



**PROVISION FOR POST PROJECT EVALUATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
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EVALUATION REPORT



**UDF-NIR-09-301: Civil Society Support Initiative on Political Marginalization in
the Niger Delta in Nigeria**

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the Evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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Given the need by CSOs and beneficiary groups to maintain independence from federal and state governments which have done nothing to earn the trust of the people of the Niger Delta, sustainability of results achieved will depend, in large part, on the continuing flow of international donor funds. For all this, through the project, a number of valuable tools for capacity development work with local CSOs and beneficiary groups were designed and tested. A number of those who w
activists and members of their wider networks. With additional support in the future, these innovations will contribute to further strengthen civil society networks in the Niger Delta and reinforce their presence as actors in governance processes.

UNDEF Added Value:

grantee was able to address its priority issues directly, without adjusting project objectives to fit the particular requirements which many other donors bring forward.

iii. Conclusions

The project strategy was sound as it worked, locally, with local communities to broaden the base of participation, and, hence, enhance local democracy. However, the ambition to hold project operations in all nine states in the region was realized at the cost of depth of involvement and continuity of support to project participants. A more focused project, restricted to fewer states would have been more effective.

The Baseline Study was well conducted and served positively to project effectiveness as a training tool.

ivered in a
workshops and seminars were extremely
positive. The numbers of trainees involved exceeded initial targets.

The Advocacy Visits had a positive impact on building practical skills and enhancing self-confidence. It was a worthwhile beginning to a process of engagement by participants. However, the visits were an opening only, and, in many cases, though not all, participants seemed hesitant to build on the experience.

In general, the budget was managed in an efficient manner but further attention should be paid to expenses presentation and supporting documents.

While long-term progress will depend on continuing external assistance, the project contribute to civil society capacity building and made a number of contributio

II. Introduction and development context

i. The Project and Evaluation Objectives

Development and Resource Centre (KWDRC), based in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Project implementation began on 1 January 2011 and was completed on 31 December 2012 (24 months). The project benefited from an UNDEF grant of \$295,000, with a project budget of \$270,000 plus an UNDEF monitoring and evaluation component of \$25,000.

KWDRC was founded in 2003 and began operations the following year. It is active throughout the Niger Delta region, and describes itself as a community action, education and advocacy NGO. It focuses on the promotion of social justice, gender equality, environmental just

up meetings with KWRDC in Port Harcourt the following week.

status quo. The beneficiaries of this state of affairs have little interest in reforms which would dilute their power and influence, while few of the benefits derived from oil wealth have flowed to the people of the Delta region.

Abuse of power through corruption of public officials, including providers of basic services, is widely recognized as endemic at all levels in Nigeria. A Human Rights Watch report in

⁴ The Niger Delta region, more than any other part of Nigeria, has suffered the consequences of deep-seated corruption.

A side-effect of system-wide corruption has been the distortion of state priorities and the diversion of public resources from support to basic services. Hence, despite its oil wealth, which gives it the status of a middle-reducing poverty and

opportunities and the provision of social services and local infrastructure. The people of the Niger Delta feel politically disenfranchised and disadvantaged in comparison with other

III. Project strategy

i. Project approach and strategy

In designing the project and developing detailed implementation plans, KWDRRC drew on its prior experience in the region in supporting the engagement in political life of women and other vulnerable groups. The first of a number of initiatives relevant to this objective -making (Action Aid Nigeria 2006-2008), focusing on both training and advocacy. Similarly, also with the support of Action Aid, KWDRRC organized the State Policy Dialogue on the Niger Delta in Akwa

iii) The production of two short training manuals: the *Marginalized Groups Participation Handbook* and the *Training Manual on Civic and Political Education*;

The Nine States (in italics) and the Major Urban Centres of the Niger Delta

iv) The organization of advocacy visits made by trained CSOs and beneficiaries, with members of the Project Implementation Team, to government officials in each of the 9 states;

v)

in the 9 states.

The situation analysis, or baseline study, also provided needs assessment data concerning the beneficiaries of the project, CSOs and beneficiary groups, representing marginalized communities. The data derived from the study was employed as a guide to determining the issues to be addressed during the project. It also assisted in the selection of the CSOs and beneficiary groups with which the project would engage. The study represented the first step in project implementation. Once data analysis was completed, the project team

activities, as listed above.

Management arrangements for the project activities in the nine states, as listed above.

Advocacy meetings organized, bringing trained CSO representatives together with

and interacted with 89 members of the governments in 9 states on local government issues (in practice, this was more effective in some states than others)

organized for representatives of

185 women and youth group members trained through nine engagement seminars (originally intended = 135)

Capacity of marginalized and disadvantaged groups is built, which has significantly improved

resorting to violence; and,

c) Encouraging Political Pluralism

Marginalized groups acquire knowledge of the workings of democracy

Women who are trained acquire skills and knowledge on how to monitor budgets, elections, and policy implementation

and broadcast in the 9 Niger Delta states

Local citizens are better-informed on the ideas and workings of democracy

Production and distribution of

IV. Evaluation findings

This evaluation is based on a set of Evaluation Questions or EQs, designed to cover the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and value added by UNDEF. The Evaluation Questions and related sub-questions are presented in Annex 1.

i. Relevance

Drawing on its previous work with local communities in the Niger Delta, KWDRC was able to demonstrate a firm understanding of the circumstances of vulnerable and marginalized groups in the region. In addition, the Baseline Study provided the foundation for a more focused analysis of the background, experience and level of previous civic and political engagement of the groups to be supported through the project.

The Study was based on the analysis of data derived from questionnaires delivered to two groups: firstly, CSOs working on the issues of marginalized people, and, secondly, a small sample of marginalized people and vulnerable groups. The Study will be discussed in more detail in the following section of the report. For now, it will suffice to note that, by utilizing its findings, KWDRC was in a better position to structure and determine the content of the curriculum for the workshops provided. The Study also informed the decision on the selection of the trainees to be included in the project.

As discussed earlier in the section on Development Context, there is a strong sense among the people of the Niger Delta that major decisions are made by the government and the oil companies with little regard to their needs and livelihood. This view goes along with low levels of political participation. Most of the studies of the Delta cited in this report emphasize the need for a departure from the ineffective and corruption-prone, top-down model of development characteristic of the approach adopted by the government, in favor of a community-centred approach to economic and social development. This would allow for recognition of the social and cultural complexity of the region, and the differing circumstances of the local communities within it.

A key ingredient in a community-driven model of development is the need for local leadership and the engagement of local populations in decision-making. The aims of the UNDEF-funded project were very much in line with the need to strengthen locally-based organizations, while also building the confidence of representatives of beneficiary groups that they can take action to bring their concerns to the attention of the government. Hence, the objectives of the project were in line with democratic development priorities for the Niger

modest support and guidance to both CSOs and representatives of beneficiary groups in applying what had been learned in their communities would have assisted greatly in building for sustainability. A more focused project, limiting activities to, perhaps, three states would have provided a more effective basis for testing and refining the methodology, and building the foundation for more ambitious efforts in the future.



Young Women Participants with Trainer at a Workshop in Owerri, Imo State

Risk: Drawing on the experience obtained through its long engagement with the political life of the region, the grantee was able to ensure that the project was equipped with a firm appreciation of the risks which might be encountered. The strategies adopted to deal with the identified risks were appropriate, given limitations of time and budget.

ii. Effectiveness

The project completed all activities as planned. However, in certain states, the advocacy activities did not take place as envisaged, as a result of non-cooperation, or limited cooperation, on the part of governing authorities at state level.

of **the Baseline Study**, which also served as a needs assessment for potential project participants. Although it does not seem to have had a detrimental effect on the project, a limitation of the survey, on which the Study was based, should be noted.

The questionnaire for the survey was well-designed and the questions included were relevant and appropriate, given its purpose.¹³ Furthermore, the Study report was well-written and presented, and the analysis of data was handled professionally. However, there was an issue with the survey methodology. For each of the two groups surveyed – CSO representatives and members of beneficiary groups – ten questionnaires were administered in each of the nine states. For CSOs, this would seem to provide an adequate and reasonably representative basis for analysis, given the purpose served. However, given the need to ensure coverage of three major beneficiary groups –women, youth and the

¹³ Data collection was handled by the Local Coordinators, working with consultants, in each state

physically challenged the total of 10 questionnaires per state does not allow for adequate numbers for each group to permit objective analysis, This is particularly problematic where results are broken down by state, and sub-group, as is done in the Baseline Study Report.¹⁴

Despite the fact that in project documents both the CSOs and the marginalized groups are taken as project beneficiaries, it is apparent that, in practice, it was the CSOs which represented the primary target group. The baseline data appears to have been very helpful in providing a profile of those to be trained, as well as in identifying some critical capacity gaps to be addressed. For example, the Study determined that only 28 per cent of CSOs had engaged in policy advocacy activities directly with government authorities on issues of priority for their communities.

Leaving aside the methodological limitations noted above, the Baseline Study was a factor contributing to project effectiveness. The recruitment of the nine Local Coordinators was a further source of strength. Given the considerable distances, and difficulties of travel between project sites, their role in managing local relationships, as well as logistics, was of some importance.

Training: Overall, the project experienced some success in achieving, or at least contributing to, its anticipated results. The training itself, the core part of the project, seems to have been well-gearred to the learning needs of participants, and many of those trained were able to put their new skills to work.

Implementation Team and the resource persons who would deliver the workshops. There were two key documents: the Training Manual on Civic and Political Education and the Marginalized Groups Participation Handbook (which introduced the Marginalized Groups Participation Index the MGPI) while these outputs were not specified in the original project document.

The Training Manual included the following components: *Human Rights; Understanding Democracy; Government Budgeting, the Budget Cycle and Budget Monitoring; Community-Based Election Monitoring; Introducing Gender; and Citizen Participation*. Other topics covered were engagement with stakeholders and mass media. The findings of the Baseline Study were also used extensively in both sets of training workshops.

The Marginalized Groups Participation Index (MGPI), featured in the Handbook of the same name, was viewed by KWDRRC as the principal innovation of the project. The Index was

step, the opening, to what was expected to be a long-term dialogue. For this expectation to be realized, far more support and advice will be required, over a period of years, rather than months. A commitment of this order will be required, if levels of engagement are to be maintained, and if project participants are to develop the skills and working relations with their own communities, as well as officials, in order for the process to achieve results.

Judging from anecdotal information obtained from the small number of participants with whom the National Consultant met, along with post-training interviews conducted by the project - as well as documentation of subsequent activities of participants the confidence

iii. Efficiency

A review of the project budget indicates that, overall, costs do not seem out-of-balance with the activities completed and results achieved. However, there are a number of issues which are worthy of more attention within a general picture which appears to be satisfactory. One particularly positive, and extremely unusual, feature of the project was the decision by the grantee not to charge for the costs of core s

While the topic was relevant to the project, no matter how well-broadcast will have done little to support project objectives.

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Properly planned, with programming produced with local communities on a continuing basis, and with links to community development activities, development broadcasting can be a very effective tool. This single program does not meet the criteria to qualify as an

working towards the sustained engagement of civil society organizations with government concerning decision-making.

Modest Beginnings: Advocacy at Work, a First Meeting with the Deputy Director, Ministry of Youth and Sports Development, Ondo State.

Commissioner of Youths informing him about the project and proposed that an interactive session be held. Mrs. Williams and a small group visited the Commissioner and discussed the need for more involvement of NGOs in the activities of the Ministry. The NGOs complained that the interests of their beneficiaries are not addressed in the activities of the Ministry. The Deputy Director, 5 Youth Development Officers, and four members of the National Youths Council participated in the Interactive session. Discussion during the session was focused on youth empowerment activities, especially in rural communities, the involvement of youths and NGOs in such activities and how the activities were being monitored. Explanations about the provision of motor-bikes and wheel-barrows as income-generating support to marginalized youths were given. It was also explained that the Ministry has a policy of integrating female youths into projects and activities. Issues discussed were relevant to me as, the Deputy Director, Youth and sports development. It was decided that NGOs should be asking for information fr ut 6.3n6 Tf1s4()-82(Mi)-4(ni):

vi. UNDEF Added Value

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grantee was able to address its priority issues directly, without adjusting project objectives to fit the particular requirements which many other donors bring forward. This, along with the two-

V. Conclusions

All conclusions are derived from the findings of the Evaluation, presented above.

i. The grantee, KWDRC demonstrated a strong, practical knowledge of how to work effectively with the communities of the Niger Delta. strengthening the organizations and community leadership, through which mobilization of members of marginalized and vulnerable groups to engage in political life might take place, was directly relevant to the goal of broadening the base of participation, and, hence, enhancing local democracy.

with local communities throughout the Niger Delta. However, the ambition to hold project operations in all nine states in the region was realized at the cost of depth of involvement and continuity of support to project participants. A more focused project, restricted to perhaps three states, would have been more effective. The project completed all activities as planned. However, the limited willingness to cooperate, demonstrated by the government in some states, limited the scope and value of the Advocacy component. This conclusion is derived from findings on relevance and effectiveness.

ii. The Baseline Study was a positive factor in project effectiveness. It was conducted well and used as a means for identifying capacity gaps to be addressed through training. In addition, it was used imaginatively as a training tool. This conclusion is also based on findings on relevance and effectiveness.

iii. The Advocacy Visits by project participants to meetings with government officials, accompanied and facilitated by members of the Project Team, represented a worthwhile beginning to a process of engagement by participants. However, the visits were an opening only, and, in many cases, though not all, participants seemed hesitant to build on the experience. Overall, it is apparent that the project contributed to building both the practical skills and knowledge of participants and their self-confidence. In a number of cases, those supported by the project were motivated to take further action. Most often, this

CSOs and beneficiary groups became more active in advocacy on priority issues. This conclusion is derived from findings on impact and sustainability.

iv. In general, the grantee seems to have managed the budget well and made effective use of it in working towards objectives. At the same time, the way the budget was presented, along with the lack of supporting information, makes it difficult to know if the costs of all activities were reasonable. This conclusion is derived from the finding on efficiency.

v. The project contributed to the broader objectives of strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to support local communities in becoming engaged in the political process, and in enhancing the skills of beneficiary groups in the Niger Delta to engage effectively with government. While long-term progress will depend on continuing external assistance, the project made a number of contributions which will facilitate further positive developments in building the demand for good and responsive governance, thus

challenging the top-down political process in the Niger Delta, where the priorities of the poor and marginalized receive little attention. This conclusion is based on findings related to impact and sustainability.

VI. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

i. UNDEF gives careful consideration to amending the guidelines on the presentation of the budget in project proposals to ensure that the costing basis, along with any funding formulas adopted, for particular budget lines, are explained and justified in a note to accompany the budget tables. In addition, it is recommended that a section is added to the Final Report, documenting how the budget has been used, and explaining on a line-by-

VII. Overall assessment and closing thoughts

The Civil Society Support Initiative on Political Marginalization made a credible effort to provide support to building political participation among the most vulnerable and also most alienated groups in a region plagued by weak and corrupt governance. Operating under difficult conditions, the project devised an imaginative approach to strengthening the organizational and substantive knowledge of local CSOs, while also providing practical skills on advocacy to beneficiary groups representing Women, Youth and the Physically Challenged. It was over-ambitious, and some initiatives did not fit well with the broader strategy adopted. Nevertheless, its efforts yielded some valuable results.

It was able to develop an effective training program, planned and conducted in a very professional way, and which also addressed the learning needs of trainees. While the project represented the beginning to a long-term process to build a base to sustain political participation by marginalized and vulnerable groups, short-term objectives were achieved, with many of those trained proving that they had the ability to put newly-learned skills to work.

KWDRC demonstrated that it knew how to get things done in the Niger Delta environment. It showed that it possessed sound organizational capacities, as well as the knowledge and commitment to make a difference for those supported by its work, in a region where it is not easy for development projects to make solid progress.

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

Annex 3: Persons

Annex 4: Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EQ	Evaluation Question
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Gender Equality
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KWDRC	Kebetkache Women Development and Resource Centre
LGA	Local Government Area
MGPI	Marginalized Groups Participation Index
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NOREF	Norwegian Peace-Building Research Centre
PLHIVs	People Living with HIV/AIDS
SSA	Senior Special Assistant
ToT	Training-of-Trainers
UN	United Nations
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USIP	United States Institute of Peace