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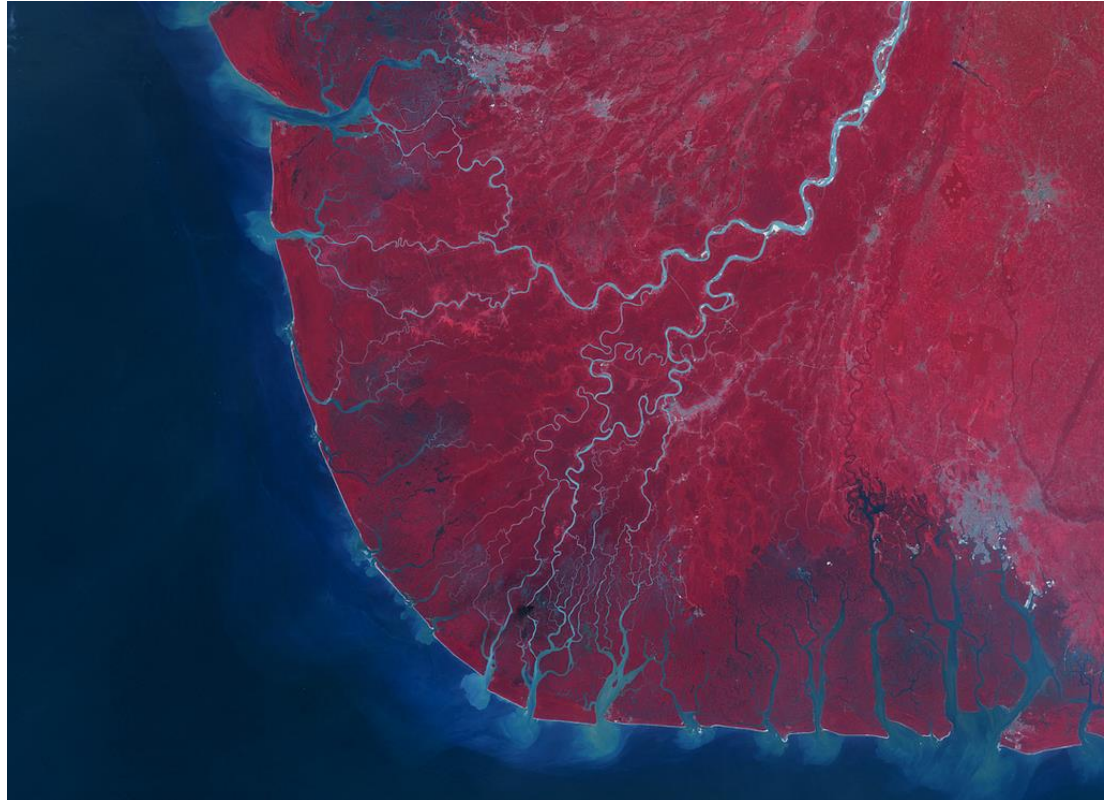


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Report

**Niger Delta Development Forum: delivering  
sustainable and equitable socioeconomic  
improvement through industrial diversification**

Tuesday 23 June 2015 | WP1402

Held at DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, London Victoria

In association with:

With support from:



UK Trade  
& Investment



Department  
for International  
Development



## Report

# **Niger Delta Development Forum: delivering sustainable and equitable socioeconomic improvement through industrial diversification**

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Held at DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, London Victoria

This high level roundtable aimed to build upon the work of the Niger Delta Partnership Initiative (NDPI) and its public, private and civil society partners as they collaborate to promote equitable economic growth in the Niger Delta. What influence will the newly elected Nigerian government have on the region's development over time?

The forum convened a wide range of stakeholders and partners to discuss the complex security and economic challenges facing the people of the Niger Delta and identified new opportunities to work together for the development of the region.

The select group of expert participants benefited from the inclusive, off the record format to speak frankly about how to fulfil the region's socioeconomic development potential.

### **Key points**

- The public and private sector must not pursue interests in isolation but work together with regular dialogue to identify and pursue development opportunities. Information-sharing will enhance mutually beneficial and sustainable partnerships and market competition to increase investment opportunities and interest in the region.
- As the largest investment and revenue generator for local government, the oil and gas industry has become a preoccupation in the region. New strategies for socioeconomic development must promote growth without increasing dependency on oil and gas, such as solar or hydro energy and agri-businesses.
- Rent-seeking has come to dominate the economy of the Niger Delta through political patronage, extortion and illegal oil bunkering. As a fundamentally domestic process, the region needs to drive a major behavioural change. The loss of political power and fall in oil prices presents a 'window of opportunity' to transition cities from inequitable, unstable platforms to urban centres with effective organisations, using scale connectivity and clustering together to form an effective and growing economy.
- The election of General Muhammadu Buhari as the new Nigerian President presents an opportunity for development. Great optimism surrounds the new administration, particularly regarding Buhari's zero-tolerance approach to corruption and military expertise to defeat the growing threat posed by various militant groups.

“People usually see just a small piece of the value chain, often just their piece and even then incompletely”

## Driving market growth: encouraging collaboration and competition

1. Information in the Niger Delta is often considered as a source of power and therefore citizens and organisations are not incentivised, or sometimes lack the appropriate systems, to share data and research. Improved systems for sharing information are essential to stimulate behavioural change among market actors, encourage increasingly productive relationships and foster sustained economic growth through mutually beneficial market competition.
2. In order to build an effective organisation in either the private or the public sector, individuals throughout the supply chain must have confidence in the quality of the product. The workforce must first internalise and invest in the quality of the product and objectives of the organisation before external investors or market competitors can value the business.
3. By continually increasing the productivity of individual market actors at the same functional level within the sector through ‘good’ competition, the level of innovation and productive capacity of firms will steadily increase to match and outperform, rather than undercut, competitors, thus making the entire sector more efficient and productive.
4. Sectors will grow when market competition drives shared learning, development of mutually beneficial solutions and innovation. Drivers for sustainable growth such as effective coordination, cooperation and pressure for innovation are dependent on good information flow to identify market opportunities, which suppliers are meeting those markets and which technologies can enhance productivity and competitiveness. Public platforms for information-sharing are vital to facilitate good cooperation and to build transparent, long-term and trusted relationships that can respond to common opportunities and threats.
5. Economic growth in the Niger Delta region is restricted by not only a paucity of information and market research, but also a lack of analysis and validation of information, whether public or private. As such greater understanding is needed of the ways that information can be used to properly stimulate investment and build competitiveness.
6. In the modern age of the internet, it is relatively easy to access data, but the key issue is identifying the right and most relevant information and knowing how best to use it effectively. Only once clear objectives have been set regarding the data’s use can correct and effective analysis be carried out.
7. It is essential not to let short-term interests overshadow long-term, sustainable market growth through increased information sharing to those able to use it productively. A participatory review of studies to share and validate information with key industry stakeholders has proven to be a powerful tool for developing linkages and partnerships for future action.
8. A clear value proposition for all parties needs to be shared among involved parties to establish mutual benefits and ensure greater long-term information sharing. An example of a good data collection and sharing initiative was NDPI’s aquaculture value chain project ‘Market for Fish Feed in Delta State’. Starting with identifying stakeholders requiring data (fish farmers, feed companies and government), NDPI facilitated information sharing among key market actors and carried out detailed analysis to identify previously missed market opportunities.
9. Nigerian companies which need technical, financial or management assistance and experience need to clearly identify capability gaps in order to develop into efficient and safe suppliers which international oil companies can use in Nigeria. By identifying opportunities for expansion within local companies, new skilled and semi-skilled jobs can be created for the local workforce. It is estimated that by 2050 the Nigerian population will surpass that of Europe; therefore in order to promote sustainable growth it is essential to encourage training and offering much-needed opportunities for

“Workshops need to be structured around accurate content and clear definition of constraints”

development to younger generations.

10. Since 2009, 65 new partnerships have been formed between UK and Nigerian companies, creating 2300 skilled jobs and 5200 semi-skilled jobs. This has created a new generation of independent Nigerians, fostering skills, such as welding and fabrication, that can be transferred from the oil and gas industry to other sectors and creating partnerships for future action.

## Past challenges and future opportunities

### Rent-seeking and insecurity

11. Rent-seeking has come to dominate the economy of the Niger Delta through political patronage, extortion and illegal and industrial-scale oil bunkering. The consequences of trying to live on these forms of rent-seeking include lawlessness, increased income inequality, insecurity and economic disaster for legitimate businesses. As this type of illicit behaviour is a fundamentally domestic circumstance, the region's governments need to be proactive in driving major behavioural change and change of expectations. In contrast to Abuja, the national epicentre of rent-seeking, Lagos has become the economic capital of West Africa, where legitimate business takes place with support from local government to build services for a stronger economy.
12. Before the Niger Delta is able to move beyond rent-seeking, it is essential to accept that the only way to become prosperous is to become productive. In order to build prosperity, the Niger Delta must create contexts in which effective organisations (combining scale and specialisation) can thrive.
13. Oil bunkering is deeply integrated into the politics, economics and business of the region, with a large number of people complicit in the theft. Oil companies have internationalised the problem, coining the term 'blood oil', reflective of the blood diamond campaign. Participants agreed that Nigeria needs to own the problem with the support of the international community to strengthen maritime and port security.
14. Key challenges in the Niger Delta include poverty, unemployment and lack of security fed by a lack of government presence. The absence of police formation leads to flows of migration and terrorism along the old trading routes, making moving from one area to another challenging. Local companies cannot provide security but suffer from unstable or insecure trade routes. To address this, rent-seeking must be eliminated and police-civil relationships must be developed.
15. Security is a vital public good, enabled by strong infrastructure and public services, such as decent policing and reliable street lighting. The high cost of criminality to firms (eg in the form of specialised security staff) acts like a tax and produces an unsustainable cost to local businesses. Increased domestic security would create an economy of its own, but the main challenge is implementing security initiatives in an economic and political environment which thrives on instability and insecurity.

### Industrial diversification

16. The oil industry is the largest generator of revenue for government and draws the largest investments in the region. Yet opportunities for growth must be sought without increasing dependency on oil to achieve an efficient and diverse economy.
17. There is huge potential for development of the gas industry in the Niger Delta, but the current federal strategy is not creating an enabling environment for gas production. Fuelling generators through local access to energy such as gas is a key enabler to kick-start the economy and tackle oil bunkering.
18. The major challenge to industrialisation is local access to energy. It remains important to continue to develop the oil and gas sector for export, but domestic use of power within the region must be prioritised. In order to facilitate a transition from gas to electricity, the last government of Nigeria spent extensive time getting legislation in

"The Niger Delta's past is rent seeking – if it were going to turn into Dubai it would've done it by now"

"Oil and gas have become an 'unhealthy preoccupation' of the Niger Delta"



place to enable private generation but nothing has happened on the ground.

19. The unsustainable exploitation of the environment by the oil and gas industry has led to crippling pollution along coastlines and the destruction of habitats that were formerly relied upon for livelihoods. An important opportunity for sustainable development is restoring the fishing ability of local people, which will require extensive environmental cleaning. Technology exists but currently there is no funding, creating a possible opportunity to invest in the future of the Niger Delta's coastal cities.
20. The current fall in oil prices creates an opportunity to end rent-seeking behaviour. Rents have fallen more than proportionately to oil prices, and less money is to be gained from illegal bunkering. This presents an opportunity to transition to more stable, well-governed coastal cities with effective institutions, allowing organisations to use scale and connectivity together to form an effective and growing economy.
21. In addition to increased investment opportunities, diversification from oil will create employment and training opportunities for skilled workers – a significant gap in the Delta's employable labour force, currently including women, for whom micro-credit facilities can enhance the living conditions of families. With a high reproduction rate comes a high rate of unemployment; development of alternative industries would prevent younger generations turning to criminality and bunkering to support families.

“20,000 UK nationals work in Nigeria at any one time, generating £6 billion of bilateral trade”

### **Governance**

22. The first transition from one democratic government to another in Nigeria with the election of President Muhammadu Buhari has stimulated great optimism for the future of the Niger Delta, perhaps in excess of what can be achieved. Key questions are how in reality the oil industry will be managed and to what degree and to whom Buhari will delegate.
23. Too often companies talk of the role of corporate social responsibility as their contribution to development initiatives within the Delta, but the real contribution is taxation. The full focus of the government should be identifying uses for the benefits and revenues generated through taxation whilst ensuring transparency of public spending. To create greater stability in the region, individual states' governments must identify how to collectively have oversight over public spending to benefit the local area, combat terrorism and involve citizens in the democratic process.
24. It is well-documented that a major challenge for the Niger Delta is the prevalence of corruption. Buhari's zero-tolerance approach to corruption is promising, but there is much more to work on than can be achieved in four years. Key to combatting corruption is ensuring that independent, trustworthy individuals are appointed to positions of power and are given support from early stages.
25. The Nigerian public sector has been primarily motivated by personal short-term gain rather than long-term public interest. The Nigerian public distrust government officials, creating a need for independent and trusted bodies to reinforce the integrity of politicians and change the perception of the electorate.
26. The end of the Delta's amnesty programme for militias provides suitable timing for innovative approaches for the new administration to ensure stability in the region. The amnesty programme, which started last year, provides a window of opportunity for development among reduced violence and militancy.

### **Improved infrastructure: making connections**

27. The greatest endowment of the Delta is not, as most observers might think, its vast resources of oil and gas, but its shoreline and ports. African cities which will thrive are port cities with better connectivity to global markets. Local government must foster a prosperous public environment in the form of functional cities; Port Harcourt presents good opportunities for development with its existing two sea ports and ocean terminal. If properly utilised it will allow commerce which is currently blocked in Lagos, and

enable local businesses to start up and be sustained.

28. Coastal cities are more manageable for development opportunities, striking a balance between connectivity and population density. Smaller cities have better opportunities for effective and efficient connectivity than larger cities. 'Typical' African cities aim for density at the expense of liveability. The most functional cities do not exceed five stories, with ground-floor businesses meeting the demand of the population above.
29. The lack of infrastructure is key to unlocking the problem of lack of development opportunities in the region. Trade within and outside the region is limited by current trading routes and complex trading zones. The African Union Commissioner is looking at economic integration and the planned summit is a step forward, but the double challenges of currency risk and lack of physical integration remain. The European model is not suitable for transferral to the Delta trading structure so new strategies must be drawn up.

### Investment risks

30. In recent years the Niger Delta region has benefitted from policy initiatives and interventions from the Federal Government and development partners, such as the Niger Delta Development Act of 1961, the Presidential Amnesty Programme for Ex-militants of 2010 and various skills training and vocational education projects. Yet, numerous challenges, including macroeconomic risk, socio-political risk and non-passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), continue to heighten business and investment risks and weaken growth potential and projects often remain unfinished due to lack of capacity, infrastructure, corruption or misappropriation of funds.

### Case study: Agri-business

31. Three main challenges face agri-businesses in the Niger Delta region: creating an enabling environment, production and distribution risks and creating a prosperous market. Lack of infrastructure, such as electricity and road connectivity and limited access to fresh water – in addition to extra costs for necessary regulatory approval – lead to market actors being priced out of the agricultural sector. Raw materials bought from local, small-scale farmers often do not reach the quality standards and supply levels needed to meet export demands. Agri-businesses are often forced to start up supporting farms or source sufficient raw materials from larger farms in order to reduce production costs and ensure reliable supply. Lack of good quality information and data analysis has led to competitive advantage to a small number of firms, but has restricted wider mutually beneficial, market-driven competition.
32. The long pay-back time for investors in agri-business requires patient capital or deep pockets to finance what is traditionally low-profit sector; for example, analysis of CDC Group investment in agriculture over 30 years shows that projects go through two or three iterations of ownership before becoming profitable. Investments in agri-businesses require sensible financial analysis to determine whether generated profit will be able to cover borrowed funds. Governments and development organisations can consider the approach of investment and credit committees (who are mandated to preserve money) to take a longer-term view and who anticipate higher risk from agri-business investments. These committees recognise the difficulty of the sector and build-in tolerance of financing and re-financing within investment proposals.
33. More training and capacity building initiatives are necessary to recruit commercially-focussed management to develop viable businesses in the Delta. Agri-business needs to be more attractive to the brightest and best among the local workforce.
34. Agri-business cannot solve all the problems of the Niger Delta, but through involvement, collaboration and support to the private sector, small businesses can provide incentives to invest and create jobs.
35. Constituting a large proportion of the Nigerian economy worth a total of over \$500

“Need to focus on creating profitability in the value chain and let the livelihoods follow”

“New appetite for investment can stem from the new administration’s manifesto and public announcements”

billion, one dollar in every five is generated from agriculture, yet still more can be done to make the sector more profitable in the future. One suggestion was to bring in management from diasporas of Nigerians educated abroad.

### **Opportunities for change**

36. To address the business and investment risks presented by the region it is essential that government at federal and state levels demonstrates exemplary leadership and political will. There is no shortage of initiatives and ideas to promote development within the region (e.g. power generation and street lighting), but government must show commitment to actionable targets. Initial focus should be on a selection of a few highly impactful projects that hold high promise for reducing regional business and investment risks.
37. The price of crude oil should be seized as an opportunity to rethink the future of the Niger Delta beyond petroleum. Instead, focus should be shifted to the natural agriculture and human resources of the Delta, such as cassava, rubber, fishery and light manufacturing, to create sustainable, labour-intensive jobs and promote inter- and infra-regional trade which is yet to be exploited.
38. Many civil society actors are left out of the equation of economic plans for the future. Engagement with civil society groups can lead to increased commitment from investors, businesses, educational institutions and local government to construct an environment to encourage development. Government should be at the core of conversations, but actions must be led by an engaged civil society network and businesses submitting themselves to common agreed leadership of one business institution.
39. National interests such as sport can be deployed to create a culture of peace and cultivate a passion for investment in the region, capturing engagement from primary school children to pursue education and from investors to realise the potential profitability of local businesses.
40. Corporate social investments made by international oil companies (IOCs) were once stimulated by risk mitigation to reduce levels of poverty and youth employment, leading to sustainable economic growth through investment in the future labour market. Recently these initiatives have become perceived by some as a public relations tool to enhance the reputation of the IOCs. Small companies should instead collaborate and cooperate to address shared risks from the perspective of the specific social issues which need to be addressed and resolved.

### **Strengthening the economy through diversification**

#### **Access to energy**

41. The Niger Delta is suffering from 'energy poverty', with limited or no access to electricity for the majority of the population. Shell carried out research on access to energy in the Niger Delta region, involving embedding 8000 households and small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to better understand the market, the delta's energy needs, and what is available. Findings revealed that two thirds of households either do not have access to electricity at all or no more than four hours per day. In three states, 1.8 million households and almost one million SMEs rely on generators for power, spending on average ₦11,000-12,000 (approximately USD50) on maintenance every year. The survey revealed that citizens and businesses are willing to pay multiples of their current charge for a reliable and stable source of electricity, feeding into the energy market worth over USD800 million, and calling into question how citizens' money could be otherwise used to stimulate economic growth.
42. A severe lack of coordination has led to the large gap between demand and supply of energy in the Niger Delta. The Nigerian government invested in ten National Independent Power Projects; three of which are located in the delta region and are at

“What is the investment climate and major development factors in each of the states? ... Let them compete with each other in rankings”

“One power station provides 650MW and can supply electricity for one million people (12-15% of energy needs)”

the lowest stage of completion, creating the largest actual power deficit despite the abundance of available energy sources.

43. With seven million people in the delta region, the future is not in big power plants but small solutions, patient capital and greater access to funding. Entrepreneurs of wind, solar and hydro energy are investing in easily deployable solutions in the area; now there is a need to create a collaborative platform for entrepreneurs to share ideas and access market-based funds.

### **Geospatial imagery**

44. Mapping and space imaging can play a significant role in the security domain to solve problems. Satellites can collect 20 million km<sup>2</sup> of imagery per day, and can create a 50cm resolution image of the whole of Nigeria twice daily. Not reliant on solar illumination, satellites can collect images at night, use radar to see through clouds, and can even collect imagery in challenging or hostile environments, enabling them to identify bunkering activities and monitor barges moving into the Gulf of Guinea. Their automatic identification system makes it easy to identify, track and recognise suspicious activity of vessels over 1000 tonnes.
45. Technology cannot be used in isolation, but must be combined with civil security to eradicate illegal practices such as oil theft. Criminals are persistent due to financial necessity, so technology needs to be used in collaboration with other sectors to reduce demand and market value of illicit oil. Satellite imagery has been used successfully for monitoring actors on the ground, creating a 'pattern of life' through surveillance spanning up to 15 years, but the question is how to interpret and use it.
46. Satellite imagery is used for non-security purposes in East Africa as part of a rural economic stimulation programme. Imagery can be used in land tenure systems and to prove land proprietorship where traditional farming communities are unable to provide legal ownership to draw up title deeds. In the south west of Nigeria, programmes funded by the World Bank and African Development Bank have begun state-wide mapping to create a land property map.
47. Geospatial imagery can assist in managing and monitoring urban development; for example ensuring transportation routes are put in the right place at the right time, and are able to monitor population density, a tool which could be useful in evolving cities such as Port Harcourt. Three-dimensional spatial analysis can also identify suitable locations for alternative forms of energy production, such as macro-planning for best sites of a wind farm by identifying its proximity to electricity grid, sufficient elevation and best point of wind flow.
48. Training and capacity building initiatives are necessary to fully utilise the data collected. In the region the culture of not wanting to share information acts as an impediment to new initiatives. Teaching the local government and private sector companies to use new technology will enable them to overcome development challenges more easily. Using satellites once in orbit is a relatively low-cost means of increasing security and assisting development of new infrastructure projects.

### **Agri-business**

49. Since Nigerian oil resources were identified, development has been limited in agriculture. Citizens and businesses grow crops, but lack of training and technology has led to only a small number farming the 34 million hectares of land available throughout Nigeria. Local farmers cannot afford to buy or rent tractors and the technology market is flooded with generic, counterfeit, substandard, or illegally imported goods, unable to facilitate running a sustainable business. Microchips in tractors can track location, usage and monitor correct operation and therefore mitigate risk to potential investment in small businesses.
50. Gaps in the value chain are not accessible to small farmers; one kilogram of potatoes is currently sold for treble the cost of those in Johannesburg and 1.5 times the price in the

“Google is undermining the power of imagery by using it just as a marketing tool”

“Nigeria has not signed up to any intellectual property protection to safeguard new technology of research and development companies”



UK, despite no cleaning or packaging processes. Small farms which are unable to produce and market crops in mass volumes suffer from increased production and manufacturing costs, resulting in high-cost products for sale to a population living on an average budget of USD2 per day. For microfinance institutions considering investing in small holder farms, businesses cannot promise a reliable rate of return and considerable profit margin. Farmers still use traditional farming techniques inherited from ancestors, produce a smaller yield than in Europe and have no collateral.

51. USD10-20 million has been spent on building a new rice mill, but it is only running at 30% capacity. With no raw materials the mill will be defunct from day one. Value chain partners need to be engaged to lift productivity by considering quality and consistent quantity over a significant period of time.
52. Five states in the Niger Delta were chosen for over 500 private-sector led demonstration days inviting 100-200 farmers to learn how to efficiently farm land at different times of year using new technology. Over 21,000 farmers were trained directly through the scheme, and over 129,000 were taught new skills indirectly through a step-down process. The demonstration farms showed that yields can be increased by up to 92%, taking average yield for maize from two tonnes to four tonnes per hectare.
53. Through this scheme farmers were able to increase the quality and quantity of production from the mill to increase overall yield in Niger State by over 430%, proving that local government does not need to spend USD11 million per day importing rice and other vegetables which can be produced profitably within Nigeria.
54. Farmers were able to rotate rice farming and irrigation with cocoa production as a cash crop for export. Agriculture is not a sector for short-time investment; farmers needed one or two seasons to believe in the capabilities of new technology and adopt it themselves. But by using these modern farming methods, farmers could profit from meeting high standards of buying countries and investors could see long-term, sustainable growth in the form of returns.

### Catalysing investments

55. Access to financing and availability of sources of capital is a critical enabler of socioeconomic development, whether from development funds, or microfinancial or commercial banks. There is a significant 'missing middle' tier of finance for medium- and large-sized enterprises in the Niger Delta. There are many microfinancial banks for which regulation restrictions limit the maximum amount of investment, therefore narrowing funding sources for medium-sized enterprises whose proposals are too small for consideration from commercial banks.
56. In order to unlock existing capital, multinational companies must think creatively, not seeing themselves as investors in only particular sectors or through corporate social responsibility. Multinational corporations must coordinate with development partners and government to meet the missing middle of investment for medium-sized enterprises.
57. In order to seek capital from debt or equity investment in the Niger Delta region or for a specific project there must be a 'guarantee' of a return through interest or profit share. To tap into sources of capital the proposed deal must be bankable, creating a return profile to reach an agreement with potential investors. This is not necessarily restricted to a monetary return, but by achieving the right objectives and reaching the right compensation for all, such as technical assistance or consultation, strategic impacts or long-term partnership.
58. The most important ingredient is a good idea driven by good management to mitigate risk of project incompleteness or unsettled debt. The highest risk money is at the early stages of project development, leading to start-ups needing five to seven years to get the project off the ground in order to later secure initial investment. Nigerian and foreign

"From 2010, insurance and pension funds in Nigeria have accumulated \$9.27 billion of potential investment"

"The Niger Delta is a wealthy area, but you need cash to unlock cash"

banks will lend to well-structured projects once they foresee that the money can be repaid, often using equity to cover the risk over the long-term.

59. Despite the ongoing unrest, Nigeria is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, enabled by successive governments working to create an enabling environment for economic development. The Niger Delta needs the entire spectrum of small to large enterprises and projects, but larger infrastructure projects supplying power are at the basis of development in the region. However, infrastructure requires high upfront capital costs, with debt return only possible after 15-20 years and equity profit share even later.
60. Reasonably comprehensive and bespoke risk assessments are carried out on projects in the region, with all projects being analysed and negotiated individually to apportion risk. Every aspect of the project is analysed extensively, including its market, driving innovator, corporate governance and regulatory environment, all of which is an expensive exercise, but can be sustained in the delta as an inherently wealthy region. The most important factor to securing investment is partnership; opportunities for which need to be built over time as people are increasingly careful about reliability of financial partnerships.
61. Technical assistance is key to project preparation and driving start-up enterprises. Development banks can provide technical expertise and guidance to financial access to SMEs, such as how to present a project to commercial institutions and how to create a market where financial institutions can compete for funding at a cheaper rate.
62. Part of the challenge is not only a lack of financial expertise or technical assistance to fund new development, but willingness and attitude of parties to strike a deal where financial returns are uncertain. Some enterprises are turning technical assistance into an equitable stage in the company to form a social and financial return on investment; however, this creates uncertainty around what exactly the equity share translates into in terms of assistance. Some international entities are pushing the question of how to use the greatest asset of labour and technical assistance to invest into a company to increase yield and dividends and therefore fill the 'missing middle'.

## Conclusion

63. The fall in oil prices and its impact on a reduction in rent-seeking behaviour in the Niger Delta, (not only in the public and private sectors but also at community level) should be seized as a unique window of opportunity to change thinking and encourage wider development without increasing the region's dependency on the oil industry. All development actors in the region must recognise shared responsibility to find ways to collaborate to address rent-seeking behaviour and promote economic diversification before oil prices rise again. Despite challenges, the amnesty programme has created a window of peace to work in and change current approaches to peacebuilding in the region. Government, corporate and civil society actors must take advantage of these timing opportunities before both dynamics change again.
64. Training in development principles and value chain analysis is essential for upscaling SMEs and successfully securing investment. Focus needs to be on improved coordination, communications and information between market actors to use existing data and analysis to best effect by those best placed to do so. Understanding and answering data needs can be best facilitated through creation of online intelligence-sharing platforms which can create mutually beneficial relationships and competition between market actors to unlock investment opportunities.
65. There is a need for other governments to look for other ways to finance infrastructure in the region by tapping into the capital market and financial institutions to drive infrastructure development in the delta. There is not a shortage of capital in the region, but all projects must be seen as profitable to potential investors, providing a form of short- or long-term return. Importantly, technical assistance can also be structured

"Nigeria 2020 is not a cake for all of us to cut and share, but a cake we should all bake together"

differently as a returnable grant to assist project development and financing in the early stages, and provide a form of return to encourage commercial or microfinancial investment.

**Gina Vale**

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