, on the people, rather than embark on such projects that have the capacity to facilitate development in the region, which include such developmental projects that emanate from the people.

Perhaps, due to the misplaced development priorities of the Niger Delta by NDDC, inadequacy of developmental projects and non-performance of the available ones, it can be

extrapolated from data available to this study that development in all its facets had continued to dwindle in the Niger Delta, while the poverty condition has worsened. This seems to be indicative that the funds as well as the number of projects made no significant impact on the improvement of the standard of living and overall development of the region. For instance, Table 5 indicates that Bayelsa and Rivers States, which are NDDC member States, recorded the worst standing in economic human security in Nigeria as at 2015 with the index of 0.6358 and 0.6806 respectively. Also, the Niger Delta's index averaged 0.7669 while the average for Nigeria stood at 0.8162. This meant that other parts of the country that were not NDDC member States stood better than the Niger Delta which was referred to as the least-economically secured zone in Nigeria (UNDP, 2016).

Table 5 Niger Delta's Economic Security Position, 2015

State	Average Human Economic Security Index
Abia	0.8290
Akwalbom	0.7814
Bayelsa	0.6358
Cross River	0.7758
Delta	0.7842
Edo	0.7902
Imo	0.7586
Ondo	0.8672
Rivers	0.6806
Average (Niger Delta)	0.7669
Average (National)	0.8162

Source: Computed with figures from UNDP2016

Also, the average life expectancy at birth in the Niger Delta was put at 50.7 as at 2015, against Nigeria's 53.1. While the percentage of household with access to improved sanitation facilities was 33.3 for Nigeria, it was 28.6 for the Niger Delta. Again, health facility to population ratio was 1:4,097 on average for Nigeria but 1:4,375 for the Niger Delta. These are shown in Table 6; while Table 7 shows that

doctor to patient, nurse to patient and pharmacist to patient ratios in the region were 1:53,333, 1:1,066 and 1:12,000 respectively, against the World Health Organisation's standard of 1:700, 1:700 and 1:2,000 respectively. These data probably further prompted the observation that the South-South geo-political zone was the least health secured in Nigeria (UNDP, 2016).

Table 6 Health-related development indicators in the Niger Delta, 2015

State	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Household with access to improved sanitation facilities (%)	Health facility to population ratio
Abia	51	42.5	1:4608
Akwalbom	50	36.6	1:7220
Bayelsa	50	16.9	1:7342
Cross River	55	10.4	1:3936
Delta	49	22.4	1:4514
Edo	49	34.4	1:3483
Imo	53	48.2	1:2943
Ondo	52	18.0	1:4243
Rivers	48	28.0	1:1089
Average (Niger Delta)	50.7	28.6	1:4375
Average (National)	53.1	33.3	1:4097

Source: Computed by the researcher from UNDP (2016)

Table 7 Staff to health personnel ratio of health facilities in the Niger Delta, 2016

	Doctor to patient ratio	Nurse to patient ratio	Pharmacist to patient ratio
Niger Delta	1:53,333	1:1,066	1:12,000
WHO Standard	1:700	1:700	1:2,000

Source: Compiled from UNDP (2016)

Again, between 2003 and 2010, Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2011) observed that poverty rates in Abia, Bayelsa and Edo States rose from 40.9 percent, 40.0 percent and 53.6 percent respectively to 50.2 percent, 44.0 percent and 64.1 percent respectively, as shown on Table 8. That is to say that the poverty level in some NDDC States worsened even with the establishment of the NDDC and the huge sums of

money it was supposed to be spending in the zone. Ironically, some non-NDDC States recorded impressive improvements in poverty reduction. One of such cases was Lagos State where poverty rate remarkably dropped from 69.4 percent in 2004 to 40.3 percent in 2010, recording a phenomenal improvement of about 42 percent.

Table 8 Poverty levels and reduction rates at state levels, 2003/2004 and 2009/2010

State	2003/2004 (%)	2009/2010 (%)	% Reduction
Abia	40.9	50.2	-22.7
Akwalbom	56.8	51.0	10.2
Bayelsa	40.0	44.0	-10
Cross River	67.0	60.4	9.8
Delta	70.6	53.8	23.7
Edo	53.6	64.1	-19.5

Imo	46.7	39.4	15.6
Ondo	62.8	57.7	7.6
Rivers	56.7	47.2	16.7
Lagos	69.4	40.3	41.9

Source: Computed with figures contained in National Bureau of Statistics (2011)

As gleaned from the foregoing, underdevelopment deepened in the Niger Delta despite the creation of state interventionist development programme – the NDDC. This makes it appear that the programme was not necessarily an intervention for the development of the region but probably a mere legitimisation cover for the capitalist exploitation and appropriation of economic surpluses. In other words, the huge amounts of funds channelled to the Niger Delta through the NDDC may not be to facilitate development in the region but business investments of Nigeria's governing class, designed to divert attention of various local interests while expropriation activities continued unabated in the region. Throwing about US\$4.69 billion into the Niger Delta through the NDDC between 2010 and 2014, as earlier noted, while over US\$415 billion accrued to them within the same period through oil production activities seems to be a brilliant business idea of Nigeria's state managers and ruling class. While the people of Niger Delta may have erroneously judged performance of the NDDC based on the token gestures manifesting in patchy infrastructures here and there to brood over its failure to facilitate development in the region despite massive finances at its disposal, Nigeria's ruling (business) class probably toasted to a successful and rewarding business outing in the region.

Of note, the infrastructures which passed for development in the Niger Delta have been noted to do little or nothing to ameliorate the sufferings of the people in the region. They have not improved the living standards of the people in anyway. They are, at best, described as development artefacts (Ekekwe, 2015) represented by bridges, roads and street lights which attract over-bloated contract awards accompanied by huge kickbacks. More often than not, once payments are fully made for such contracts, and the necessary kickbacks retained, they are consequently abandoned by the contractors and managers of the NDDC with the negative consequences on the development of the Niger Delta and its people. This seems to offer some support for Ekekwe's (2015) observation that the worst victims of capital accumulation crises are the masses of the people, typified here by the masses of the people of the Niger Delta who have continued to flounder in abject poverty while huge capital resources consistently accrued to Nigeria's state and its ruling class, national and indigenous.

V. CONCLUSION

What has been argued and presented above suggests that development as done by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) can be safely attributed to the nature

and class character of the Nigerian state. The programme of development intervention failed to facilitate development in the region because it was not structured to do so. For one thing, the conspicuous absence of any provision for local community participation in the Act establishing the NDDC shows that this intervention is a good example of development from above. Such development aims less at helping the people to achieve their own development than legitimising the goal of the state in ensuring continuous capital accumulation. Thus, it can only pass for an avenue for creating the order in which the interest of the ruling class to accumulate capital in the region is favoured, both on the short and long run. This is because the NDDC is constituted in a clear class-distorted way, geared towards the achievement of latent and manifest class goals and evidently produces class-centric results, to the unavoidable disadvantage of the majority of the people of Niger Delta and the environment. This is symbolised by the continuing severe underdevelopment of the region as shown earlier.

Specifically, the following conclusions are logical:

1. NDDC is an obvious limitation to people's participation and involvement in their development process. This has proven to have great implications on the development of the Niger Delta.
2. The NDDC is a perfunctory and ad hoc intervention against the impediments to the state's capital accumulation in the Niger Delta and therefore may not facilitate development in the region.
3. Repression and programmes of intervention are interchangeable state policies in the Niger Delta geared towards manufacturing legitimacy needed for capital accumulation in the region. They work independently and sometimes complement each other. Where repression failed, sometimes, interventionist programmes took over.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Membership of the management and governing boards of the NDDC should be made a community elective affair. By this, the members should be made accountable to the people, not the ruling class represented by the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The local oil producing communities who know themselves should be given the opportunity to select those they trust can better represent their interests, in terms of development.

2. Maintenance elements should be built into NDDC contract terms in order to ensure sustainability of development projects.
3. Communities should be made to come up with their development needs, in order of priority, before the Commission prepares its budget for each fiscal year. This is because only the projects that address those priority needs of the communities seem to be appreciated, owned and protected by them.
4. From conception, development interventions in the Niger Delta should be properly articulated, not ad hoc responses to the impediments to capital accumulation as emblematised by the NDDC.
5. The advisory and monitoring committee of the NDDC should be made independent bodies composed of members of the local communities. By this, the communities are meant to own and protect the development projects in their communities. It appears that an understanding of this centrality of people in the development process accounts for the success levels achieved in the global north, in terms of development. This in turn reflects in the people's patriotic stance in such societies. A Singaporean is as patriotic as an American, Briton and even Japanese, as evidenced by the relative civility and discipline experienced in those societies. "God bless America" is one of the most important and revered prayers in the United States of America. Conversely, the number of Niger Deltans and Nigerians generally that have that level of zeal and commitment, perfunctorily or passionately, to the Nigerian project remain indistinct. In any case, "God bless Nigeria"!

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