

**RURAL WOMEN IN PEACE-BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: THE CASE OF
GBARAIN-EKPETIAMA WOMEN IN BAYELSA STATE.****Ambily Etekpe****ABSTRACT**

The commencement of the Gbarain-Ubie integrated oil and gas project (NLNG) in Gbarain-Ekpetiama Clans in 2005 was to equally bring about the positive transformation of the 47 host communities in Bayelsa and some parts of Rivers State. Accordingly, the parties entered into a global memorandum of understanding (GMoU) in April 2006 to establish nine programmes and projects, but SPDC reneged, leading to series of agitations that eventually resulted in the “rural women revolt” in May 2010. The NLNG was shut down for three weeks. This made the state government and SPDC to sue for peaceful resolution on May 18, 2010, where it was agreed that SPDC faithfully implement the tenets of the GMoU. The study applied David Easton’s theory of “post-behavioural revolution”, and adopted the “participant observation” method to examine the need for rural women to reinvigorate tested indigenous knowledge in peace-building and development in the male dominated vocation. The paper discussed how the revolt unveiled several lessons, including the need for dialogue, adherence to the tenets of GMoU, and swift response of government and SPDC to forestall escalation. It then recommends the sustenance of the micro-credit scheme to continue to impact positively on the rural communities.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable community development, peace-building, global memorandum of understanding, and associated and non-associated gas gathering.

I. SETTING THE STAGE

The Gbarain-Ubie integrated oil and gas project (IOGP) is a multi-billion dollar project located in Gbarain-Ekpetiama Clans in Bayelsa State for gathering oil and gas from 47 communities in Bayelsa and some parts of Rivers States to Bonny in the Niger Delta for export. The project gathers about 1,000 mmsf/d of associated and non-associated gas

(AG/NAG) for transmission to the Nigeria Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG) at Trans 4-6 in Bonny in Rivers State. The initial completion date was 2008, with a life span of 25 years after commissioning. The components of the project (Dickson and Dadioweji, 2010) include:

- 1) 12 gas wells to meet 1,050 mmscf/d gas capacity in Gbarain (3), Zarama (5), Kolo Creek (1), and Ubie (3);
- 2) 12 oil wells in Etebebou in Gbarain-Ekpetiama clans in Bayelsa State and 1 Adibawa in Rivers State;
- 3) Central Processing facilities (CPF) at Gbarain;
- 4) Outlying flow stations at Adibawa and Ahia communities in Rivers State; and
- 5) Associated gas (AG) collection from Gbarain, Kolo Creek, Etebebou, Ubie, Zarama, Okordia, Ahia and Adibawa clans in Bayels and Rivers States.

As expected, the project is to have positive multiplier effects, in terms of sustainable development on the communities. Thus, the communities, especially the Gbarain-Ekpetiama clans entered into a global memorandum of understanding (GMOU) with Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Ltd (SPDC) on April 28, 2006 for the provision of nine (9) projects discussed in Part II below.

The Gbarain-Ekpetiama clans (G-ECs) of 17 communities noticed that by the first quarters of 2010 when SPDC had almost completed its assignment, most of the nine projects in the GMOU had not been executed. Thus, the women, having observed the inaction of the men dominated Project Advisory Committee (PAC II) organized themselves into Gbarain-Ekpetiama Women Forum (GEWF) and revolted on May 2, 2010. The revolution paralyzed activities at Gbarain-Ubie IOGP for three weeks. It was at this point that the state government and SPDC responded by exploring opportunities for dialogue and mediation to resolve the crisis.

The paper aims at examining the emerging dynamic role of rural women in conflict resolution, peace-building and development in Nigeria with emphasis on the Niger Delta. This is important as it is a male dominated vocation. It went further to unveil the nature,

consequences, and implications of the conflict and argues that it is a continuing cycle of “peace to conflict to peace” (Table 1-1), and “the cycle of shutdown or revolt interspersed with periods of mutual co-existence.” This suggests that previous peace-building mechanisms were unsufficing until the rural women’s “behavioural revolution” on May 2, 2010 that ushered in an enduring peace for the mutual benefit of the three principal stakeholders – 47 host communities, SPDC and its contracting firms, and federal government.

The paper is divided into five parts, beginning with an introduction. This progresses to an analysis of the problems and major contending issues, review of related literature, methodology and discussion on the peace-building processes and development. This is followed by an in-depth assessment of the impacts and derivable lessons for the future. The paper recommends the need for faithful adherence of MNOCs, especially SPDC, to the tenets of GMoUs.

II ISSUES ANALYSIS

The origin of the Gbarain-Ekpetiama communities (G-ECs) conflict is traced to the SPDC’s non-implementation of the GMoU signed on April 28, 2006. The Part B of the GMoU is on “sustainable community development (SCD)” projects that specifically stated the following nine (9) items:

- 1) Rural electrification of the immediate 17 communities in Gbarain-Ekpetiama clans;
- 2) Potable pipe-borne water scheme for the communities;
- 3) Construction of internal roads;
- 4) Upgrading of town halls;
- 5) Building of modern civic centres;
- 6) Construction of primary schools blocks and health centres;
- 7) Provision of hospital equipment to cottage hospitals and comprehensive health centres;
- 8) Youth empowerment programmes, including scholarships, technical trainings, etc; and
- 9) Human capital development.

These programmes and projects were meant to be catalyst for the development of G-E communities. Thus, their non-execution prompted the women, who are predominantly the rural dwellers vulnerable to poverty, depleted ecosystem, and environmental hazards (Burrinic and Yudelman, 1989) to react. Their argument was that as the people have severally protested (Table 1-1), but to no avail, there was an urgent need to be violent, since the “only language an oppressor like SPDC understands is violence.”

This raised several issues that are considered one after the other. First, is the issue of non-implementation of GMoU and its negative consequences on rural communities, especially in the Niger Delta. This has become so critical that it formed one of the cardinal agenda at the *UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)* at Rio de Janeiro in Brazil in 1992. The UNCSD is popularly known as the *Earth Summit*. The *Earth Summit* made a declaration, that is commonly referred to as Agenda 21, making it compulsory for development agencies and/or partners to conduct *environmental impact assessment (EIA)* in any community before commencement of any major programme/projects; and that the EIA has to be made an integral part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Lynne and Charts, 1989).

The tenets of EIA and CSR are then imbedded into the GMoU. It specifies the rights and responsibilities of all the major stakeholders, which in case of G-E project, are SPDC, Federal Government, and 47 host communities.

The second issue is that contrary to established norms and practice, the Gbarain-Ubie IOGP had a “Global EIA” (GMoU) on April 28, 2006 after one year of commencement in 2005. This was because the initial GMoU prepared by SPDC was rejected by the communities as the baseline data did not meet the conditions of the immediate project area. In addition, the communities identified in the EIA were alien to the Gbarain-Ubie Project communities. This means, it was a mere replication of a project executed some where outside the communities and transposed on the people. This generated the first conflict over the authenticity of the EIA. It has to take the Federal Ministry of Environment, Housing and Urban Development (FMEH & UD) to intervene to ensure that “all community related issues are addressed promptly by SPDC while continuous consultation is carried

out throughout the life span of the project” so that the EIA was not merely transplanted on the communities, but to reflect the realities on ground. The author was involved in the process of preparing a fresh EIA that eventually reflected realities on ground. In between the period (2005-2006), SPDC had already commenced work and the communities were handicapped in holding their ground on certain projects considered paramount to their sustainable development.

The third, which is incidentally the most serious issue, and the immediate cause of the conflict was the non-implementation of the tenets of the GMoU. It led to intermittent conflicts, resulting into shutdowns of the projects as stated at Table 1-1.

The fourth issue is that the rate of shutdowns at Table 1-1 seems to suggest that the host communities do not recognize the importance of dialogue (Manuh, 1990). This may not be the case as Dickson and Dadiowei (2001:484-6) have pointed out that it is the usual character of MNOs, especially SPDC, to ignore warning signs, including appeal for dialogue, and even if it succumbs, the resolutions are not tenaciously pursued. The dialogues are not fruitful and the communities are “completed” to adopt the Marxian philosophy that the “only language an oppressor (like SPDC) understands is violence.” This seems to hold ground as the frequent shutdowns paved way for incremental implementation of the GMoU until the conflict escalated to crisis point on May 2, 2010. On the other hand, the shutdowns gave SPDC the opportunity to renege on its social responsibility to the host communities, thereby causing further protests / shutdowns.

Table 1-1: Chronology of Conflicts and Shutdowns at Gbaran-Ubie Oil & Gas Gathering Projects in Bayelsa State, 2007-2010.

Date	Community	Issues/Grievances	Consequences
February 12, 2007	Obunagha (Immediate site of IOGP)	Non-implementation of Sustainable Community Development projects (SCDP) prior to commencement of work.	Violent protest for two days until the Community and PAC II met to address the issues.
May 22,	Obunagha	Still on non-implementation	Shutdown of Deutag drilling con-

2007	(Women)	of GMoU by SPDC and non-inclusion of women in PAC II	tracting firm, site for 14 days.
June 11, 2007	Ogboloma, Okolobiri, and Koroama (Landlords)	High level of pollution caused by drilling of Koroama appraisal wells without remediation.	- Wrote and dispatched protest letters to Bayelsa State, FMEH & UD and SPDC International. - As no action, there was 3 days of violent demonstrations, leading to shutdown.
April 28, 2008	Obunagha (Youths)	Non-implementation of GMOU while IOGP activities were progressing fast.	Shutdown of plant for 14 days.
June 11-21, 2008	Obunagha	Supply of low quality generating set by SPDC contracting firm.	Seizure of Daewoo (contracting firm) self-loading truck for 102 days.
October 18, 2008	Ogboloma	Daewoo company (SPDC contracting firm) vehicles destroyed high and low tension electricity wires without repairs after repeated appeals.	- Blockage of access road to project site. -Seizure of Daewoo buses/heavy duty vehicles - Shutdown of plant for 3 weeks
May 2, 2010	Gbarain-Ekpetiama women from 17 communities	Haphazard implementation of GMOU while completion of work	- Peaceful demonstration - Blockage of access road to the plant, followed by shutdown of plant for 3 weeks.

Sources: Field Works as at June 30, 2010.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

There are several frameworks that can be applied in this study. They range from institutionally-induced frustration-aggression (Dollard,1939 and Lorenz, 1966), structural conflict (Galtung, 1990) to systemic (Johnson, 1966) theories. Let’s briefly critique each of them, and their applicability to this work.

The frustration-aggression theory was propounded by John Dollard in 1939, and expanded and modified by Leonard Berkowitz (1962) and Johan Galtung (1966). It explains how disparity between “expected value and value capacities” in a given community results into conflicts. In contributing to the theory, Midlarsky (1975) said, “the disparity is based on lack of need satisfaction defined as a gap between aspiration and achievement.” What Midlarsky means

is that tension builds up as in the case of G-ECs where there is an obvious gap between the level of value expectation in terms of sustainable development and that of value attainment (non-implementation of the GMoU). This led to frustration of the 17 Gbarain-Ekpetiama host communities, especially the women, and the resultant consequence was frequent shutdown of the plant. In applying this theory, scholars are too quick to rely on explanations from psychological theories of motivation. Secondly, it is the most common explanation for violent behaviour in the Niger Delta, and has lost some level of relevance.

The next one is the structural conflict theory which asserts that conflict is built into the particular way societies in the Niger Delta and elsewhere are structured or organized. The theory looks at social problems, such as economic exclusion, injustice, poverty, neglect, exploitation, and domination of one class by the other experienced by the people of G-ECs, in particular, and Niger Delta, in general, as responsible for the perennial conflicts. Accordingly, Karl Marx argues that the oppressed people (of G-ECs) have to revolt to overthrow the exploitative *system of the MNOCs*. The weakness of the theory is that the working class in Nigeria, and indeed Africa, is too weak and bedeviled by crisis of leadership to rise up against the system (bourgeois). This is so because even strong European proletariats have not been able to do so over the centuries.

The systemic theory postulates that the Nigerian system's inaction on environmental degradation and skewed political processes alters peoples' material comfort that consequently stirs them into violent acts. The prolonged discomfort resulting from non-implementation of the GMoU, for example, propelled the G-ECs' act of civil disobedience that, in turn, resulted in the behavioural revolution. This theory may, however, not be suitable as material discomfort in the Niger Delta has seemingly become an "acceptable norm", and whenever the people protest against it, they are "crushed" by an occupation force (JTF) that is permanently stationed in different parts of the region. The theory would rather work better in a "free society" governed by arms-length transaction.

Having felt that these and similar theories would not give the desired explanations, the author turned to the "theory of post-behavioural revolution" propounded by David Easton (1953/1969). This theory is a departure from undue dependence on other social sciences,

especially psychology and economics in explaining issues of conflict, peace-building, and security in the Niger Delta, the same way it is applied to other socio-political phenomena. The post-behavioural revolutionary framework encourages the evolution of autonomous concepts in political science for an indepth understanding of the “linkages between philosophy, science, peace, security and development studies”, instead of merely relying on over-recycled theories. The behavioural revolution has four stages. It begins with endurance of hardship, followed by intermittent agitations/protests to spur constructive dialogue. The failure to successfully address the two stages would lead to the third stage, which is, limited violence. The final stage is “full blown violence (revolution).” The four stages were prominent in the G-ECs conflict, and together explains the complexity of the subject matter.

The final analysis is that of data collection. Here, the author applied the participant observation as he has been involved in several aspects of the peace-building process, including the preparation of the second EIA in 2006, and the revolt in May 2010. Holdaway (1980:79-100), an expert on the subject, argues that “observational method allows in-depth study of the whole target group.” The method was complemented by interviews and documents study.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature on the contributions of women to peace-building and development in the region and country is clear that very little attention has been focused on them. This is worrisome, and Ntunde and Ugwu (2005) have drawn the attention of the world to the fact that about 80 percent of today’s casualties in violent conflicts, refugees and internally displaced people are women and children. Bolanle (1992) and Warah (1998) went further to state that women are the main victims of conflicts, and at the same time, are excluded from negotiation and other forms of peace-building mechanisms (Bolanle, 1992 and Warah, 1998). They then advocated for a prominent role for the women.

The trend seems to be changing for better as witnessed in recent times when women participate actively in public peace rallies, shutdowns of plants, and aimed at eliciting dialogue that ultimately leads to peace and development. Again, Ntunde and Ugwu recall women playing

these roles during:

- 1) the Jimeta-Yola and Gombe uprising on February 28, 1984 and April 29, 1985 in which the women reacted swiftly to the destruction of the central markets that internally displaced about 50,000 persons;
- 2) the Bauchi riot on April 20 – 22, 1991 in which women resisted the Boko Harams;
- 3) the Zangon-Kataf riot in 1997 where women carried arms and fought side by side with men;
- 4) the Tiv-Azara communal conflict in June 2001 caused by the struggle over ownership of land, and the women stood their ground to protect their farm lands. And we wish to add
- 5) the Jos religious crises where the women of Plateau state, irrespective of their religion staged public rallies to the National Assembly (Parliament) in March 2010 calling for government security and protection of their lives and property; and
- 6) the Gbarain-Ekpetiama rural women revolt against SPDC on May 2 to 18, 2010.

The issue at stake is that, except the Gbarain-Ekpetiama case, the analyses of Ntunde and Ugwu were on the urban women. For example, Hussaini, Abdul (2002) and Olawale, Albert (1996) have equally written extensively on “women and conflicts”, but “are limited to Kaduna and Kano urban cities, and emphasize mainly the effects of conflicts and crises on Nigerian women, instead of their role in conflict prevention, resolution, and peace-building in Nigeria” (Akran and Akinga, 2005). It is important to go beyond this level and focus more on the rural women. It is for this reason the experiences of Gbarain-Ekpetiama rural women revolt and the resultant peace-building process in a male dominated vocation is worthy of analysis. The women applied their feminine calmness and unique perspectives very well to eventually bring about peace on May 18, 2010.

Warah (1998), and Akran and Akinga (2005) argue that the action of rural women, like that of G-ECs conform to the on-going global awareness that women can play a positive role in conflict prevention, resolution, and peace-building in developing countries like Nigeria. Thus, men need to change their mind-set to understand that women are wonderful partners in the art and science of peace-building and development. Already, the UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1,325 of 2000 on “women, peace and security” has directed “member states to ensure

increased representation of women at all decision-making institutions”, including peace-building and development.

Olaniyi and Nnabuishe (2009) have re-emphasized the need to incorporate the “native knowledge of indigenous rural women into the mechanics of peace-building in Nigeria.” Their emphasis is based on the fact that, in the traditional Ijo society in the Niger Delta, the *ama-ereatu* (i.e., married women of a particular village), or the *ibe-ereatu* (i.e., married women of a particular clan) used to be involved in conflict management, resolution, and peace-building when their native compounds, villages or clans clash with the communities in which they are married. The *ama-ereatu* and/or *ibe-ereatu* would gather themselves and mediate over the crisis as both conflicting parties give audience to their native women in crucial matters like violent communal or inter communal conflicts. Thus, the Ijo people have an adage that, “when you are born a female child, you have two or more homes.” This was replayed in the Jos crisis in 2010 where Christian and Moslem women played active role in mediating between the conflicting parties.

The region and country still need this type of tested indigenous knowledge as it affords the women ownership of the peace-process and development; it is unique as the process is tilted towards specific Nigerian or African realism; and it is relevant in terms of context and challenges. The point to be made is that the concepts of conflict resolution, peace-building, and development are not new to Nigerian or African women. Zartman (2000), for example, argues that Africa had long before the arrival of Western Europeans developed indigenous knowledge, approaches and processes to draw on, and what practitioners and scholars should do is to develop programmes, methods or styles that are relevant to the specific context and peculiarities of the Niger Delta, in particular, and Nigeria, in general.

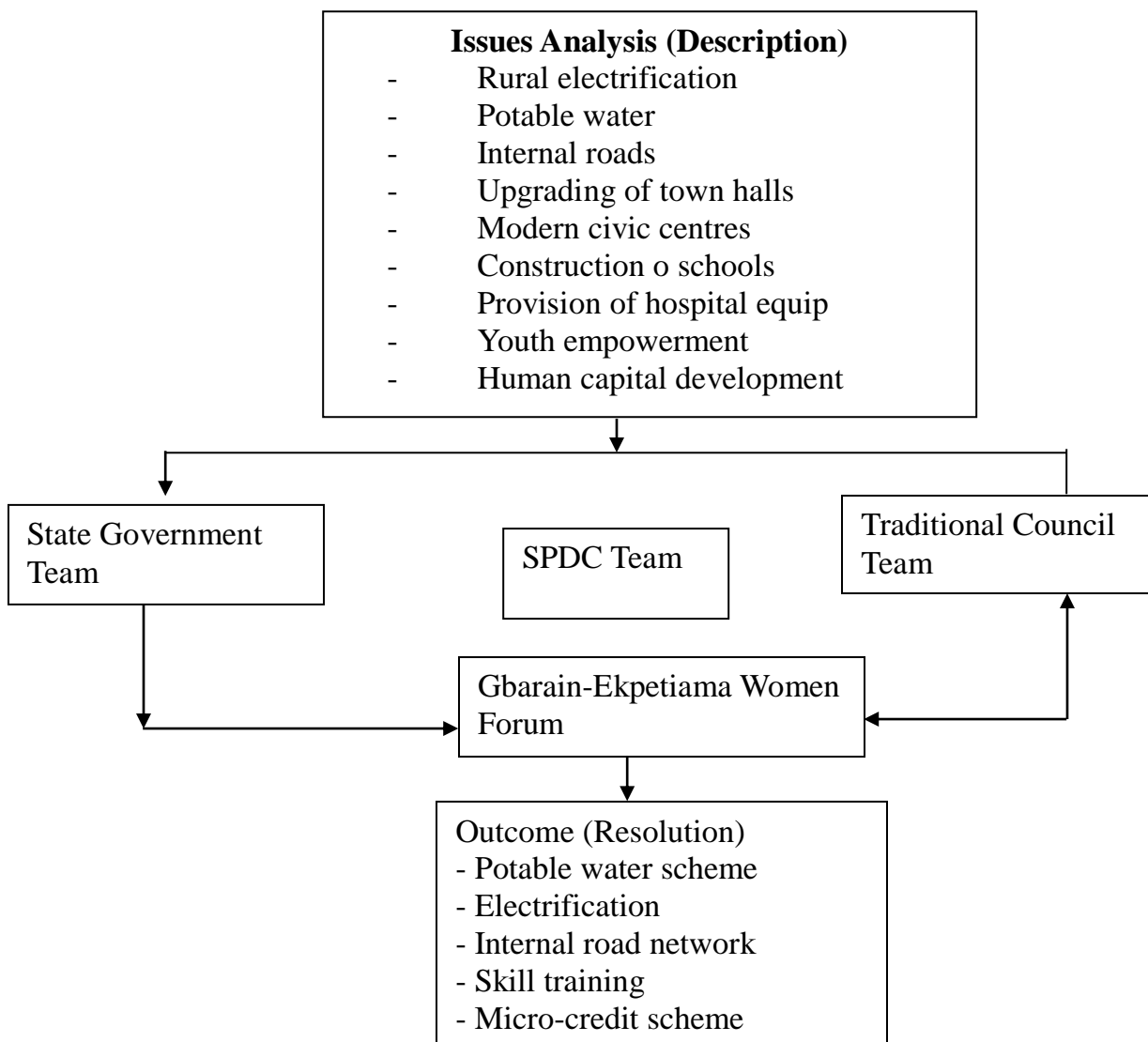
IV. THE PEACE-BUILDING PROCESS AND ITS IMPACT ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT

It should be pointed out that the Gbarain-Ekpetiama rural women were not satisfied with SPDC’s slow pace of implementing the GMoU meant to develop the 17 immediate communities in the two clans, in particular, and the remaining 30 other host communities, in general. They were also not satisfied with the way the male dominated PAC II, established through the GMoU, supervised the implementation of the projects. Therefore they revolted.

The revolt attracted the attention of the state governor, Chief Timpre Sylva, who then invited all the conflicting parties for a peace process that involved dialogue, negotiation and collaboration at the Government House on May 18, 2010. Prior to it, Hon. Michael Ogbolosingha, Chairman of Yenagoa Local Government Area (YELGA) and Ibomo Kenigua, Commissioner for Commerce and Industry, have successfully intervened on May 15, 2010. The women resurfaced two days later on May 17, 2010.

The peace process is presented as a flow chart in figure 1-2. It involved a matrix form of communication between and amongst the principal players/stakeholders, namely the state government, SPDC, traditional rulers councils, and the women. The outcome of the process was the effective implementation of the GMoU to fast-track SCD shown at the bottom of figure 1-1.

FIGURE 1-2: GBARAIN-EKPETIAMA PEACE-BUILDING FLOW CHART



As shown at Figure 1-1, membership of the peace forum (on May 18, 2010) comprised:

- 1) The Government team led by Chief Timpre Sylva (Governor of Bayelsa State). He was accompanied by:
 - Hon. Gideon Ekwe (Secretary to State Government – SSG);
 - Hon. Werinipre D. Seibarogu (then Speaker and now Deputy Governor, who is an indigene of Ekpetiama Clan); and
 - Hon. Ibomo Kenigua (Commissioner of Commerce & Industry, who is an indigene of Gbarain Clan).
- 2) The SPDC team led by the Managing Director, accompanied by the General Manager East, and Area Manager – Bayelsa Project.
- 3) The Gbarain-Ekpetiama Traditional Rulers Councils, represented by
 - His Royal Majesty (HRM) Funpere G. Akah, *Ibenanaowei* of Gbarain
 - His Highness (HH), Christian Otobotekere, Acting *Ibenanaowei* of Ekpetiama;
 - Chief (Barrister) Timiebi Okara (Regent of Ekpetiama Council of Chiefs and Spokesman) at the Peace Forum;
 - Barrister Ibeni Iwolo (Attorney to Gbarain Council of Chiefs); and
 - Chief K.D. Kwokwo (Secretary, Gbarain Council of Chiefs);
- 4) Gbarain-Ekpetiama Women Forum (GEWF), represented by Mrs. Ruth Okomi (President and *Amanana-arau* (Village Queen) of Gbarantor), Mrs. Tariere Lythe (President and Queen of Tombia), and Mrs. Roseline S. Ogbogidi (Secretary-General and Queen of Agbia).

Mrs. Ruth Okomi of GEWF addressed the Peace Forum, and presented an 8-point demand (i.e, issues analysis/description) namely:

- 1) Provision of potable water scheme;
- 2) Rural electrification scheme;
- 3) Construction of internal and inter-community roads;
- 4) Provision of 7,500 cubic of sand (stockpiled) for each of the 17 communities in Gbarain-Ekpetiama Clans;

- 5) Execution of all the 9 projects in the GMoU signed on April 28, 2006;
- 6) Provision of 17 coaster buses for the women in the 17 communities for transportation business to generate income;
- 7) Overseas training scheme for 1,400 youths from G-ECs ; and
- 8) Provision of micro-credit facilities to empower the women.

The Governor, having listened carefully to the demands (i.e. issues), obliged the GEWF) to prune it down to already projects already incorporated in the GMoU, and present them in order of preference. In the process, the 17 coaster buses, overseas training of 1,400 youths, and provision of 7,500 cubics of sand were deleted for not being part of the GMoU. The parties then went into an intensive negotiation, collaboration and mediation, and *resolved* (i.e., Outcome) that SPDC should execute the following sustainable rural development projects:

- a) Potable water scheme;
- b) Rural electrification scheme through gas turbine;
- c) Construction of internal roads;
- d) Skill/vocational training for 100 women; and
- e) Establishment of a micro-credit scheme

The GEWF, in particular, and the other 30 host communities in general, shall reciprocate by maintaining peace and order.

In pursuance of the resolution, PAC II was dissolved and in its place a Super Project Advisory Committee (PAC), known as Super PAC was set up. The membership of Super PAC comprised Mrs. Ruth Okomi and Mrs. Roseline S. Ogbogidi (President and Secretary-General of GEWF), Ibomo Kenigua and John Iyekoroagha (Commissioners for Commerce, and Industry and Central Senatorial District), and Barrister Ibeni Iwolo. The Super PAC was to liaise with SPDC to ensure that the water scheme is properly executed in each of the 17 immediate communities in Gbarain-Ekpetiama clans. Going forward, the Bayelsa State Electricity Board (BSEB) was constituted as another Super PAC to execute the rural electrification scheme.

The other outcome were the nomination of 100 women for skills/vocational training by SPDC and the establishment of a micro-credit scheme with an initial amount of N5 million. The State Government complimented it with an additional N5 million, making it a total of N10 million. To forestall women from the other 30 communities revolting, SPDC set up similar credit scheme for women in Okordia-Zarama-Biseni, Epie-Atissa, and Kolo Creek clusters with N5 million each.

While these social investments are nothing when compared with the cost-benefit of oil exploration and exploitation in these rural communities in the region, the outcome (i.e., terms of settlement) went down well with the three principal stakeholders. And when the author visited the G-ECs two months after as part of post-conflict analysis on July 30, 2010, the two Super PACs had commenced activities. Moreover, the micro-credit schemes had taken-off and the women were clustered into groups of five for cassava and fish farming, tailoring, handicraft, hair dressing, and other small scale enterprises while they were given N100,000.00 per cluster to generate positive multiplier effects in the communities. The Super PAC on electricity, too, has connected most of the communities to the Gbarain-Ubie gas turbine. It is expected that at the completion of the rural electrification and water projects, including vocational skills acquisition trainings, the Gbarain-Ekpetiama communities would experience an urban-rural migration – a reversal of the prevailing trend.

In all, the Gbarain-Ekpetiama rural women revolt has unveiled several lessons, but the most prominent ones are those of dialogue, adherence to the tenets of GMoU, and swift response of government and SPDC to conflict situation. It is observed that instead of relying on military/mobile police (personnel) to apply coercive action, all parties in the Gbarain-Ekpetiama conflict resorted to constructive dialogue with satisfactory outcome. This is quite unusual of SPDC that believes so much in the military-option to resolve civil protest. The women have indeed, charted a new direction in conflict resolution, peace-building, and sustainable rural development in the Niger Delta.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The issue raised in this paper is that, “our mothers” are coming out to demand for their

rights and those of their communities. “The rights” as Aminu (2010:17) observes “are for the present and future generations to be born....” These are the types of demands (issues) that communities in Nigeria should be demanding from MNOCs like SPDC, Chevron, Schlumberger, and even Nigerian leaders, especially PAC II. It is obvious that the MNOCs operate differently in other countries like America, United Kingdom, Australia, and even South Africa. In these countries, the MNOCs are properly guided by the principles of corporate social responsibility (CSR), in addition to paying statutory taxes.

To ensure that Nigerian host communities are not treated differently, the rural women of Gbarain-Ekpetiama clans in Bayelsa State organized themselves into a platform – Gbarain-Ekpetiama Women Forum, and reacted in line with David Easton’s “theory of post behavioural revolution.” The revolt paralyzed the NLNG plant for three weeks until the state government and the management of SPDC responded to resolve the conflicts.

Based on the analysis and discussions, the paper wishes to recommend that:

- 1) SPDC, in particular, and MNOCs in general, should adhere strictly to the terms and conditions of GMoUs signed with host communities in the region. This is important because it has been observed (Human Right Watch, 2002; Aneej, 2004; and UNDP, 2006) that “non-adherence to GMoU have accounted for over 70 percent of the conflicts in the Niger Delta”;
- 2) Conflicting parties should equally adhere to the rules of dialogue, negotiation, and collaboration, instead of deployment of the military and the mobile police to handle civil matters. The government and SPDC are usually guilty of this. In case of the Gbarain-Ekpetiama conflict, the Police and JTF that were despatched with the instruction to “shoot at sight”, applied discretion not to carry out the order, having assessed the likely negative consequences. Instead, they resorted to guarding the women against criminality. The maturity with which the JTF handled the crisis is commendable as it saved the situation from escalation; and
- 3) The micro-credit schemes that have commenced be sustained to impact positively on the rural communities.

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