

Final Evaluation Report for the Community Resource Exchange Project implemented in Odimodi Community in Burutu LGA Delta State



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Acronyms

CODAF-----	Community Development Advocacy Foundation
OECD-DAC-----	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee
UNEG-----	United Nations Evaluation Group
CSOs-----	Civil Society Organisations
FGDs-----	Focus Group Discussions
KII-----	Key Informant Interviews
CRE-----	The Community Resource Exchange
IBM-----	International Business Machine
SPSS-----	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences

Structure of the report

This report is presented in four sections, which reflect the scope of work of the evaluation as provided in the Terms of Reference.

Section 1 provides the introduction and background of the action including the context in which the action was implemented and implementation arrangements including programme objectives.

Section 2 has evaluation purpose and objectives including the scope of the assignment with specific evaluation criteria.

Section 3 provides the evaluation methodology and sources of data and information.

Section 4 provides information on key evaluation findings, lessons learnt, conclusion and some recommendations.

Annexes follow this section

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. Background

The Niger Delta region is known for its rich oil and gas deposits producing largely Nigeria's major export oil. The major occupation of its inhabitants is farming and fishing, exploiting the numerous waterways within the region. The region is notorious for environmental pollution from crude oil spillages, effluent discharge and gas flaring. The people have complained about this environmental assault being perpetrated on their ecosystem and its values upon which their livelihood depends on example fishes, periwinkles, crops and other medicinal plants etc.

Thus, in order to survive, they must put themselves at risk by going further into the deep sea to catch, which is mostly by stroke of luck or venture deep into the mangrove forest in search of periwinkles, fuelwoods and other medicinal plants to sustain themselves and their families. This constraint has subjected most of their women to lack and poverty.

This is the story of the target community of Odimodi whose major source of income is fishing, farming, and basket weaving, and these issues have resulted high level of poverty and destruction of natural resources within their environment.

In this context therefore, these vulnerable, women and at-risk youths, and farmer/fishermen groups require approaches with positive alternatives to ensure that their voices are heard. The people, particularly the women, are in need of solutions to protect their rights and they have in the past sought legal redress to help them end the perennial pollution that violates their rights to life.

To this effect, funding was provided for the purpose of facilitating collaboration and collective strategy development with and between communities advocating for their rights in the context of international investments and development projects. The project aims to support communities impacted by international investments and development projects.

1.2. Objective/purpose of action

The project was designed to take place in Odimodi Community in Burutu LGA of Delta State in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria, with the overall goal of this project is to create advocacy platforms for the fisher women in Odimodi and give them the opportunities to tell their pollution stories to the world. This project will document the stories of women on how they perceive the impact of pollution on their local economy in the forms of visuals and newsletter. For the women to effectively build local resistance against oil pollution ravaging Odimodi community, their capacity for advocacy techniques will be enhanced. This will also change the ideology of the fisherwomen who have not been heard telling their pollution stories and impacts of their local struggles against pollution.

The Objectives of the Project include:

These actions will be sustained through a two-step approach.

- (1) Network building and Advocacy: The project will create a platform that would be saddled with the responsibility of amplifying women's voices in the Niger Delta.
- (2) Human rights defenders training: In order to preserve their rights, they need adequate training that will help them to independently fight for their rights.

1.3. Methodology

The evaluation provides opportunity to undertake a comprehensive review of the progress towards achievement of the results of the action for the past 8 months of implementation and provide recommendation for lessons learnt and best practices of international standards. In order to abide by the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards, the organization of the findings follows the OECD-DAC (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee) criteria, i.e., Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability. The process focused on seeking information based on these criteria in relation to current programming in the areas of advocacy, capacity building and network building. The purpose is to assess CODAFs action in the

light of these criteria in order to contribute to the strengthening of existing programmes and/or further programming. It was envisaged that the evaluation will inform CODAFs programme document.

The evaluation adopted a mixed method approach using qualitative and quantitative data. Field work was conducted involving the use of 40 in-depth interviews and 3 focus group discussions (FGDs) consisting of 21 respondents. In accordance with the M & E framework, the evaluation aimed to ascertain whether the activities carried out so far, yielded its intended results.

The Key Evaluation *Question* asked is, what impact has the “project” brought to the communities and the implementation of the lessons learnt. This question investigated if there have been significant positive changes in the action of community stakeholders as well as stories of change from women who are victims of oil pollution

The evaluation questions enquired if through implementation of activities have resulted in change in knowledge, attitude and practices in the beneficiary community. How effective has the projects impact on women increased their potential or existing influence in effectively building local resistance against oil pollution ravaging Odimodi community, their capacity for advocacy techniques will be enhanced.

The evaluation also enquired if there is an enhanced form of collaboration between the project’s stakeholders, local structures created to use advocacy tools and legislative instruments to seek to clean-up and possibly eliminate oil pollution in Odimodi community as well as safeguard peaceful co-existence between community and the oil companies and ensure that promised development by the oil companies are actualized.

This evaluation conducted, included a desk-based document review, key informant interviews and focus group discussions as well as interviews with program officers that implemented the activities. Questionnaires were generated and used for the evaluation for both key informant interviews (KII) and Focus group discussions (FGD). These were used to obtain qualitative and quantitative data from all the respondents. After collection of data, desk review, IBM SPSS and Microsoft Excel were used to analyse the data.

1.4. Findings

The evaluation made these general findings from participants involved during the activities:

- The activities held in the community had a good impact. Stakeholders participated actively during trainings and bought their knowledge and skills into the project activities.
- Community persons have a change of perception about their roles in carrying out advocacy how it leads to overall improvements of lives and livelihoods; they have also developed network building strategies through collaborative efforts between the government, oil companies, women groups, youth leaders and community leadership.
- The engagement of the women and youth leaders in the beneficiary communities has proved key in providing the necessary platform for community persons to engage with the leadership of companies carrying out exploration activities in their communities.
- The project contributed to social cohesion between media, CSOs and community persons from the beneficiary communities which until project intervention have not had much impact at the community level.
- Findings revealed that all the strategies adopted were considered relevant and effective as it helped in cultivating the communities that have started effective advocacy strategies and equipping them to build upon that foundation in other to ensure their voices are heard and rights not violated.
- Respondents believe that lack of sufficient government and oil company leadership presence in activities might result in no subsequent take-over of the intervention after activities end.
- Fisher women, women groups and CSOs in the same thematic area are asking for support to be able to sustain their efforts at grassroots level.

- Women want activities and trainings to be taken to market places, women gatherings such as Church meetings and women meetings. They say it will help more women to understand the role they play in ensuring effective advocacy and making their voices heard.
- Over 70% of all the participants have learnt advocacy strategies which will aid in sustainability of the project

1.5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the project is viewed as an initiative that is relevant to the current context. Respondents praised the efforts of CODAF in implementing these activities and the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders. Stakeholder's participation from conception to the implementation of activities was seen as one of the major factors in the success of the activities implemented. The M&E report demonstrates visibly that good number of accomplishments has been achieved but more work needs to be done to achieve the desired goal in the beneficiary communities. The full effect and resulting conditions of project cannot be measured until a longer period of time has passed.

2. Introduction:

The discovery of oil products in the Niger Delta region has caused more distress to the area than its affected indigenes could imagine.

In a United Nations Development Program (UNDP) report, a total of 6,817 oil spills, which account for a loss of three million barrels of oil, were recorded between 1976 and 2001. The report also stated that more than 70% of the spills were never recovered. These figures were corroborated by the estimation made by the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR), that about 1.89 million barrels of petroleum were spilled into the Niger Delta waters during the said period.

The background of this project stems from a strategy meeting CODAF held with the community in July 2020. The beneficiary community, Odimodi is a community in Burutu Local Government Area of Delta state the in the Niger Delta that host multinational oil corporations. However, as an aftermath of the union between oil companies and the communities, oil spill incidences have continued to impact the lives of the inhabitants of the community negatively.

Before the presence of Shell, a multinational oil and gas company, passed its pipelines through Odimodi, whose, residents were once proud fishermen, who made huge fortunes from their profession.

Presently, this is no longer the case as spills from oil exploration activities around the community's river have driven its aquatic inhabitants into near extinction, threatening the sustainability of the fishermen's livelihood.

This has led to the villagers abandoning the river to sink their fishing nets inside the drainages in front of their houses or going deep into the sea in search of fish. They claimed fishes and other aquatic animals had swum up the gutters in search of fresh water, after the oil-polluted river could no longer provide a habitable environment for them. According to a community-led mapping experience on the impacts of plastic production, the residents are now exposed to greater risks by venturing far into the sea for fishing.

The proposed project is a follow-up to the existing activities that have been carried out by the community members in advocating for cleanup of the oil spill. The project will work towards reducing and possibly eliminating oil pollution in the area and on the other hand establish a mechanism to track and report oil spillage and sanction defaulters.

To this end CRE funded a 8 month project that will aggregate, build capacity and work with community members to use advocacy tools and legislative instruments to seek to clean-up and possibly eliminate oil pollution in Odimodi community as well as safeguard peaceful co-existence between community and the oil companies and ensure that promised development by the oil companies is actualized.

The goal of this project is to create advocacy platforms for the fisher women in Odimodi and give them the opportunities to tell their pollution stories to the world. This project will document the stories of women on how they perceive the impact of pollution on their local economy in the forms of visuals and newsletter. For the women to effectively build local resistance against oil pollution ravaging Odimodi community, their capacity for advocacy techniques will be enhanced. This will also change the ideology of the fisherwomen who have not been heard telling their pollution stories and impacts of their local struggles against pollution. These actions will be sustained through a two-step approach.

(1) Network building and Advocacy: The project will create a platform that would be saddled with the responsibility of amplifying women's voices in the Niger Delta.

(2) Human rights defenders training: In order to preserve their rights, they need adequate training that will help them to independently fight for their rights.

Program officers were assigned to implement the projects activities in the beneficiary communities. Monitoring and evaluation was done to evaluate the midterm outcomes and impact of the project.

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

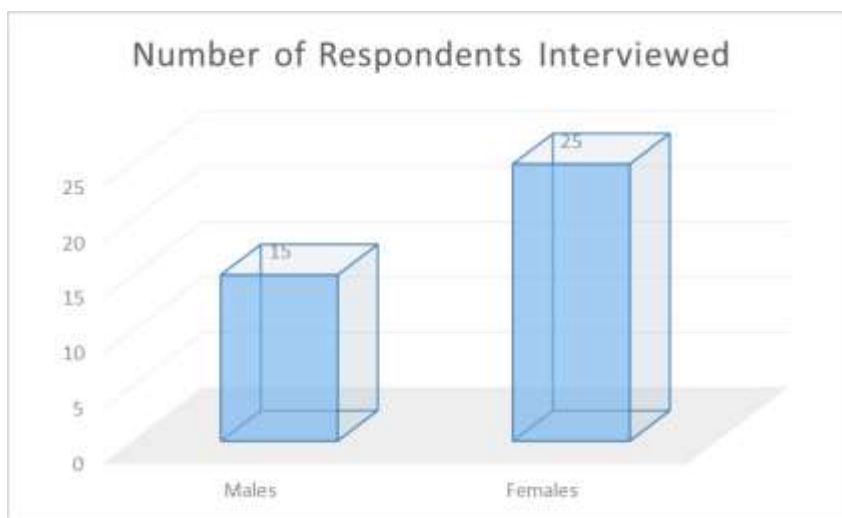


Fig 1: Number of Respondents interviewed during the evaluation

A total of 40 persons were interviewed during the evaluation comprising of 25 Females and 15 Males all located within the beneficiary communities.

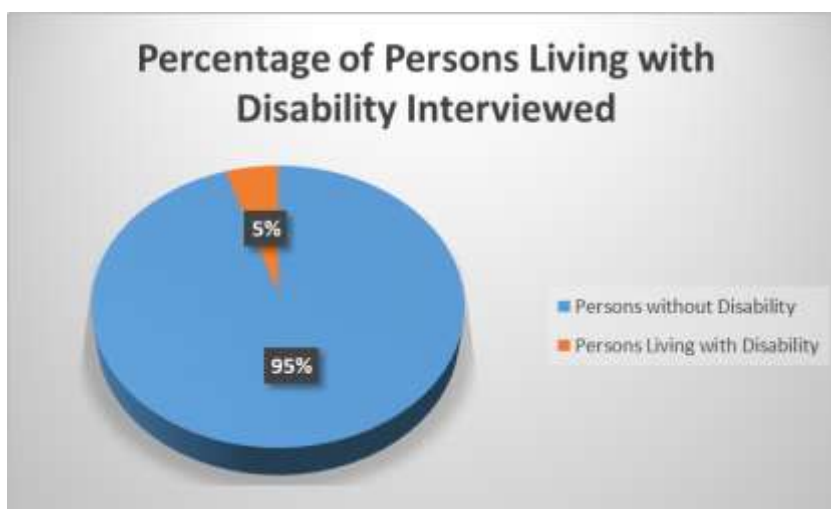


Fig 2: Percentage of PLWDs interviewed

During the evaluation, two PLWDs were interviewed which consist of 5% of the total number of respondents during the evaluation.

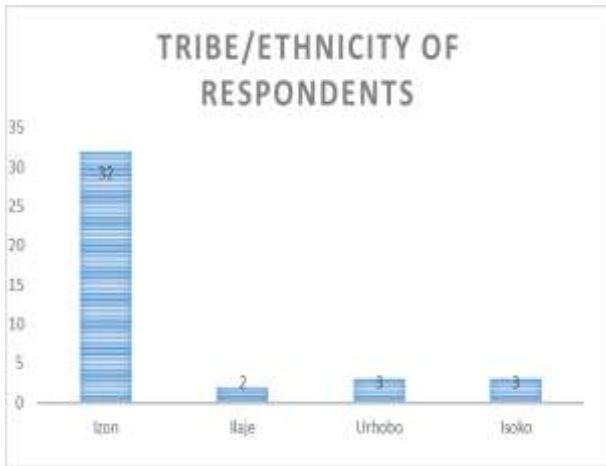


Fig 3: Ethnicity of Respondents

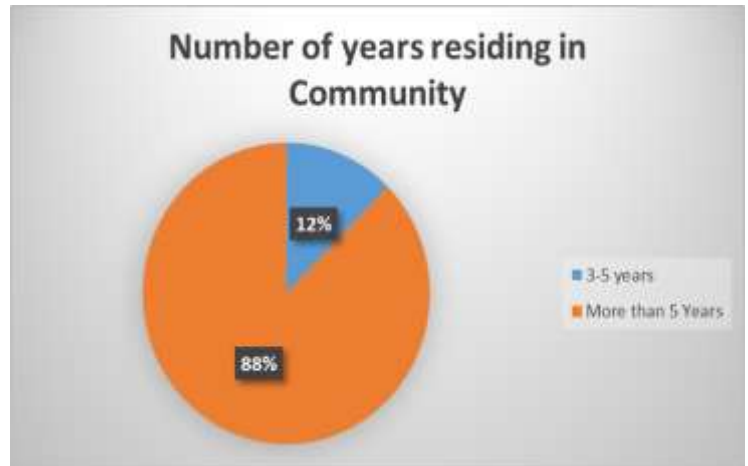


Fig 4: Number of years residing in the community

From Fig 3: The major tribe in the beneficiary community is Izon which is as a result of the high number of persons interviewed. Other tribes such as ilaje, Urhobo and Isoko, make up the composition of the respondents. It is important to note that as a result of the high number of persons in the community who speak Izon, the interviews were conducted in English and Izon. In fig 4, 88% of the persons interviewed have stayed in the community for more than five years which makes them aware of the situation on ground.

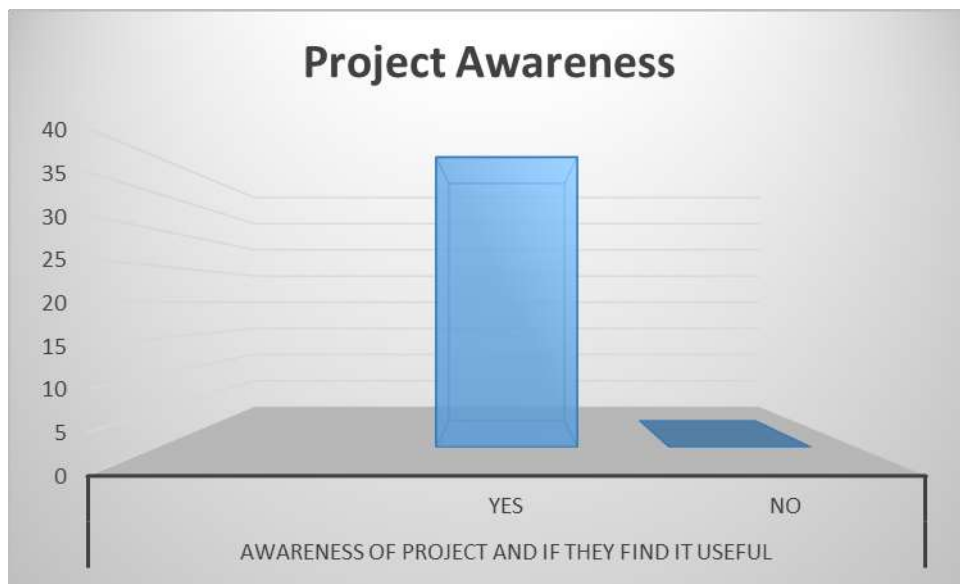


Fig 5: Respondents Awareness of the Project

The graph above shows how many respondents interviewed are aware of the project and have been involved in project activities from conception.

3. Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to measure intermediate results and some noticeable impact of the project. The evaluation assesses the degree of achievements of the objectives and results of the action of the implemented activities, as outlined in the proposal. It provides an opportunity to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the intervention approach. There have not been any deviations so far from implementation strategy. The report summarizes information collected from intervention and evaluation activities, interpreting the data for possible meanings, and concluding how the findings

might shape subsequent activities. Quality control elements were used to establish monitoring mechanisms in each target LGAs, which resulted in the capture of inputs from a diverse sub-set of stakeholders all through the evaluation.

4. Objectives of the Evaluation

The overall objectives of this evaluation were to:

1. Assess the extent to which the project has started bringing about anticipated changes,
2. Examine which factors have proved critical in helping or hindering change
3. Assess the core action structures, methodologies and capacity development.
4. Appraise the activity implementation approach (including management structures, communications and relationships) to community implementation, research and advocacy in relation to the project's achievements.
5. Draw lessons for future programs.

In line with the objectives of this evaluation, five separate yet interlinked areas of review were identified and key findings under each are summarised below:

4.1. Problem and Needs (Relevance): Did CODAF do the right thing in the right way?

The evaluation assessed the strategy CODAF adopted during project implementation of the CRE funded project, looking at the appropriateness of the action objectives in the overall problem context, and to the needs and priorities of the target groups and beneficiaries. Information was sought to know how the project at baseline identified the needs of the community and whether such needs were built into project. In addition, the evaluation assessed whether the project identified addressed the challenges of inclusion and efficiency for optimal results.

The uniqueness of the approach and its capacity to strengthen the capacity of relevant stakeholders such as the fisher women in Odimodi and give them the opportunities to tell their pollution stories to the world, is highlighted. In general, respondents felt that although the project's objectives were germane and relevant to the context and the activities deepened the focus on the issues addressed during the baseline and initial activities as well as getting more women especially those who have ply their trade in fishing, involved in the capacity building on human rights defense, advocacy and communication skills as well as building their skills on advocacy actions. In addition, it was widely recognised that given the increased acceptance of the importance of building the capacity of women and youths on advocacy and making their voices heard will improve their relationships with oil companies in the region which in turn leads to improve socio-economic development. There would be improved human rights and ecological rights protection.

4.2. Achievement of wider effects (Impact): Did the project achieve the planned results?

The evaluation finds out that to a large extent, what was planned was achieved. The majority of activities have been implemented across the beneficiary Communities. An analysis of result findings from the field and attendance reports shows that the right stakeholders were engaged and planned activities were delivered. The participatory decision-making approach employed by CODAF, recognizes the rights of impacted host communities to awareness raising about legal rights, improving knowledge and technical capacity of community persons built as change agents, women's voices would have been (amplified) raised to silence pollution in their community, and social inclusion. This was universally felt to be one of the key success factors in the project as it supported wider buy-in and engagement at all levels as well as a better understanding of some of the key problems affecting the success of this intervention in their community.

To improve advocacy culture among citizens and relevant stakeholders in the Niger Delta, some of the most effective measures taken under this objective were to ensure that the capacity building activities had a higher number community stakeholder participation consisting of youths, women, elder's council, community security groups and other CSOs. This made sure that these diverse group of stakeholders were sufficiently equipped with the skills they need to use appropriate advocacy strategies and improved aquaculture techniques at the grassroots level of their community.

Finally, key stakeholders which include community leaders, representatives of IOCs, religious leaders, civil society and media houses played key roles during activity implementation. Data collected from the field show that the women and youths were extensively engaged for members to discuss issues and collaborate on the state level, LGA and ward level.

4.3. Achievements of Purpose (Effectiveness)

The evaluation identified the actual results that were achieved against planned results as outlined in the results matrix and against key performance indicators. It also assessed how the action interventions in capacity-building contributed to the achievement of results. This component also looked at how advocacy interventions were carried out and how effective these have been.

As a result of the implemented activities, the following results were accomplished:

1. The knowledge and technical capacity skills of community members most especially women have been built as positive and responsible change agents to influence reforms leading to effective implementation of government positive policies in their community.
2. Improved human rights and ecological rights protection,
3. Women's voices are amplified to silence pollution in their community,
4. Women's capacity in Aquaculture techniques have improved

4.4. Sound Management and Value for Money (Efficiency)

This section sought to focus primarily on those related to economy, efficiency and effectiveness. In general, the level of support, management and administrative costs associated with the project were relatively maximised, and although 100% of respondents highlighted the learning and sharing to be gained from the variation of stakeholder participants as an advantage of this approach, concrete examples of learning being put into practice were visible.

In order to maximise learning and sharing and justify the high proportion of support costs due to the sensitive nature of the project, it would make more sense to spread the activities over a period of time to increase capacity to achieve impact. In addition, due to the complexity of the Niger Delta terrain where the project was implemented, grants provided means focus on implementing activities only in the beneficiary communities as the financial resources cannot be stretched to implement in more communities within the LGA or State, which may have resulted in achieving a slightly higher overall percentage of activity implementation and thus, from a purely quantitative perspective represents greater value for money.

4.5. Likely continuation of achieved results (Sustainability)

The evaluation assessed whether strategies for sustainability were adopted and how effective they have been. The evaluation assessed the likelihood of a continued flow of benefits for beneficiaries after the project, and the extent to which the project influenced community level commitment for resource allocations and leveraging. Finally, the evaluation assessed the extent to which results achieved are sustainable and if they can be replicated or integrated into policies, strategies and programmes.

There is already evidence that, the approach adopted by the project was potentially conducive for longer-term sustainability due to the high-levels of engagement by women groups it encourages from the outset, particularly in terms of its capacity to mobilise community women, community youths, civil society and other key affected stakeholders. To sustain this momentum, it will be crucial to continue encouraging buy-in especially among government agencies and also focus on developing capacity, skills and understanding on advocacy particularly for women and youths whose livelihoods are mainly affected using trainings and workshop approaches. Finally, by strengthening links between local and national advocacy work, ideally in association with a strong advocacy partner and by making best use of the available research and policy information the project will stand a greater chance of pushing for specific changes to ensure longer term impact.

5. Methodology

This evaluation conducted included a desk-based document review, key informant interviews and focus group discussions in Odimodi Community as well as interviews with program officers that implemented the activities. Further detail on how these methodologies were implemented follows below:

- A. Desk Review: a document map, linking key documents to the main areas of review for the evaluation was drafted and information obtained from documents was mapped against the areas of review/evaluation questions and key data extracted to inform analysis.
- B. Key Informant Interviews: in total, 40 key respondents were interviewed using questionnaires. Respondents included traditional rulers/community leaders, women/youth leaders, and CSOs, and the media.
- C. Focus Group Discussions: a series of focus group discussions were carried out in the project intervention using questionnaires to gather information to complement the desk review and key informant interviews. In total, 3 groups of people will be interviewed including Men, Women, and Youths consisting of 21, who were sampled from communities.

Qualitative data was derived from responses of the participants interviewed in the field. Data derived from the attendance sheets and activity reports formed the quantitative data analysed. To analyse the qualitative data derived from the field, responses of participants were converted into number variables so it can be easily inputted into IBM SPSS for statistical analysis. Both KIIs and FGDs made up the data used in quantitative analysis.

Data derived from the attendance sheet and activity reports were inputted into Microsoft Excel for analysis which formed the basis of the qualitative data. Excel was used to generate tables and also plot graphs to capture number of attendees, sex variations and percentage of women trained.

The key areas of investigation are further discussed:

5.1. Impact on beneficiaries and the community

Stakeholders interviewed from the beneficiary states contain a variation of participants which are further divided into literate and non-literate actors. Monitoring and evaluation of the project showed if after the activities, there is noticeable changes in knowledge of participants who participated in the trainings, advocacy and dialogues.

5.2. Community Participation

The evaluation verifies if stakeholders such as community leaders, government agencies, women and youths have improved knowledge on advocacy, skills and capacity to become responsible change agents. Also, the willingness to take ownership of the process and participate in decision making that is a key determining factor to the success of the implemented activities.

5.3. Selection and processing of beneficiaries

This evaluation seeks to validate the selection process of the stakeholders, participants in the community. It also shows how the stakeholders were engaged before the commencement of the project. Where variables such as action location, thematic areas, gender, occupation, position in community etc stated criteria on for stakeholders in their individual target community? The evaluation method verifies that each stakeholder selected met the expected criteria for selection.

5.4. Project Management and overall implementation process.

Operational and logistics costs were factored during the evaluation process. Each activity held in the community and participants were drawn from the communities to participate for each activity. The evaluation questions seek to inquire if funds were disbursed appropriately for each implemented activity. Participants drawn for the communities were interviewed to see if CODAF met its obligations in terms of using an appropriate venue and factoring staff transportation and refreshment costs.

6. Evaluation Findings

The project was implemented by competent members of staff of CODAF. These include the Executive Director, Programme manager, Finance and Admin Manager, Programme officer and communications officer. Therefore, the evaluation findings were highlighted under the following:

6.1. Relevance

Relevance asks the question: Did CODAF do the right thing in the right way? This is answered using the following points.

1. *What value and for whom did this project add in the context?*

Oil pollution affect the source of livelihoods in riverine communities which are predominantly fishing. Most women living in these communities get their source of livelihood from fishing and are the most affected by spillage into the environment which destroys fishes and pollute water bodies. It is therefore imperative that there are positive solutions to combat oil spillage into water bodies to reduce the damage being done to the source of livelihood in the beneficiary community. If the capacity of these women and youths at risk are improved on advocacy techniques, than 50% of the problem solved. That means women can build local resistance against oil pollution ravaging Odimodi.

The basic premises of the project is that by operationalizing strong network building and advocacy initiatives that promotes citizen engagement and evidence-based advocacy, the voices of these women will be amplified. Discussions with respondents suggest that the main value added by the action is its capacity to raise awareness on the effect of oil spillage in Odimodi by oil companies amongst a broad range of stakeholders at decentralised level. To some extent this was guaranteed by the participatory approach which engaged community leaders, women, youths, government officials, the media, and other relevant stakeholders during the activities. Rather than simply seeking to highlight the challenges faced in Odimodi Community, the project provides stakeholders and beneficiaries with the capacity to understand importance of building strong grievance mechanism networks and inclusive advocacy while implementing strategies that foster preservation of human rights.

In addition, 80% of respondents emphasised their appreciation for this project's focus on capacity building in the communities that has raised awareness and has contributed to empowering and enabling stakeholders themselves become advocates particularly in the highlighting the impact of oil pollution in within their communities. Nevertheless, it was felt that overall, the project's approach and methodologies contributed to consolidating staff capacity to better understand how to implement story telling using visuals and newsletters in practice. In terms of the project's capacity, it is clear that progress was made towards capacity building and awareness, however more needs to be done to mobilise different stakeholders for effective advocacy and campaigning in solidarity with national-level networks and coalitions when implementing future programs

2. *Did the project answer real needs in the intervention areas?*

The challenge of oil pollution and its mitigation remains a reality in most communities in the Niger Delta Region and whilst top level figures may show significant overall progress towards the achievement of strengthening the capacity of women and youths to play a positive role during advocacy and building strong networks in collaboration with other stakeholders. Findings from the community stakeholders reveal some of the challenges and issues of such as: lack of awareness; lack of governments' political will to address cases of oil spillage; low engagement of stakeholders particularly from oil companies may not be solved immediately.

Nevertheless, respondents felt that the issues the action sought to address were coherent with needs on the ground and that the collaborative nature allowed community members and other stakeholders to gain a clear view of the extent to which how community resilience to contamination of the environment can be strengthened and risk of destroying livelihoods reduced.

3. *Are the project objectives still relevant given achievements so far?*

Changes to knowledge are relatively easier to achieve than changes to attitudes, practice and policy and whilst the project has succeeded in raising awareness in the in communities, much remains to be done. Overall, key respondents felt that as the project activities continue it would do well to continue

working on the same issues, with 90% of respondents arguing for a deeper focus on the issues and mitigation strategies in the event that the project continues. The activities allowed the project to raise awareness and begin identifying potentially successful strategies for addressing issues relating to goals and objectives and there is a need to begin to dig deeper in order to see real results.

6.2. Impact: Did the project achieve the planned results?

The sections below seek to assess progress made against each of the project's key objectives. The emphasis is placed on achievements in the beneficiary communities; however, mention is also made of contributions and efforts of CODAF's project team.

Objective 1: Amplifying women voices in the Niger Delta through Network building and Advocacy.

To a large extent the project has been successful in increasing engagement of women and youth led platforms in the beneficiary communities to strengthen their engagements and resilience to oil spillage in their waterbodies. The project seeks to integrate women into advocacy in other to amplify their voices on reportage of pollution in their environment. An analysis of project narrative and reports shows that a high proportion of targets have been reached under this objective and planned activities on sensitization advocacy visits and capacity building. The indicators selected for this objective are largely outcome indicators and therefore, since most activities were carried out, the majority of outcomes on the percentage increase in the participant's knowledge at the end of each training and the number of women who are open to discussing stories of resilience as a result of crises of oil spillage and there has been a significant improvement in the actions as regarding advocacy. A small number of output indicators were also established in the M&E framework and it was noticed from available data suggests that some percentage of target stakeholders interviewed in the project who report successes and stories of change include the 70% of persons interviewed say there are open to discussing stories of resilience.

. This is represented in the figure below:

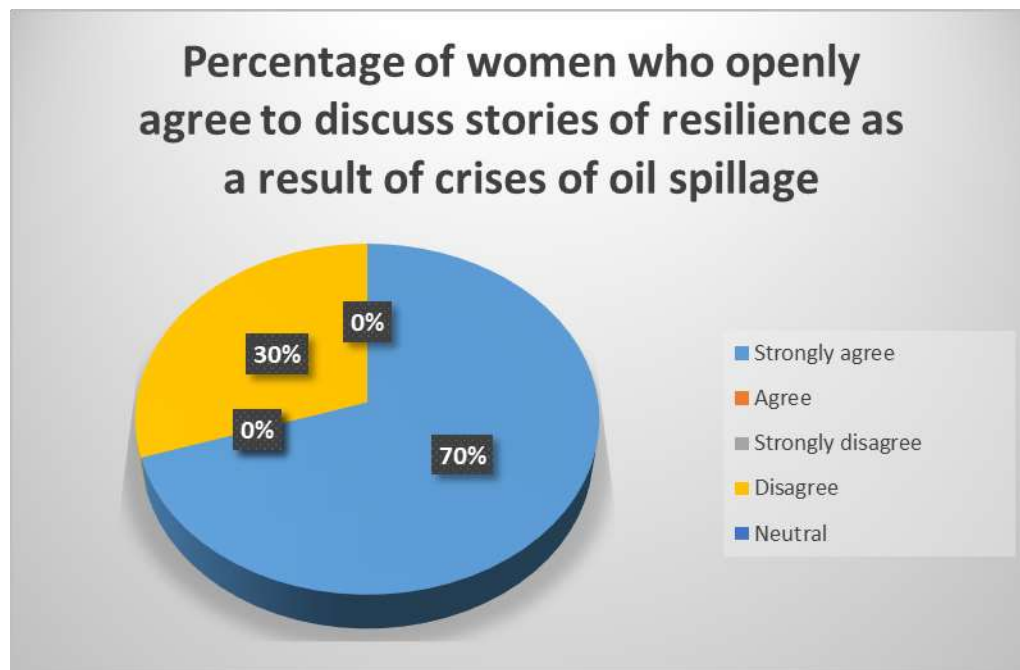


Figure 6: Figure showing Percentage of women who openly agree to discuss stories of resilience as a result of the crises of oil spillage.

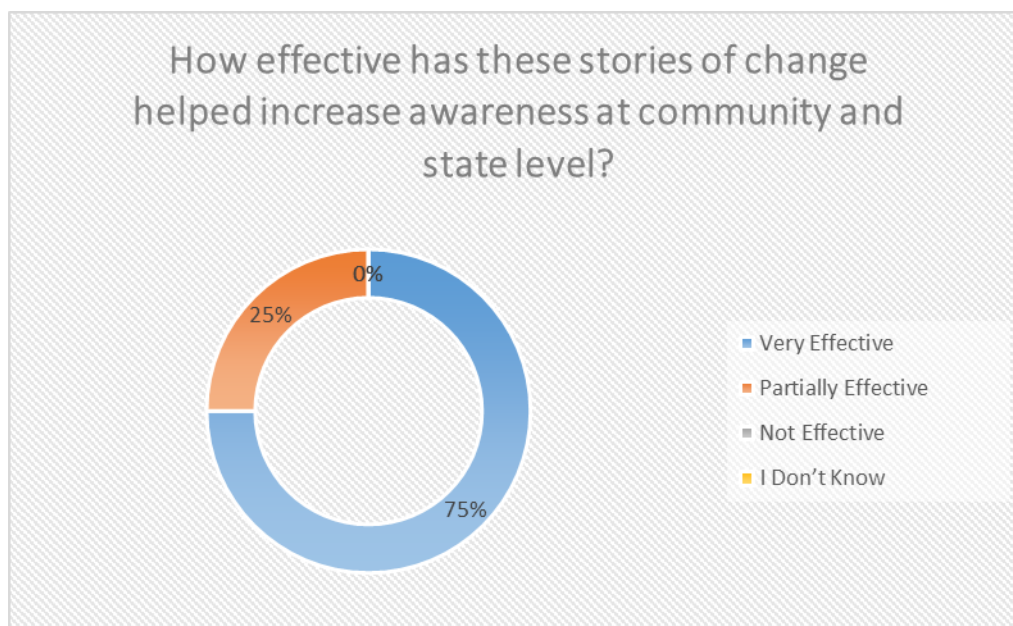


Figure 7: Figure showing percentage of effectiveness of how stories of change helped increase awareness at community and state level.

Process:

Through capacity building workshops, the project engaged with community leaders, women groups, youth leaders, and relevant stakeholders on advocacy strategies that will improve the ability of women to have their voices heard. Community persons and representatives from these groups dialogued on effective means of communication to government officials and oil companies carrying out exploration activities in their communities while sensitizing the mass public on improved fishing techniques. At the end, there has been great progress in improving the knowledge and capacity to address issues around pollution and oil spillage in the beneficiary LGAs.

Results:

Discussions with stakeholders in the beneficiary communities revealed an appreciable level of women and youth led group’s willingness to tell their stories of resilience and tell the world what is going on in their community. One of the key requirements for sustainability is to ensure that advocacy and building of strong networks and coalitions is enshrined in the way of life of the people regardless of their view on the matter; demonstrate some level of awareness and implementation of negotiation strategy which will become their way of life in the long run. Although CODAF engaged with women, youths and PLWDs groups across Odimodi, Forcados and Okotun communities through sensitization and capacity building workshops, there is still need for increased participation at community level.

The stakeholders that have been trained are expected to become advocacy champions in their respective communities as well as collaborate to reduce incidents of neglect by the oil companies which was noted from the evaluation visits that some have started implementing what they have learned and stepping down the information they have heard at these trainings to other community members and members of their households.

Objective 2: To Increase capacity of Community persons to independently fight for their human rights.

The project aimed to take a range of measures to raise awareness in increasing the capacity of citizens to fight for their fundamental human rights. Behavioural change is regarded as a major barrier to the successful implementation of the project therefore; most activities have focused on raising awareness or imparting education as a classical method to foster people’s

participation. This is why CODAF are implementing training activities to ensure that this objective is achieved.

However, whilst it is possible to see that a large percentage of stakeholders have been reached, lack of systematic data means it is difficult to measure impact. CODAF has been efficient in enhancing the knowledge and skills of women and youths on leadership, advocacy, human rights and conflict management which at the long run will ensure that the project is sustainable at state and community level. A long-standing view of most persons reached through the community dialogue is that they know they have rights but these rights mean nothing to the government or oil companies carrying out activities in their communities. They believe that the practice of oil spillage is not acceptable, because it causes loss of livelihoods and destruction of the ecosystem. These attitudes lead to respect for tacit rules of socially responsible behaviour. To measure the indicator which speak to this objectives; the activities participants' voices of change, testimonies or success stories recorded during or shortly after every activity, a subset of respondents were interviewed during the evaluation and out of the persons interviewed, the following results were highlighted:

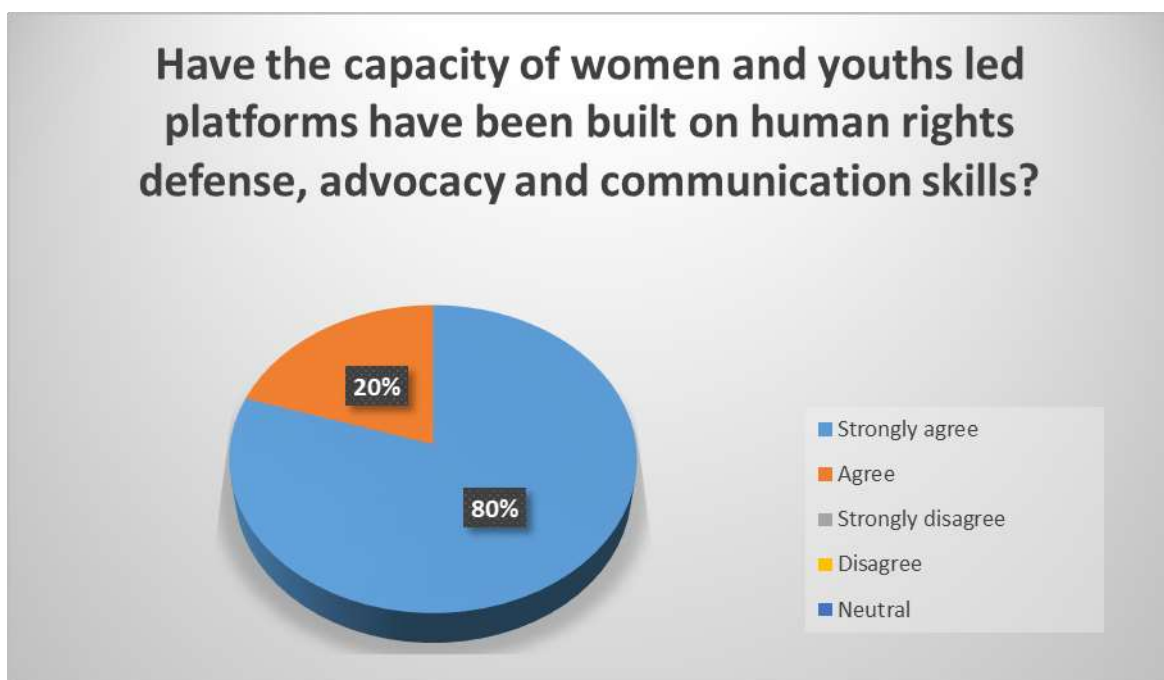


Figure 8: Percentage of Respondents interviewed whose capacity has been built on human rights defense, advocacy and communication skills.

Process:

As noted previously, one of the key areas where this project managed to add value as compared to other government initiatives and make the most lasting change during its relatively short implementation period has been in its capacity to increase awareness on the fundamental human rights of community persons and relevant stakeholders. This was largely attributable to the use of an inclusive methodology when seeking for representatives in each community to participate in the community dialogues and capacity building workshops. These workshops were as a strategic capacity development opportunity in addressing the gaps that arise to reduce inability to stop activities polluting the environment. CODAF ability to adopt an onsite approach using physical presence ensured that more persons are reached and could only accommodate more community persons. Activities such as the airing of programs over the community radio also contributed to the effective promotion of knowledge and understanding of their human rights. The respondents interviewed attested to the time the programs being aired on radio increased awareness at community level and enabled more women and youths to show interest in the activities. These strategies have ensured that

there is a pathway to commitment to work together to sustain efforts on enforcing their rights within the confines of the law.

Results

From key interviews conducted with stakeholders in the beneficiary communities revealed an appreciable level of awareness of what they know about their rights and how to go about ensuring their rights are not abused, however it is also important to note that government need to do more in improving the livelihood of the people and also sensitizing oil companies on the importance of preserving the environment which is specific to the goal of this project. One of the key requirements for sustainability is to ensure that advocacy by fisher women and youths are enshrined in the way of life of the people with community members taking lead role on the matter and demonstrating some level of understanding of the subject matter. Although CODAF were able to comfortably identify a range of sensitization and advocacy strategies as well as raising awareness on human rights, there has been some challenges in making sure the message spreads to the entire communities in the LGAs as a whole due to paucity of funds, necessarily limiting their capacity to take empowered action. Nevertheless, strong direct-level engagement with community leadership and government agencies has contributed to awareness, buy-in and action and, potentially, onward sustainability and their involvement from the outset led to a range of immediate and concrete results including: ensuring that key membership of these fisher women and youth groups are part of the community leadership which will help in the sustainability and ensuring they are involved in decision making in their respective communities.

Results of this enquiry on how effective the radio platforms were in spreading the messages were gotten from participants of women and youth groups as analysed below.

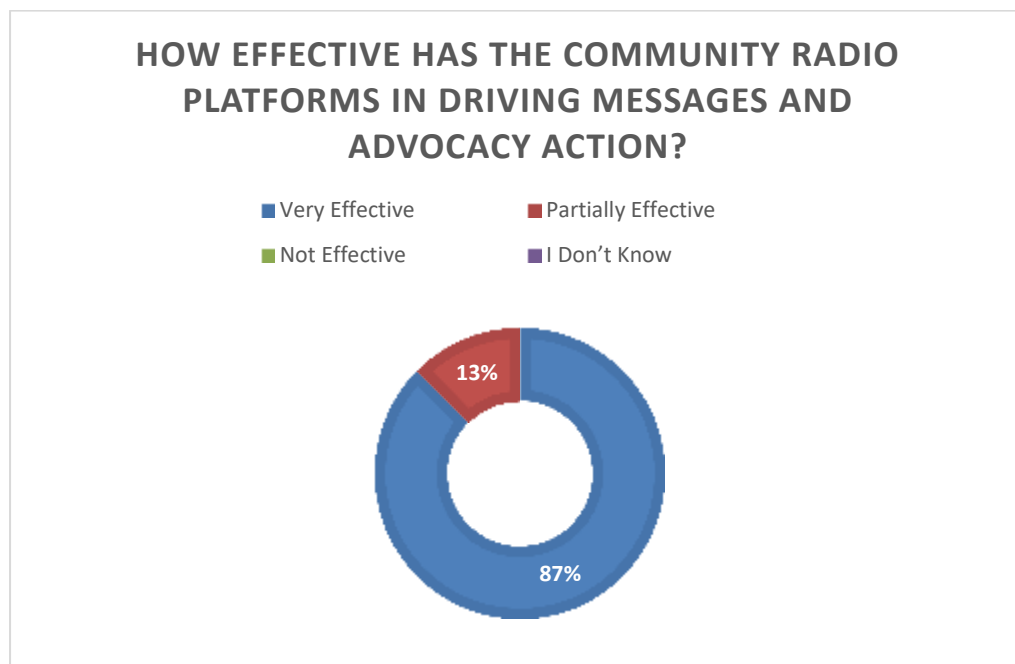


Fig 9: Effectiveness of community radio platforms in driving advocacy messages.

About 87% of community women and youths interviewed for this evaluation noted that the radio programs were very effective and passed on messages and those that couldn't attend the activities, learnt the importance of holding companies and organizations who are involved in oil and gas exploration accountable. Finally, participants shared success stories of how they sensitize their close neighbours and wards on what they learnt during the course of project activities. A shift in perception can be observed from those who participated in the sensitizations and capacity building workshop at grassroots level leading to increase in interest on volunteerism. These volunteers have signified

interest in taking this message to their communities sensitizing households and community leadership and women particularly fisher women thereby improving the general wellbeing of the community.

6.3. Efficiency

A range of management and decision-making structures were established at to support successful implementation of action. They include the following:

To what extent did the management, decision-making and relationships structures of the project, support the successful implementation of the action?

The management of CODAF were involved in the design and implementation of activities from the inception of the project. The Executive director and his team were involved in all implemented activities with the executive director taking a lead role during the capacity building workshops and sensitization. He also actively led in advocacy visits to government institutions and community leadership. He leveraged on his previous relationship with stakeholders and engaged them using his knowledge environmental strategies to make participants understand the importance of understanding their rights and advocating for protection of their environment. Project Team met at the end of each activity to evaluate its success and report back to the Executive director daily.

What measures were taken to ensure effective financial implementation, monitoring and reporting?

The majority of respondents both within CODAF and stakeholders highlighted there wasn't any delay in implementation associated with this project and the fact that this meant that there are no discussions of no-cost extension at the end of the project as the activities in the work plan was fully implemented. Some respondents however complained that their cost of transportation from inside their communities to where the trainings held wasn't fully factored as transportation rates seem to change on daily basis due to Nigeria's inflation rate. Also, the cost of paying for refreshments when meetings are held were impacted by the inflation rate as market value appreciated however CODAF where able to manage the situation effectively by ensuring the right quotations were received from vendors far ahead of time before implementation of activities. The Project Manager and Officers ensured activity reports are produced on time which is verified by the finance team and management before payment of vendors can be approved.

How well did the project predict and react to risks?

A risk matrix was developed for the project before inception and the project team were aware of the relative instability in the region and sensitivity of the situation which has ravaged many communities in the Niger Delta. CODAF on its own mitigated this risk by working directly with community persons and using their networks to interface with all relevant stakeholders in the project. This ensured that all stakeholders were carried along during project implementation

6.4. Effectiveness

How did the action ensure accountability to beneficiaries?

Beneficiaries were involved in the project from the outset, and were also involved in community-level stakeholder meetings. Information about the project in general as well as ongoing progress and key research findings were shared with beneficiary groups at regular intervals. During the evaluation, opportunity was given to the beneficiaries to discuss their expectations and contribute to how activities where implemented. They made suggestions and also highlighted areas that needed improvement.

6.5. Sustainability: Ensuring ownership and lasting change

To what extent will activities be sustained by local beneficiaries/partners after the program activities comes to an end?

There is some evidence already that the approach adopted by the project was potentially conducive to longer-term sustainability due to the high-levels of buy-in and engagement it encourages from the outset, particularly in terms of its capacity to mobilise media, civil societies and other key stakeholders at both local, state and national level. The grassroots experience was especially successful in this regard as they were able to engage women in the community all of whom have committed to working together in future and integrating advocacy into their work. This was also considered to be crucial in ensuring longer-term sustainability once program activities come to an end. Discussions with CODAF staff also demonstrated that there was a growing understanding of the need to integrate sustainable advocacy and network building initiatives into their broader programme of work. The enthusiasm also stretched to government and civil society groups at state level.

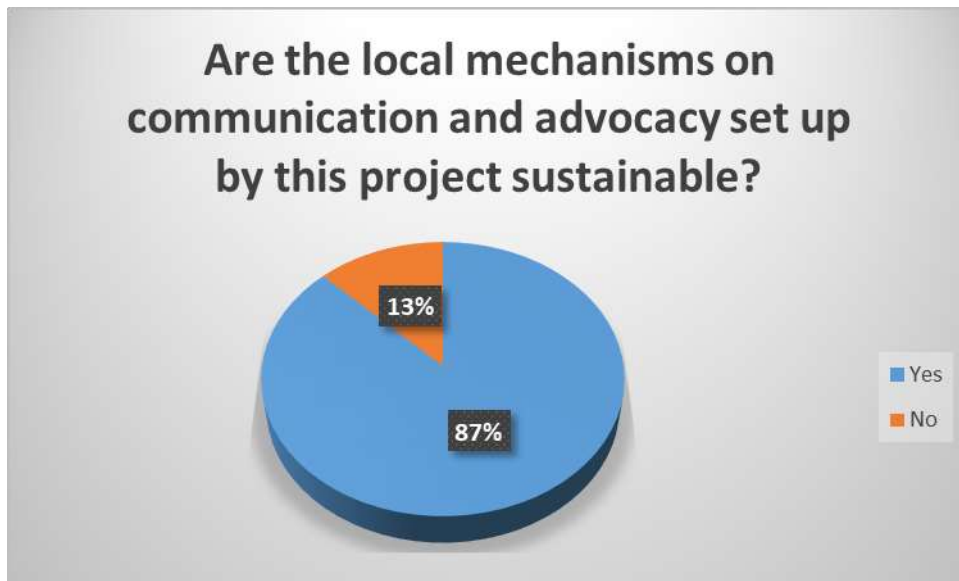


Fig 10: Verifying if Local mechanisms on communication and advocacy

In order to sustain this though, 80% of respondents felt that it was crucial to continue encouraging buy-in and focus on developing capacity, skills and understanding of different stakeholders to continue using methods taught during the training and approaches in their everyday work. At the community level, beneficiaries suggested the need to build-in specific activities targeted at community members particularly fisher women groups in order to enhance collaboration and longer-term sustainability

7. Conclusions and lessons learned.

Conclusions

The project, although pre-determined, the focus areas of the action were largely considered to be relevant at all levels and progress was made in the beneficiary communities towards the achievement of the project's two objectives. Overall, some of the action (activities) implemented, main areas of achievements were felt to have been in the areas of creating awareness and sensitization, stakeholder buy-in, and tackling of some of the root causes and enablers oil pollution at the community level.

To consolidate gains and promote wider impact and sustainability more remains to be done in areas of advocacy, primarily by building on initial successes achieved and linking work undertaken in the implementation areas to the state level through strong partnerships. Closer collaboration between the project and the government intervention programs can support this work and also raise the profile at the state and national level.

As with most projects, this action comes with a relatively high proportion of support costs relative to implementation costs, which may be more justifiable over a longer period, especially if efforts are made to really maximise learning and sharing across communities in practice. Longer-term sustainability should be promoted by continuing to encourage buy-in of key beneficiaries, especial oil

companies at local, state and national level and emphasising collaborative advocacy work both internally with CODAF as well as externally.

Lessons Learned

The section below aims to provide more detail on some of the key lessons learned during the course of the project evaluation:

1. The activities had a good impact:

Participants were able to understand the capacity building also contributed during the community dialogue discussions. They expressed interest in the use visuals during the training especially using Microsoft Powerpoint presentations with pictures and drama role plays in explaining key strategies so that community persons can who may not understand English language very well can understand the message. The dialogues and trainings where highly interactive and the facilitators engaged participants on their most pressing concerns.

2. Sensitizing women and youth groups to get involved in community leadership and advocacy engagements

The project has highlighted the importance of women getting involved in leadership at community level. Due to traditional and religious beliefs, women are more often sidelined when it comes to making decisions and having their voice heard regarding pressing issues. The training has helped women to understand the lead role they have to play both at the community and also at the local ensuring their voices are heard and human rights are not violated the respondents evaluated say they now understand the role they have to play in speaking up against oil pollution and have started implementing what they have heard at community dialogues and capacity building workshops. The youths are not left out as they understand that they are the voices of their communities and can engage government and oil companies effectively thereby adding their voices to the women in their communities.

3. Government officials, oil companies and Community persons have started collaborating with each other.

As a result of the means of communication opened during the dialogues and trainings, community persons, environmental officials from government and oil companies have begun collaborating and communicating with each other and which have brought attention and subsequent action against oil spillage and pollution. These actions have built trust and confidence that the improved collaboration between these stakeholders will help in achieving good environmental practices within the state and communities.

4. Multi-Stakeholder engagement.

The engagement of community leadership, women, youth groups and PLWDS at community level provided guidance and expertise during the project implementation period. The choice of participants proved strategic in ensuring key support during specific activities.

5. Monitoring for change in context

There is a need for flexibility and dynamism in project activity implementation based on change in contexts, reviews and reflections. Communities may have been identified through a community selection criterion, a needs assessment or baseline scoping to share similar context and project activities may have been well developed to address these identified needs specifically for each community.

6. Participatory approach was essential in achieving stated objectives

CODAF adopted a participatory approach in its programme implementation by involving key and critical stakeholders. This has helped in the acceptance of the project activities and methodology in the various communities of intervention. Findings revealed that fisher women from the beneficiary community are beginning to use new fishing methods to improve their harvest and add

their voices to change the incessant pollution of their environment. Community members are beginning to recognize the importance these initiatives and approaches as effective and have even attributed to the level of sensitization during activity implementation.

7. Involvement of the Media, CSOs and human rights agencies during sensitization has proved critical

During the learning and sharing, CSOs and the NUJ attest they have used the lessons learnt from the project and have started spreading this message to other members of their associations. They said from the activity, they had improved their mind-set on how they can increase women advocacy engagement. Members of the media also said they have had positive feedback from the radio programs as well as the messages passed particularly on pollution. Many have promised to be more objective when reporting and involve all stakeholders and call government to action on the importance of sensitizing oil companies in the region.

8. Recommendations

8.1. Relevance

- Deepen the focus on issues already identified during the implementation phase of the project.
- Ensure regular consultations with community stakeholders to maintain the focus of project objectives.
- Interventions are most impactful when they are built from a bottom-up approach of identification of community needs. The key learning of this project should therefore constitute a major starting point in the implementation across several Niger-Delta communities.

8.2. Impact

Advocacy:

- Undertake a strong stakeholder analysis, establish partnership agreements with national level advocacy partners and ensure active links between national and local advocacy work.
- Strengthen working relations with CSOs, media and security agencies and ensure initiatives on advocacy and network building are better embedded into the delivery of the project.
- Empower local assessment teams comprising of fisher women to engage meaningfully in advocacy work at all levels and use effective dialogue mediation work to support this.
- Promote internal links with other programme/project work and campaigns.
- Draft realistic, feasible advocacy plans that are clearly linked to project objectives and baseline findings and can reach decision makers in the government as well as the oil companies.

8.3. Learning Outcomes:

- Continue to engage stakeholders through training, awareness-raising and other activities to ensure the successes achieved are a norm.
- Collaborate and dialogue with the State Government actors and other organisations working on learning outcomes to promote an effective approach to assessment and performance.
- Every stakeholder must be involved in the process. This learning understands that though a stakeholder mapping is essential not just at the beginning of the project but also periodically.

8.4. Safe, continued learning environments:

- Work in collaboration with other organisations with expertise on oil pollution to keep developing strong training packages for community residents

- Ensure media bodies are clear on reporting and referral procedures for cases and work in collaboration with community stakeholders to create simple that will help achieve quick resolution of cases
- Media programming is considered to play a vital role and a consideration of an extension of this beyond the project implementation timeline can contribute to the sustainability of the gains of the project.

8.5. Partnerships

- Ensure technical capacity development for local CSOs to ensure quality programme implementation.
- Strengthen the links between CODAF and beneficiaries ensuring capacity development and face-to-face meetings to ensure advocacy initiatives integrated into the delivery of the project and promote shared learning.
- Seek stronger engagements with other International CSOs organisations especially those who are involved in similar thematic areas to build synergy and promote the successes of this project in the Niger Delta.
- Engage constructively with necessary stakeholders at decentralised level to promote buy-in and support.

8.6. Value for money

- Ensure key ‘deliverables’ are written into the future project activities to ensure concrete examples of shared learning are put into practice to maximise value.

8.7. Sustainability

- Target specific activities at district level to promote awareness and buy-in to the approach.
- Set aside funds for capacity development of community women groups, market women and youth groups as well as other key stakeholders to encourage up-take once funds come to an end.
- Build on good practice from multi-stakeholder committees to ensure strategic support during the implementation period and increase likelihood of onward sustainability/adoption after project closure.

Annex 1: Results showing Attendance Analysis for the evaluation

Respondent Group	Intervention LGAS		Total
	Odimodi	Forcados	
Key Informant Interview (KII)			
Traditional Rulers/ Community Leaders	1	1	2
Government Officials	1	1	2
Religious Leaders	1	1	2
Women	5	5	15
Youths	6	4	10
Community Leaders	2	1	3
CSOs/ Media	1	1	2
CODAF project staff	CODAF project staff (Executive Director, project officer , Communications officer and Finance Officer)		4
			40 KII's
Focus Group Discussions (FGD)			
Men(males between 18 and 35 years old)	4	4	8
Women (females between 18 and 35 years old)	5	5	10
Specialised Groups (i.e., PLWDs)	1	2	3
TOTAL	6	11	21 FGD's

Table 3: Number of persons interviewed using KII and FGDs

9. Annex 2: Results showing Attendance Analysis From SPSS

Were_women_adequately_represented_in_the_Capacity_Building_Workshops

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	51	60.0	60.0	40.0
Valid No	20	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total	71	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Representation of women at dialogues

Were youths adequately represented in the Capacity Building Workshops

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	24	48.0	48.0	48.0
Valid No	26	52.0	52.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Table 5; Representation of youths in capacity Building

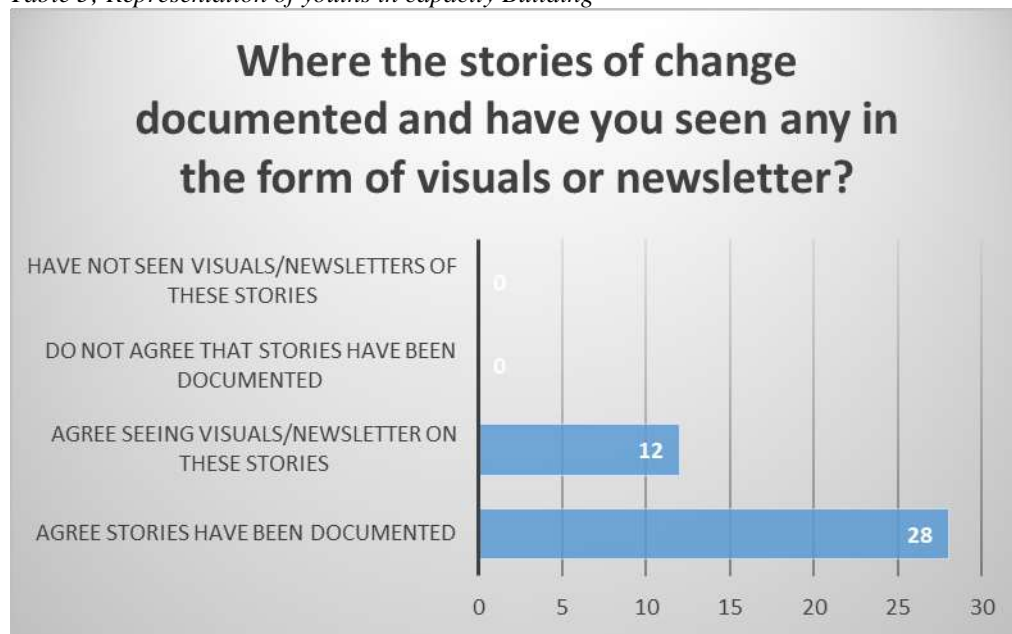


Fig 11: Respondents response to documentation of stories of Change on visuals and Newsletters.

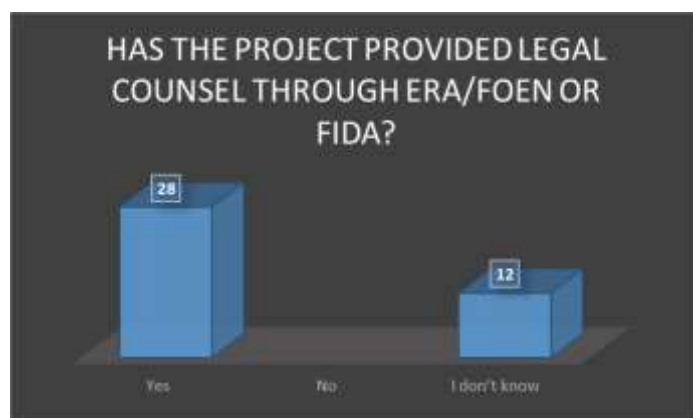


Fig 12: 28 respondents attest that the project has provided legal counsel through FIDA

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