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A Study on Development of Niger Delta, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Nigeria's Niger Delta was one of the foremost regions to come in contact with European civilisation, as far back as the 15th century. Moreover, the region accounts for a great portion of the country's economic resources arising from its rich human and natural resources. In other words, Nigeria's economic mainstays – oil and gas – are largely domiciled with the Niger Delta region. However, the region is still grappling with severe underdevelopment, despite the forgoing. It is bad enough that the region is severely underdeveloped; what is worse is that successive governments in Nigeria have laid claim to one development intervention in the region or the other, since independence. It is this irony of poor development condition of the Niger Delta in the midst of various so-called interventionist development programmes in the region that necessitated this study to interrogate why the region is not developing. In so doing, Marx's class analysis was employed as the theoretical framework within which the inquiry was conducted. Contents of data largely collected from secondary sources were analysed to show that the Niger Delta is not developing because the different programmes of intervention in the region appear not to be development interventions but conscious avenues for personal aggrandisement of Nigeria's governing class. The study therefore recommended the institutionalisation and implementation of real fiscal federalism as well as establishment of Community Trust Funds in the respective Niger Delta communities as panacea for the region's development crises.

Keywords: Niger delta, development interventions, Nigerian state, ruling class, capital

1. Introduction

Prior to European colonial incursion of Nigeria, its Niger Delta, which was an assortment of various regions controlled by different tribes and kings (Alagoa 1972), was involved in trade relationships within it. In the late 15th century, the Portuguese imperialists in search of fame and profit eventually came to Nigeria through the Niger Delta, and by 1481, the foremost European Royal emissary was hosted at the court of the Oba of Benin. Trade relationships started between the European merchants and the people of the Niger Delta. Slaves, pepper and ivory were exchanged for beads, textiles and other modern European products. Owing to Europe's industrial revolution, palm oil took over the trade centre stage by the 19th century when slave trade was internationally abolished (SDN 2010). These meant that the Niger Delta was the epicentre of European – African trade, and before the end of the 19th century, activities of the Royal Niger Company with which Britain conquered Nigeria was also based in the Niger Delta (Dike 1956). The century wound up with the exploration of the territory and rivers of the Niger Delta region by Britain. George Goldie, through his United African Company (UAC), took total control of the area known as the lower Niger River, which was the main trade route of the Niger Delta. This was the beginning of the colonial story in Nigeria.

Besides its early contact and relationship with Europe, the Niger Delta hosts 100 percent of Nigeria's mainstay – oil and gas deposits. Statistics of the great significance of oil and gas in Nigeria needs not delay us here. In addition to oil and gas, the region is also endowed with enormous human resources, arable land, fisheries and forests. The marine life and forests of the Niger Delta place the region on good agricultural pedestal.

In spite of its early contact with Europe, its rich human and natural endowments with its significance in Nigeria's economy, the Niger Delta is observed not to be developing. Rather, it has continued to grapple with underdevelopment problems such as poverty, degraded environment and administrative neglect. The condition of the region appears to be better in previous centuries than it is today, and no good reason could explain this paradox, considering that the region has all development potentials as earlier noted. The Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, during a visit to the Gbaramatu Kingdom of Delta State in 2017, observed that the issues in the Niger Delta were embarrassing, despite that the Nigerian state benefited immensely from the region. He further noted that the region had no reason not to compete with the most developed parts of the world, including Dubai. It is important to note that these remarks about the Niger Delta were not new. Attention was attracted to them because it was perhaps the first time such remarks came from that level of Nigeria's governing class.

The literature is awash with remarks on the pitiful development condition of the Niger Delta and bulk of it concludes that the region is a typical paradox of underdevelopment in the midst of wealth. UNDP (2006), Aaron and Patrick (2008), Amnesty International (2009), Edigin and Okonmah (2010), Tom (2010), Aaron and George (2010), Jack-Akhigbe (2013) and Usang and Ikpeme (2015) agree that the Niger Delta has the most crushing underdevelopment in the country, considering the amount of resources at its disposal. Underdevelopment in the region is more pathetic because it appears that it is foisted by its rich endowments. Parts of what underdevelops the Niger Delta are the negative externalities associated with oil and gas activities. They include ecological and environmental pollution issues. These have severely affected the region's ecological resources and biodiversity which have in turn threatened the people's survival which is largely dependent on ecology. Low agricultural productivity symbolised by very poor farm yields have continued to threaten food security system in the region. These socio-economic problems and other health and environmental challenges have caused the Niger Delta to continuously rank very low in all known development indices (Jack-Akhigbe 2013)

In the place of development, violence and restiveness are on the increase in the Niger Delta symbolised by the emergence of new anti-state violent and non-violent groups. That is to say that feelings of alienation, estrangement, deep-rooted mistrust and frustrated expectations (Umoh 1996) are palpable in the region. These have resulted in persistent conflict as a response to very poor human development – a condition that has continued in the region despite the claims by successive governments to one development intervention in the region or the other, starting from the colonial Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB) of 1958 to the present Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

Given these claims to development interventions in the region in the midst of palpable underdevelopment challenges, this study therefore interrogates why the Niger Delta region is actually not developing. In doing this, the study assumes that the region is not developing because the state programmes of intervention in the region are not development-bound but conscious avenues for the selfish personal aggrandisement of Nigeria's ruling class.

2. Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the "Class Analysis", as postulated by Marx, as the theoretical framework within which the inquiry was carried out. Class, according to Marx, is defined by one's relationship to the means of production. In other words, social relations of production determine the class structure in the society. To him, in a typical capitalist social formation, two classes exist: bourgeoisie and proletariat; dominant and dominated; exploiter and exploited; have and have-not. In this arrangement, the dominant class who largely own and control the means of production only invest and live off the economic surpluses generated directly or indirectly by the dominated class.

Analysing the society based on class reveals that the structure of property relations as well as the processes of distributing power, opportunities and other scarce resources determine the mode of production in that society (Adams and Dyson 2007, Roberts and Sutch 2004). The explanation in this context is that the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta cannot be treated in isolation. It should be analysed with the broader Nigerian class formation, nature of the ruling class and struggle for state power.

Because social class in Nigeria did not follow the natural class formation process (Ekeke 1986), the ruling class that emerged was half-baked in order to hurriedly take over control of state power in Nigeria, at independence. Being half-baked meant that the class was based on very weak economic foundation. As a result, control of state power resulted in the conversion of state apparatuses to means of production in the hands of the emergent ruling class. The weak economic base is constantly reinforced by the use of state power to advance capitalist interests. Because state apparatuses have been converted to means of production by Nigeria's ruling class, the struggle that ordinarily exist within the economic sphere over control of the means of production is transposed to the political realm in form of fierce struggles over control of state power. This is because state power is the surest means of gaining and securing control over resource allocation processes. Gaining access to state power is therefore recklessly sought at any cost, including human lives. This is symbolised in the warlike and violent nature of electoral processes in Nigeria, especially in the Niger Delta region.

With control over state power, state institutions are at the disposal of the ruling class to accrete every available capital. In federal states like Nigeria where state resources come from certain regions, and the national government serves as the only source of allocations, contest for political power cannot but be based on the political economy of resource allocation and surplus appropriation. Hence, anything that stands on the way of surplus production is branded inimical to "national development" and treated as such, either by repression or placation.

3. Methodology

The study was carried out in Nigeria's Niger Delta which is administratively and politically defined presently as the oil-bearing region of Nigeria. To this end, the six states in Nigeria's South-South geopolitical zone (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers), two in the South-East (Abia and Imo) and one in the South-West (Ondo) are the states collectively referred to as the Niger Delta region. The Niger Delta which is mainly found in the southern part of Nigeria have a population of approximately 40 million people and covers a land area of over 112,000 square kilometres. It is for these states that the successive Nigerian governments claimed to have established development interventions, at one time or the other.

In consideration of the fact that most of the interventionist programmes featuring here were in the past, secondary data are basically collected and the contents analysed to ascertain why the Niger Delta is not developing, irrespective of the plethora of development interventions in the region. It is therefore imperative to take a cursory look at what the state has done in the name of development interventions in the Niger Delta.

4. Findings

4.1. *Prelude to Development Interventions in the Niger Delta: A Critique of the Niger Delta Development Board (NDDB)*

In 1957, agitations by minority groups in Nigeria, occasioned by claims of marginalisation, neglect and alienation, prompted the colonial administration to set up a Commission of Inquiry into their fears. This Commission was headed by Sir Henry Willink. In 1958, the Commission turned in their report to the colonial government during the 1958 Constitutional Conference in Lagos. In the report, it was observed that the swamps and creeks of the Niger Delta posed huge development challenges to the region. In other words, the development needs of the residents of the creeks and swamps were different from other parts of the country (Ekpo 2004). The reasons adduced for this position are that communication was so difficult, building very expensive and education quite scanty. The Commission therefore held that lack of understanding and deep feeling of neglect were widespread in the region. It observed that the poor, neglected and backward condition of the region required special effort. Unfortunately, these remarks on the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta still resonates, over six decades later, despite the creation of many state interventionist development programmes for the region.

Following a Willink's Commission recommendation, a special intervention programme was created for the Niger Delta, the Niger Delta Development Board by the immediate post-colonial government in 1960. Section 14 of the 1960 Independence Constitution provided for the establishment of Niger Delta Development Board. Unfortunately, the NDDB was far from solving the Niger Delta problems outlined in the Willink's Commission report (Udoma 1989, Ekpo 2004, ANEEJ 2004).

Many reasons were adduced as responsible for the failure of the NDDB to tackle the development challenges of the Niger Delta as anticipated by the Willink's Commission. By virtue of the section of the 1960 Constitution establishing the NDDB, the Board was a mere advisory body. Authority of the Board was also domicile with the parliament. In other words, the parliament was to decide the fate of the Niger Delta by providing such policies as it deemed fit for the running of the NDDB. What constituted the statutory roles of the Board were at the discretion of the parliament. That meant that the development provision made by the Board were only those desired by the parliament. Moreover, the Board was reportedly starved of funds to carry out its ordinary advisory roles (Iyayi 2006). Given these conditions, the NDDB could not facilitate development in the Niger Delta, even as the 1963 Republican Constitution, under section 159, made provisions for its continued existence.

4.2. *From the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA) to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)*

Probably because the structures of the NDDB, with very few alterations, were transferred to Niger Delta Basin Development Authority (NDBDA) which was later renamed Niger Delta River Basin Development Authority (NDRBDA), it yielded similar results (Ayawei et al 2015) and the Presidential Committee on the 1.5 percent (later 3 percent) oil derivation was established. This Committee was unilaterally administered by Nigeria's central government and we shall explain how. Firstly, approval of the percentage oil derivation was the exclusive reserve of the Head of State without any input from the people of the Niger Delta. These derivation funds, which were managed in total disregard to the people, could not also make any meaningful impact on the development of the Niger Delta.

Of note, massive protests greeted the Committee in the region. These protests escalated into social eruptions that affected oil production in the region. As a result of this, the military government planned to garrison/repress the region. Albert Horsfall caught wind of the planned repressive actions and quickly sought audience with the then military Head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida. He advised him against the planned garrisoning, pointing out the implications on oil production activities. His advice was probably taken and he was instructed to make jottings on an interventionist programme alternative. The Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC) Decree No. 23 of 1992, perhaps, developed from those jottings (Horsfall 1999).

OMPADEC was to manage the monthly 3 percent oil derivation funds accruing to the Niger Delta region. A critical look at its activities reveals a sad repetition of the Presidential Committee mistakes (Ibaba 2010). The management board of the OMPADEC who were single-handedly appointed by the Head of State concentrated efforts in building meaningless infrastructure in the region. They built health centres without equipment and support staff (World Bank 1995). They also embarked on other projects that had the capacity to distort the development of communities because they, more often than not, interrupted the physical and socio-economic relations of such communities (Anikpo 1984). This is evident in certain road projects built by the OMPADEC that reportedly blocked flood pathways in some communities of the region, thereby resulting to a collection of unhealthy flood water around such communities (World Bank 1995, Ibaba 2010). State capitals and politically powerful parts of the Niger Delta (Okoko 1999) were also "beautified" with the funds available to the OMPADEC. The Commission which inherited many projects from the Presidential Committee either abandoned or poorly executed them. For instance, many educational infrastructures at different levels of completion were inherited by OMPADEC, yet, it achieved so little in respect of educational infrastructural development (Gabriel 1999) which seems to be the sector where development is most wanted in the region.

OMPADEC planned two significant educational projects which were welcome by many well-meaning people of the Niger Delta. These were post-graduate scholarship scheme for professional courses and creation of science education centres in the OMPADEC zones. However, while the scholarship scheme remained an ambitious dream that was never flickered into life, OMPADEC established only one science centre throughout the nearly a decade of its existence. The centre which was proposed for Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Delta, Edo, Imo, Ondo and Rivers States was only established in Port Harcourt Rivers State in 1995. Established in an existing Rivers State Government facility – Rivers State College of

Arts and Science (RIVCAS), the centre functioned with staff (teaching and non-teaching) engaged and remunerated by the government of Rivers State. Libraries and laboratories were part of physical facilities of RIVCAS used by the OMPADEC Science Centre, while the Commission provided classroom desks, chairs and few teaching materials (Gabriel 1999).

Considering that establishment of the centre was a welcome development, one would expect a replication of the centre in other OMPADEC zones, if the Commission was meant to facilitate development in the Niger Delta. However, this never happened and the experiences of the experimental centre in Port Harcourt were not palatable either. The centre was reportedly starved of funds. As a result, the students were compelled to pay tuition fees of one thousand five hundred Naira per term (Gabriel 1999) thereby defeating the idea on which the centre was established.

Generally, improper planning and execution of projects were the hallmarks of OMPADEC. In addition, it did not involve the local communities at any level of the project processes. They also had a record of embarking on white- elephant projects which were subsequently abandoned. Widespread corruption and debilitating debts also characterised the Commission. Massive misappropriation of funds, highhandedness, mindless looting and incompetence of the managers frustrated the Commission's capacity to facilitate development with the oil revenues accruing to the region through it. Complaints and protests became inevitable in the region. The volatility occasioned by the execution of Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) leader, Ken Saro-Wiwa and 8 other Ogoni leaders, as well as the protests caused by OMPADEC's inability to facilitate development in the Niger Delta led the military government to a four-man panel of investigation.

The panel made many sordid discoveries about the activities of the Commission. The revelations led to the sack of its pioneer Chairman, Albert Horsfall and replacement with Eric Opia (Ayawei et al 2015). Probably because Eric Opia was reported to have further mismanaged the Commission's funds, development in the region remained a mirage. Protests and agitations heightened in the already volatile region. As a result, oil production in the region nose-dived thereby prompting managers of the Nigerian state in 2000 to abolish the OMPADEC and replaced it with the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) through the NDDC (Establishment, etc.) Act of 2000.

Details of the legal framework of NDDC which contains many dubious anti-people provisions need not bother nor delay us here. Of note, the NDDC Act, just as the OMPADEC Decree, provides for total accountability of the Commission to Nigeria's governing class, represented by the President and Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, not the local communities of the Niger Delta. Among other things, the Commission was charged to create and implement an integrated plan for the development of the Niger Delta. This was the Niger Delta Regional Development Master Plan (NDRDMP). Designed by Germany's Gesellschaft Fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), the plan gulped over ₦ 1.5 billion and was patterned after USA's Alaska and Canada's Alberta (Uche 2014). It proposed a three five-year development phase of the Niger Delta that would cost about US\$50 billion. The three phases were foundation, expansion and consolidation (Barret 2008, Francis et al 2011, Uche 2014). Of note, preparation of the plan was participatory only to the extent that Niger Delta's indigenous ruling class were involved (Ibaba 2010) but without the involvement of local communities on whom implementation of the plan would impact. Similarly, implementation of the plan (if it is actually being implemented) has maintained the usual top-bottom approach. Projects have continued to be designed and executed by the ruling class, disregarding UNDP's (2006) recommendation that community opinions needed to be consciously and cautiously put into due consideration in planning and implementing development policies that affect them, for the sake of sustainability.

Given the OMPADEC experience, people of the Niger Delta have been critically sceptical about the NDDC, claiming that it might just be another new wine in an old wine skin. True to the people's sceptic dispositions, NDDC has manifested most of the identified characteristics and flaws of the OMPADEC. For instance, within a decade of its creation, NDDC abandoned over 4,000 infrastructural projects, by its own admission (Ogunmade 2014). Officials of the Commission, in partnership with dubious contractors, facilitate the abandonment of these projects (Oxfam 2017).

It therefore seems that the NDDC was a still-birth because, on the grounds of financial misappropriation, directors of the Commission were sacked barely four months after its creation. Also, the management boards of the Commission have been prematurely dissolved about four times since inception on similar grounds (Aborisade 2010, Nextier 2015). Much allegations of corruption have continued to trail the NDDC while many have been proven. The 2010 Presidential Monitoring Committee on NDDC, as well as a Presidential Committee set up in 2011 to review the governance and outputs of the Commission, made shocking revelations that led to the dissolution of the Commission's board in 2011 (Aborisade 2010). Before then, in 2008, NDDC board chairman was prosecuted for embezzlement of over US\$5.3million of the Commission's funds.

Also, there are other proven cases of sharp practices against the NDDC and its officials, with the creation of the Ministry of Niger Delta Affairs (MNDA). Perhaps because of the duplication of roles between the two regional state institutions, confusion and corruption have heightened. For instance, while ₦ 3 billion budgetary provision was made by NDDC for shoreline protection project in Ekeremor Bayelsa State in 2010, the MNDA also provided ₦ 390 million for the same project in the same year (Oxfam 2017).

During a courtesy visit of the National Association of Niger Delta Students (NANDS) in his Abuja office, the Acting Chairman of the government anti-graft agency, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on Friday 22nd June 2018 assured that he shall visit the Niger Delta with a view to investigating abandoned projects to recover funds meant for the development of the region and bringing the culprits to book. It is, however, hoped that those that will be found culpable are not members or supporters of the ruling party; or will not be willing to cross-carpet to the ruling party in course of the investigations or trials. This hope, or call it fear, is predicated on the fact that in the past (and presently too), there are situations where members of the board of the NDDC who are hounded for actions bordering on financial

impropriety by the EFCC are suddenly given space when they crossed over to the party in power. Since then, their properties “under seal” and “EFCC investigation” have been unsealed.

These cases of financial mismanagement and inefficiencies have spelt doom for the Niger Delta Development Commission. Some of the international donor and support agencies have withheld their support to the NDDC, while others have threatened to follow suit, on these grounds. Some of the oil and gas producing companies have also hidden under this cover to shy away from their responsibilities to the Commission and region. Hence, NDDC which is the most outstanding Nigerian state institutional response to the crisis of development in the Niger Delta is ineffective evidenced by environmental degradation, high poverty rate and overall underdevelopment (Omotola 2007). That is to say that after about two decades of its existence, the NDDC has been credited for abysmal performance, just as the OMPADEC, in terms of poverty reduction and general improvement in the people’s wellbeing as shall be shown later in this section. This is probably caused by the highhandedness and unaccountability of managers of the Commission which result in the conscious bypassing of local communities in all stages of so-called development projects. This, in addition to over-reliance on the use of external contractors to execute projects in the communities, has continued to further the alienation and estrangement of the people on whom the Commission is meant to impact.

These anomalies notwithstanding, there are sterling claims of sabotage of the interventionist programmes by managers of the Nigerian state, part of which is poor funding. For instance, from 1992 to 1996, while about ₦ 85 billion was budgeted for the OMPADEC, only about ₦ 13.7 billion was actually released to it (Horsfall 1999). That meant that only about 16% of the allocated funds were released to the Commission which supposedly had the mandate to facilitate development in Nigeria’s oil-rich region – the Niger Delta. Table 1 is instructive.

Year	Allocation Expected (₦ billion)	Allocation Received (₦ billion)	Shortfall in Allocation (₦ billion)
1992	6.04	1.61	4.42
1993	6.41	2.61	3.79
1994	6.62	3.21	3.40
1995	27.82	3.21	24.61
1996	38.58	3.07	35.50
Total	85.47	13.71	71.72

Table 1: Allocations and Disbursements to OMPADEC, 1992 – 1996

Source: Compiled Fromhorsfall (1999)

Critics may argue that there could possibly be a shortfall in expected revenue of the state within the period. However, this argument may lose substance in the face of the case of the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) established in the same period. Within a five-year period (1994 – 1998), the fund established by General Sani Abacha in 1994 and headed by Muhammadu Buhari received about ₦ 347 billion (Iyayi 2006) of petroleum wealth. While it may not be presumptuous for critics to further argue that the PTF was not a regional programme of development intervention but established to intervene in the main sectors of the economy (Emiri and Deinduomo 2009) across Nigeria, a critical objective looks at the PTF project allocation and execution pattern may also water down this argument. It is discernible from Table 2 that in the entire lifespan of the PTF, 75.7 percent of its total interventionist projects went to the northern region of Nigeriawhile only 24.3 percent went to the south, out of which 11.36 percent trickled down to the south-south – Niger Delta. In health sector intervention, north got 80 percent and south 20 percent; road infrastructure: north 76 percent, south 24 percent; education: north 71 percent, south 29 percent. This revelation makes it seem that the OMPADEC was deliberately starved of funds in order not to facilitate development in the Niger Delta.

In addition, within the same period the only interventionist development programme in the oil-rich Niger Delta was starved of oil funds for its development, Nigeria’s ruling class stashed away over ₦ 11.5 trillion in foreign accounts (See Table 3) and probably much more in local bank accounts and private homes. One may not be wrong to argue that the shortfall of ₦ 71.3 billion (84 percent) of OMPADEC’s budget may have constituted part of what was stashed away by managers of the Nigerian state at the period, in this circumstance. With respect to the NDDC, the funding issue is no better. While ANEEJ (2004) observed that the Commission’s budget for 2001 and 2002 was ₦ 24 billion (₦ 10 billion and ₦ 14 billion respectively), UNDP (2006) revealed that it received only ₦ 20 billion from 2000 to 2003.

It is imperative to also observe here that in addition to the above programmes of intervention, many a Niger Delta member state has established personalised interventionist programmes to channel part of their oil derivation revenues to develop oil producing communities. Some of them are Ondo (Ondo State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission – OSOPADEC – 2001), Rivers (Rivers State Sustainable Development Programme – RSSDP – 2006), Bayelsa (Bayela Partnership Initiative – BPI – 2006), Delta (Delta State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission – DESOPADEC – 2006), Imo (Imo State Oil Producing Area Development Commission – ISOPADEC – 2007), Edo (Edo State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission – EDOSOPADEC – 2007), and Abia (Abia State Oil Producing Areas Development Commission – ASOPADEC – 2009).

Probably because of the nature of these interventionist programmes which reflects the character of their creators – the Nigerian state, they are at best sham development interventions, hence, the Niger Delta region has continued to be underdeveloped, rather than developing. The poor development remarks made about the region over sixty years ago still reverberated with much resonance. Data available from recent studies show that the region is not developing. It is bad enough that Nigeria has one of the worst development conditions in the world, ranking 152nd out of 188 countries sampled by the United Nations Development Programme. What is worse is that the condition in Nigeria’s wealthiest

region – the Niger Delta - is worse than what obtains generally in Nigeria. While the economic domain index of human security averaged 0.8162 in Nigeria in 2016, it stood at 0.7669 in the Niger Delta with Bayelsa and Rivers states recording the worst conditions of 0.6358 and 0.6806 respectively. Life expectancy which was 53.1 for Nigeria was 50.7 for the Niger Delta. Also, while percentage household with access to good sanitation was 33.3 percent for Nigeria, it was 28.6 for the Niger Delta (UNDP 2016). Between 2004 and 2010, NBS (2011) reported that poverty deepened in the Niger Delta. Abia, Edo and Bayelsa got the fairest share of this worsened poverty. While poverty in Lagos State reduced by about 42 percent, it grew by about 23 percent, 20 percent and 10 percent in Abia, Edo and Bayelsa States respectively, within the same period. These are just samples of the present development condition of the Niger Delta.

Geographical Zones And States	Health Rehabilitation Contracts (Number)		Road Rehabilitation Contracts (Km)		Education Rehabilitation Contracts (Number)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
North-Central: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau	116	24.21	4,551.03	25.1	139	14.21
North-East: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, Yobe	2	0.42	4,299.44	23.48	212	21.97
North-West: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara	263	55.37	5,020.00	27.42	336	34.82
South-East: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo	31	6.53	977.9	5.34	-	-
South-South: Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo, Rivers	31	6.53	1,478.03	8.07	188	19.48
South-West: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, Oyo	-	-	1,984.50	10.84	51	5.29
Total (North)	381	80	13,870.47	76	687	71
Total (South)	94	20	4,440.43	24	278	29
Grand Total	475	100	18,310.9	100	965	100

Table 2: Project Allocation by PTF, 1994 - 1998
Source: Compiled from Ibaba (2008)

Names	Amounts in				Total (₦ equivalent with 1999 exchange rate)
	London (£)	Swiss (\$)	USA (\$)	Germany (DM)	
Gen. I. Babangida	-	7.42b	2.00b	1.00b	2.46tr
Gen. A. Abubakar	1.13b	2.33b	0.80b	0.02b	0.49tr
M. Akhigbe	1.24b	2.43b	0.67b	0.01b	0.81tr
J. Useni	3.04b	2.01b	1.03b	0.90b	0.81tr
I. Gowon	1.03b	2.00b	1.03b	0.70b	0.51tr
U. Dikko	4.40b	1.46b	0.70b	0.35b	0.89tr
P. Ogwuma	0.30b	1.42b	0.20b	0.50b	0.35tr
S. Abacha	5.01b	4.09b	0.80b	0.01b	1.21tr
M. Abacha	0.30b	1.20b	0.15b	0.54b	0.21tr
A. Abacha	0.70b	1.21b	0.90b	0.42b	0.34tr
W. Nas	0.30b	1.32b	-	0.30b	0.24tr
T. Ikimi	0.40b	1.04b	0.15b	0.37b	0.25tr
D. Etete	1.12b	1.03b	0.40b	0.02b	0.37tr
D. Etiebet	2.50b	1.06b	0.70b	0.36b	0.57tr
M. Mustapha	0.60b	1.00b	-	0.21b	0.20tr
B. Dalhatu	2.90b	1.09b	0.36b	0.02b	0.69tr
W. Ibrahim	2.30b	1.00b	0.16b	0.02	0.56tr
H. Adamu	0.30b	0.20b	0.70b	-	0.13tr
T. Danjuma	1.36b	1.02b	0.30b	0.19b	0.34tr
I. Bamaïyi	0.12b	0.80b	-	-	0.09tr
Total	29.05	35.13	11.05	5.92	11.52

Table 3: Classified Looters of Nigeria's Treasury, 2000
Source: Gathered from Ohale (2018)

5. Conclusion

This study discerns that the Niger Delta region is not developing because the Nigerian state has not made any conscious effort to facilitate development in the region. The interventionist programmes in the region are constituted in

such a way not to tackle the development needs of the region but to serve the class interest of Nigeria's governing class to whom they are accountable. They appear as mere patronages for the ruling class. What successive governments in Nigeria have claimed to put in place as development interventions in the region are proven to be mere avenues for personal and selfish aggrandisement of the ruling class, national and indigenous, and this is in three senses.

Firstly, they emerge as responses to agitations and protests in the Niger Delta which hamper state economic activities in the region. The agitations arise from the fact that the region has always been noted to be neglected; making it look like it is not an equal partner in the project – Nigeria. The programmes of intervention are therefore established to avert the inauspicious economic consequences of the agitations. Secondly, the funds that are available to the programmes of intervention fritter away into private purses of managers of such programmes who are not responsible, responsive nor accountable to the people of the Niger Delta, as evidenced by the plethora of proven corruption cases against different managers of the state interventionist programmes in the region. Thirdly, substantial portion of the funds budgeted for the interventionist programmes are withheld by managers of the Nigerian state at the national level, perhaps through what Ohale (2018) described as benefit capturing syndrome. While the papers show that such monies are released to the programmes of intervention, large proportion of them are captured for the benefit of those billed to make them available to the programmes, and are sometimes stashed away in foreign bank accounts. The little that gets to the programmes also fritter away in the same vein as managers of the programmes of intervention sometimes compel contractors to authorise kickbacks on the contracts awarded to them.

As a proof of the foregoing claims, lack of people/communities' participation, which is key to sustainable development (UNDP 2006), runs through all the so-called development interventions in the Niger Delta, as observed in this study. This is also indicative of the fact that development is viewed as a project by managers of the state, rather than as a multidimensional process that requires collaborative efforts of all stakeholders. Moreover, the programmes which have common history of poor funding also share the notoriety of project abandonment. Therefore, for the local communities for whom these programmes are supposedly created to improve their wellbeing, they exist obviously not to facilitate development in the region but to accelerate the socio-economic objectives of the political parties in power (UNDP 2006, Osuoka 2007, Higgins 2009).

6. Recommendations

- Constitutional institutionalisation and implementation of real fiscal federalism is the best recommended option. If every federating unit is allowed to harness their resources in their best interest and remit taxes and royalties to the central government, they may not need for any form of sham development intervention by the state (and all the troubles that come with it) in any region.
- Establishment of Community Trust Funds (CTF) is also a probable option for Niger Delta's development. By this, the people are encouraged to participate at all levels of the development process. These funds are created in trust for the oil producing communities where selected members of the communities are entrusted with the responsibility of managing the funds through existing local institutions, in collaboration with the stakeholders (civil society, government and oil companies operating within the communities). Purposes and values of expenditures are collectively planned and implemented by the communities through existing local arrangements.
- If the state continues with interventionist development programme models, the legal foundations have to be remodelled to enable active participation of the local communities, at least in three ways. Firstly, the people should be made to come up with their development needs in a preferential order to form part of the interventionist programmes' budget. Again, membership of the governing boards of the interventionist programmes should be made an elective affair where members of the local communities are allowed to democratically select who will represent their interest in the boards. The local communities should also be made to constitute advisory and monitoring committees to oversee the activities of the programmes of development interventions in their communities.

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