



NIDPRODEV

NIGER DELTA PROFESSIONALS FOR DEVELOPMENT

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PAST & ONGOING D&G PROGRAMMES

- *Accountability:* Niger Delta Citizen Report Card on Public Services, Good Governance and Infrastructure/Development
- *Rule of Law:* Training on the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights
- *Citizens Participation:* Strengthening Stakeholder Capacity for Peace through Dialogue on Oil Revenue Transparency in the GMOU Communities of Niger Delta

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE EDITION

Democracy and governance are cornerstones of development. Nigeria currently faces a governance crisis, evidenced by the recent subsidy removal protests and strikes. A government unable to anticipate the damaging impact of its policy prescriptions is truly in crisis. This highlights the tremendous disconnect that exists between the governing and the governed. The governing unable to anticipate, nor meet the needs of the governed; and the governed unable to access their elected representatives. This edition seeks to highlight the main issues that hinder the consolidation of democracy. Democracy requires good governance and good governance exists in a democracy. Both are

cornerstones of development. In the book titled, African Perspectives on Governance, **Oluwu Dele notes that, "Good governance is...participatory, transparent and accountable, effective and equitable, and it promotes the rule of law. It ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making over the allocation of development resources."**

This edition seeks to highlight how our work contributes to the consolidation of democracy beginning in the Niger Delta. In the future we hope to expand in Nigeria and throughout Africa. This edition of the newsletter

will delve into NIDPRODEV's D&G programmes, and present our viewpoints on how to address the D&G crisis in Nigeria. We encourage you to join us on Facebook and Twitter for further discussion on pressing issues affecting Nigeria.



Community residents at a Keffes RDC Town Hall Meeting. NIDPRODEV mentors Keffes as part of the GMOU with Chevron.

DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMMES

Our D & G programmes encourage the relationship between democratic governance and human development. We view democracy not only as a means to human development, but as an end in, and of, itself. We encourage democracy and good governance, not only within the three tiers of government, but also at the community level.

Our interaction with rural and riverine residents of the Niger Delta has revealed feelings of neglect, marginalization and powerlessness, as a result of a non-responsive government. We work to combat this by strengthen existing governance structures at the local and community levels. While this newsletter presents snapshots into

our democracy and governance work, we invite you to visit: <http://nidprodev.org/newsevents/news/178-democracy-and-governance-in-nigeria-reflecting-on-51-years-of-independence> for a more comprehensive assessment of democracy and governance, authored in recognition of Nigerian Independence Day 2011.

COMMUNITY LEVEL GOVERNANCE

Community Development Committees (CDC) in Nigeria operate at the community level and are elected to coordinate development efforts at the community level. The CDC, established during the Babangida regime was designed to “reach-the-rural-dwellers-with-government-functionaries.” It promotes a participatory rural development model. Despite this, many CDC’s suffer from a democratic deficit, as many

are not inclusive of women in their executive membership. **The lack of women’s participation** in decision making is disastrous for several reasons (1) it prevents women from making decisions about their lives (2) it excludes half of the population from the development process and (3) it undermines democracy and promotes marginalization. **Low rates of women’s political participation** is a global phenomenon, present in devel-

oped and developing countries. Women are faced with structural, functional and personal barriers to political participation. In its most recent intervention, funded by Oxfam Novib, NIDPRODEV is equipping community residents in 20 communities of the Niger Delta with the tools and resources to challenge the status quo and bring about constitutional changes that will mandate CDC’s to include women in the executive structure.



Participants of Stakeholder’s Policy Dialogue as part of Oxfam Novib funded Livelihood and Governance Project in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State

STAKEHOLDERS POLICY DIALOGUES

Stakeholders policy dialogues provide a rare opportunity for communication between elected representative and community residents. NIDPRODEV includes such dialogues in many of its interventions. During the dialogues community residents are able to challenge government officials on issues such as budgetary allocations, development projects and their lack of presence in the communities,

limited to election period. These dialogues result in the development of action plans for enhanced coordination and collaboration between the two parties. This action plan is printed and signed by representatives of each party. This document is then circulated for publication in national print media. NIDPRODEV believes that these dialogues are an effective mechanism that encompass participation,

consensus orientation and transparency and accountability. NIDPRODEV implores development partners to integrate this mechanism in the design of their projects with appropriate follow-up mechanisms. The current state of affairs in the country calls for dialogue at the national level, across geopolitical zone, religion, ethnic group and other dividing factors.

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GMOU HIGHLIGHTS

As part of our technical and mentoring to CBO’s, NIDPRODEV mentors the Nembe City Development Foundation through SPDC. NIDPRODEV assisted the Foundation in securing funding from PACT Nigeria to implement a project entitled, “Add their Voices to the Budget (ATVB).” Through this

project, participants were equipped with the skills to monitor, track and implement local and state government budgets through a four-day Advocacy Capacity Building Training. This intervention allows for greater community intervention in development decisions and challenges the closed nature of the Nigerian

budgetary system. Participants of the training included members of both SPDC GMoU created clusters, and CNL GMoU established RDCs. The training was facilitated by NIDPRODEV Senior Programme Manager, Mr. Jerry Nwigwe and Programme Manager, Coordination and Logistics, Ms. Ifeoma Olisakwe.



Participants of the “Add Their Voices to the Budget” Advocacy Capacity Building Training

GENDER AND D&G

The political arena has not fully embraced women. This is a tremendous misstep. **Women's political empowerment** is inked to economic and social advancement. The **barriers to women's participation** include perceived gender roles and ill **conceived notions of women's** inability to assume leadership positions. Other barriers include, constraints on **women's time, particularly in rural**

areas where women's domestic and informal sector activities place a huge **burden on women's time.** Globally, strategies to enhance **women's political participation** have included quotas, networking and fostering an enabling environment. In the Nigerian context, there is need to debunk destructive attitudes about presumed gender roles, provide greater networking opportunities for

women interested in participating in community governance structures, the mobilization of women centered **CBO's to engage with CDC's** and Local Governments to **ensure that women's concerns** are reflected in development decisions. While women are not a homogeneous group some of their shared issues and concerns can be addressed with their inclusion in decision making.



Head of a community based coordination group formed by a NIDPRODEV intervention

D&G: ANALYZING THE ROLE OF THE LGA

In a statement given in 2003, President Obasanjo argued that, **"What we have witnessed** is the abysmal failure of the Local Government (LG) **system."** This statement speaks volumes, in reference to inadequacies in governance and development at the community level. Failure of local government system is failure of the state to deliver services, development and political goods to rural communities. If these communities are neglected by local government, the same can be said for government at the state and federal levels.

The decentralization of the Nigerian government established the local government which is mandated to deliver local public goods. It is equipped with 20% of federal revenues to do so, consequently its inability to accomplish this is baffling.

In large part, the LG's inability

to deliver services to the communities has been compounded by corruption and flagrant misuse of funds.

Based on our experience with **Local Governments and CDC's** in the Niger Delta, NIDPRODEV endorses the following recommendations to ensure efficiency of decentralized institutions:

- Timely and adequate release of funds to the local government
- Enhanced synergy between **CDC's and Local Government**
- Regular townhall meetings held with community **resident's prior to budgetary allocations**
- Scale-up the GMoU model to inform the resource allocation relationship between communities and local government. This will allow for community driven development.

- **CSO's should be engaged** to assist in the development of community development plans to inform development decisions and budgetary allocations
- Local and State government should make yearly **allocations to CSO's** to assist in the delivery of development projects, as **CSO's have the greatest access to communities.**

The reform of the local government is key for development in communities. The State has the primary responsibility to deliver development, this can be supplemented by action on the part of international development partners and national **CSO's.** Reform efforts require political will and this can be cultivated by significant citizen action and advocacy efforts.

"What we have witnessed is the abysmal failure of the Local Government system."



Participants of Strengthening Stakeholder Capacity for Peace through Dialogue on Oil Revenue Transparency.

We are on the Web!

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NIDPRODEV/LCPIT is a Nigerian non-profit organization founded in 1999. It currently operates in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria on the thematic areas of Community Development, Democracy and Governance and Human Security. It produces programming, conducts research and development and engages in networking and collaboration at the national, regional and international levels. NIDPRODEV as an organisation continues to reinvent itself, retooling and repositioning itself to enable it to deliver high impact projects.

...creating a safe space for peace and development action

NIDPRODEV STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

To respond to changing and growing demands as development practitioners, NIDPRODEV Programme Staff frequently attends trainings in various areas. Mr. Victor Elohomhenriamon, Programme Officer, recently participated in a training on NGO Management in Lagos. Following trainings, it is required that attending staff organize and facilitate a one-day step down training for colleagues. This is an efficient approach to organizational development. NIDPRODEV is proud to an-

nounce its new role in policy formulation, through issuing policy briefs in areas of concerns. The first brief issued was fully developed by NIDPRODEV Staff and seeks to tackle the nations descent into state failure through a series of governance reforms. Please visit the following link to access the full report:

<http://nidprodev.org/newsevents/news/181-addressing-state-failure-in-nigeria-recommendations-for-a-policy-shift>

NIDPRODEV has a staff

strength of 23 all from various parts of Nigeria and beyond. For full staff bios and further information on NIDPRODEV staff kindly visit our website at:

<http://www.nidprodev.org/>

Finally, we invite you to “follow us” on Twitter and “like us” on Facebook, we look forward to your company!

<http://twitter.com/#!/NIDPRODEV>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/NIDPRODEV-LCPIT-Niger-Delta-Professionals-for-Development/139435119468790>

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- NIDPRODEV will begin its transition to the Leadership Center for Peace, Integrity and Transformation (LITE-Africa) this year.
- NIDPRODEV to publish 2011 Annual Report in February.
- NIDPRODEV to partner on Search for Common Ground 's Niger Delta intervention , “Tomorrow is a New Day,” centered on supporting community level conflict resolution and reintegration of ex-militants.