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# PATHS TO PEACEBUILDING: AMNESTY AND THE NIGER DELTA VIOLENCE

by

BENJAMIN AIGBE OKONOFUA

Under the Direction of Deirdre Oakley

## ABSTRACT

This mixed-method analysis of three Nigerian states explores the ways in which a major policy shift has produced short-term peace outcomes in a vastly contested terrain entailing conflicting interests. The central argument of "Paths to Peacebuilding," is that disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration can create peace in resource-conflicted societies when there is governmental will and community and citizen involvement in both the design and implementation of the program. The overriding concern was whether the DDR process was capable of contributing to tangible improvements in real and perceived safety on the ground as well as destroying the structures that both contributed to and sustained insurgency for over two decades. The disarmament process yielded over 3,000 semi- and fully automatic weapons and other military style hardware. It also resulted in the demobilization of over 26,000 former

fighters. The DDR program generated important but geographically differentiated reductions in militant violence across the three states studied.

The study analyzes survey and interview data from a random sample of 346 combatants and ex-combatants and other knowledgeable informants in three Niger Delta states - Rivers, Delta, and Bayelsa. The dissertation compared DDR success rates between individuals who entered the DDR program and those who did not. An examination of the programming determinants, controlling for non-programmatic factors including community exposure to pollution reveals some evidence of macro success and micro failure. While the program has created a new sense of peace that allows oil corporations to continue oil production unhindered leading to increased oil earnings for the Nigerian state, there is lack of local level support for the program or its participants. For example, findings of significant association between participation in the program and the successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of ex-combatants are moderated by participation effects. While evidence of some level of macro success is clearly indicated in addition to some level of impact on the lives of program participants, the failure to adequately link DDR to broad economic and social development programs may obviate the tentative gains made and plunge the region into potentially more devastating rounds of violent insurgency and counter-insurgency.

**INDEX WORDS:** Niger Delta, Amnesty, DDR, Peacebuilding, Nigeria, Oil, Conflict, Resource, Triangulation, Pollution, Violence, Greed, Predation, Corruption, intra-state conflict, war.

PATHS TO PEACEBUILDING: AMNESTY AND THE NIGER DELTA CONFLICT

by

BENJAMIN AIGBE OKONOFUA

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2011

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PATHS TO PEACEBUILDING: AMNESTY AND THE NIGER DELTA VIOLENCE

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December 2011

## **DEDICATION**

**In memory of**

**Late Mrs. Monica Etusi Okonofua**

**and**

**Late High Chief (Dr.) Salu Oniha Okonofua (JP)**

**and**

**Late Madam Victoria Aikhagbonre Okonofua**

**and**

**Late Dr. Ignatius Esekhaigbe Akpele**

**This is a culmination of all of your toils and struggles.**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	v
LIST OF TABLES .....	x
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xi
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.0    Introduction .....	1
1.1    Objectives of the Study .....	6
1.2    Problem Statement .....	8
1.3    Implications for Policy and Research .....	14
Chapter 2: A HISTORY OF NIGERIA .....	17
2.0    Introduction .....	17
2.1    A Pre-History of Nigeria .....	17
2.2    Colonial Rule .....	21
2.3    The Creation of Nigeria .....	25
2.4    Modern Nigeria .....	29
2.5    The Niger Delta People .....	43
2.6    Oil Dependency .....	47
Chapter 3: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	52
3.0    Introduction .....	52
3.1    Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict .....	53
3.2    Domestic Causes Forces and the Development of the Niger Delta Conflict .....	53
3.3    International Forces and the Development of the Niger Delta Conflict .....	69
3.4    The Niger Delta Conflict .....	89

3.5	Peacebuilding .....	96
3.6	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration .....	99
3.7	Women Militants and DDR .....	104
Chapter 4:	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	108
4.0	Introduction .....	108
4.1	Conflict Formation Theory .....	108
4.2	Conflict Transformation Theory .....	111
Chapter 5:	METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE .....	125
5.0	Research Design .....	125
5.1	Study Location .....	128
5.2	Research Questions .....	129
5.3	Research variables .....	132
5.4	Research Frame .....	133
5.5	Phase 1 (Qualitative Data Collection) .....	135
5.6	Phase 11 (Quantitative Data Collection) .....	141
5.7	Study Limitations .....	145
5.8	Data Management, Screening, and Security .....	147
5.9	Research Permission and Ethical Considerations .....	150
5.10	The Role of the Researcher .....	151
Chapter 6:	SUMMARY OF FINDINGS .....	153
6.0	Introduction .....	153
6.1	Profiles of Fighters and Former Fighters .....	154
6.2	The Pre-Conflict Dynamics of Fighters .....	160

6.3	Determining Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Outcomes .....	172
Chapter 7:	RESULTS .....	187
7.0	Introduction.....	187
7.1	Measuring Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Outcomes .....	188
7.2	Research Question 1 .....	190
7.3	Research Question 2 .....	202
7.4	Research Question 3 .....	224
Chapter 8:	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION .....	228
8.0	Introduction .....	228
8.1	Research Question 1: What are the Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict? .....	230
8.2	Research Question 2: What are the Programmatic and Non-Programmatic Determinants of successful Amnesty or DDR Program? .....	240
8.3	Research Question 3: Overall, is the Amnesty Program capable of Producing Peace in the Long-Term? .....	247
8.4	Conclusion .....	249
8.5	Rethinking Theory .....	260
8.5	Recommendation .....	265
References	.....	271
Appendices	.....	288
	Appendix A: The Questionnaire .....	288
	Appendix B: Interview Schedule .....	289

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Estimated Odds Ratios from Logistic Regression Analyses of Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict	193
Table 2 Estimated Odds Ratios from Logistic Regression Analyses of Programmatic and Non-programmatic Determinants of DDR Outcomes	209

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Lederach's Pyramid of Leadership	117
Figure 2	Lederach's Big Picture of Conflict Transformation	119
Figure 3	Distribution by armed factions	155
Figure 4	Distribution by age	156
Figure 5	Distribution by gender	157
Figure 6	Distribution by marital status	157
Figure 7	Distribution by education	158
Figure 8	Distribution by religion	158
Figure 9	Distribution by ethnicity	159
Figure 10	Distribution by state of residence	159
Figure 11	Distribution by occupation	160
Figure 12	Distribution by income in year before conflict	160
Figure 13	Distribution by year of enlistment in armed group	162
Figure 14	Distribution by causes of Niger Delta conflict	163
Figure 15	Distribution showing triangulation	165

Figure 16	Distribution showing frequency of triangulation	165
Figure 17	Distribution by source of triangulation	165
Figure 18	Distribution by feelings about being triangulated	165
Figure 19	Distribution by reason for enlisting in armed group	166
Figure 20	Distribution by mode of recruitment	167
Figure 21	Distribution by incentives for joining the conflict	168
Figure 22	Distribution by source of funds	169
Figure 23	Distribution by source of weapons	170
Figure 24	Distribution roles within armed groups	171
Figure 25	Distribution by who makes attack decisions	172
Figure 26	Distribution by who makes decision about gains from an attack	172
Figure 27	Distribution by amount of weapons returned	174
Figure 28	Distribution by anticipation of future acquisition of weapons	175
Figure 29	Distribution by preference for business partnership	177
Figure 30	Distribution by time spent	178
Figure 31	Distribution by respondents who returned to community	181

Figure32	Distribution by community acceptance	181
Figure 33	Distribution by participation in communal activities	182
Figure 34	Distribution by Employment Status	183
Figure 35	Distribution by present employment conditions	184
Figure 36	Distribution by likelihood of skill application	184
Figure 37	Distribution by Method of Conflict Resolution	186
Figure 38	Distribution by Opinion on Opportunities for Political Participation	186
Figure 39	Concept-Indicator Model for Triangulation	196
Figure 40	Variable-Concept-Indicator Model	198
Figure 41	Map of Insurgent Attacks in the 1st half of 2009	253
Figure 42	Map of Insurgent Attacks in the 2nd half of 2010	254





## Chapter 1:

### INTRODUCTION

*In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeoning of chance  
My head is unbowed ...  
It matters not how strait the gate  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate;  
I am the captain of my soul.*

(Henley, 1875).

#### 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR Program in order to see how well or whether it is capable of ending the protracted armed conflict in the Niger Delta region and entrenching long-term peace. The region, the heart of Nigeria's oil production activities, contains the largest oil deposits in Africa and some of the highest quality oil in the world. Its oil resources has unprecedented economic and geo-strategic significance and value (Watts et al, 2004), and is without question the mainstay of the Nigerian economy (Ikein, 1990; Khan, 1994; Watts, 2009). Since 1956 when oil was first discovered in commercial quantities in Oloibiri, a small rural community in Bayelsa state, an estimated \$600 billion has been generated from oil exports (Okonta, 2002). Yet, the region is home to some of the poorest people in the world. The unremitting economic, political, social, and environmental marginality of the people has provided the fertile ground for the violent conflict between militant groups and government forces. As a result of the conflict, the Niger Delta has become what John Keane (1996) calls a "zone of violence," which describes a gradual but precipitous slide into what the US State Department calls "political chaos." Watts et al (2004) believe that this chaos strikes to the heart of Nigeria's political future; a future blighted by unmitigated environmental disaster, dilapidated infrastructure, unremitting poverty and disease, huge debt burden, a legacy of

mismanagement and corruption, widespread citizen trepidation, unrest, and countless deaths.

Militant violence in the Niger Delta reflects growing defiance of the authority of the Nigerian state. The basis of this defiance is perceived injustice in the extraction, distribution, and allocation of oil assets by the state and oil conglomerates, a process which discriminates against minority groups whose land harbor these huge oil and gas deposits. The intense contestations and antagonism between the state and oil corporations on one side and militants on the other side mirror contestations and armed conflicts occurring in other parts of the world. In 2009, for example, the Niger Delta conflict was one of over 24 significant armed conflicts occurring all over the world. The causes of all of these conflicts appear strikingly similar: economic deprivation, ethnic and religious rivalry, extremism, resource allocation/appropriation, and proliferation of weapons. The results of these conflicts are also tragically similar: countless deaths, social displacement, homelessness, poverty, disease, loss of human dignity, destruction of vital infrastructure, and political instability.

Contemporary statistics show that the majority of world conflicts since the end of World War II and the creation of the UN collective security systems have occurred among local contending forces within states (Marshall and Gurr 2005; De Goor, Rupesinghe, and Sciarone 1996; Triulzi, Tommasoli, and Montalbano 2003). Between 1989 (which marked the end of the Cold war) and 2003, there were only seven interstate armed conflicts, and two of these (the US-led coalition against al-Qaeda insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan and the India-Pakistan war over Kashmir) continued to be active through 2003 (Erikson and Wallensteen 2004). In that same period, however, there were 116 within state armed conflicts involving 78 countries, with at least 1000 deaths per conflict. In 2005, for example, 19 of the 20 "major armed conflicts" were within state. (Marshall and Gurr 2005) This suggests that the number of intra-state armed conflict has

risen sharply, now constituting 90 percent of all violent conflict, and accounting for over 4 million deaths since the end of World War II (Triulzi et al 2003).

The shift in the pattern of conflict from inter- to intra-state confrontations is posing enormous challenges to states, international donor communities, international development organizations and peacebuilding advocates. This is because traditional approaches for dealing with inter-state violent conflicts are proving inadequate or too ill-suited to effectively address the multifaceted causes of intra-state conflict especially in fragile states like Nigeria. According to Lederach (1997) “the nature and characteristics of contemporary conflict suggest the need for a set of concepts and approaches that go beyond traditional statist diplomacy.” For this reason, peacebuilding in conflicted divided societies, today, must involve “a wide range of activities and functions that both precede and follow formal peace accords,” including “processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships.” Such transformation potentially prevent conflicts from escalating into war and or transforms war into peace. In either case, peacebuilding avoids the tragic consequences of war including human disasters and socio-political and regional instability.

One strategy believed to be effective in this direction and increasingly being employed in conflict and post-conflict situations is DDR (Berdal 1996; Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Muggah 2009). Formal programs aimed at disarming, demobilizing, and reintegrating combatants into civil society started with the operations of the UN Observer Group in Central Sudan in 1989 (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007) and have since become a prominent intervention strategy of the UN. DDR has achieved some level of success in mitigating armed conflict and in sustaining peace in many conflict-ridden or war-ravaged societies including Rwanda, DR Congo, El Salvador, Cambodia, Cote d’Ivoire, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somalia, Liberia,

Russia, Angola, Sierra Leone, Guatemala, India, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Colombia, Rwanda, Mozambique, Burundi, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. As a result of its increasingly widespread usage and the successes it has recorded in the areas where it has been applied, the UN Secretary General concluded that a “process of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration has repeatedly proven to be vital to stability in a post-conflict situation” (United Nations 2000). This strategy is currently being used in hopes of preventing the Niger Delta conflict from escalating. If the crisis is allowed to escalate into full-blown war, it may become too costly and dangerous to intervene in any form and intervention after war, in any case, has been shown to be the least likely to succeed (Annan 1996).

Nigeria's version of DDR was initiated in August 2009 by the Nigerian government under the title "Amnesty Program" (<http://nigerdeltaamnesty.org>). The program promised militants amnesty and rehabilitation in exchange for the surrender of arms and a pledge to end the fighting. In addition to the traditional triad of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR), the Nigerian DDR incorporates an extra R, which represents economic reconstruction. The extra R is an attempt to consider new sources of economic risks such as resource control, resource allocation, unequal distribution of assets, differentiated rates of growth, and differences in community development, income distribution, unemployment, and poverty. The acronym "DDRR" therefore, encapsulates four distinct motions: 1) the surrender of arms by militants and the disbandment of armed groups in the region; 2) freedom from prosecution for militants; 3) the rehabilitation and economic reintegration of militants into civil society; and 4) the post-conflict economic reconstruction of the region.

The Niger Delta DDR program, therefore, aims to resolve a conflict that at its core appears to be resource motivated. Resulting from increased repression by state agents in alliance

with multinational oil companies, militants have been successful in framing their cause as a struggle for ecological justice, self determination, and resource control. They argue that local communities from which natural resource wealth is annexed must have rights to taxation and other economic advantages appropriated by a federal government inclined toward a pattern of growth and development that privileges the dominant ethnic groups. These communities must also determine the minimum standards for oil production as well as the nature, types, and extent of oil production and by whom. Those who support the government's position believe that federal control of natural resources as well as its use is the only way to assure of equitable resource allocation and even development. These two positions appear antithetical and the schisms have led to prolonged violence.

Until recently, both groups have been unwilling to dialogue or negotiate with the consequence that the Niger Delta has become a war zone with devastating outcomes for the people, environment, and institutions. For example, the human costs have been very high. Human costs refer to the loss of lives, the high levels of disease, poverty, socio-economic disparity, rising gender inequality, educational decline, and many less tangible costs. Also, because of the conflict, an estimated 750,000 barrels of crude out of the nation's daily supply of 2.2 million barrels was shut in and over 300,000 bpd deliberately discharged into the environment, further depleting the fragile eco-system of the Niger Delta and causing reverberations for the world's energy security. The "Amnesty" or DDR program is the mechanism the government and some other important stakeholders hope will resolve the disagreements, end the fighting, prevent the precipitous slide to full scale civil war, and stimulate widespread economic, social, and political growth and development.

But despite the growing confidence of experts, policy makers, and important stakeholders

in the ability of DDR to reverse and or retard conflict situations, there have been very few systematic efforts to evaluate DDR programs in order to determine whether disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration is effective in ending conflict or in preventing post-conflict societies from reverting to war. Also, we do not know the determinants of successful demobilization, reintegration, and reconstruction. We do not know, for example, what it is about DDR that potentially delivers the outcomes expected. For that matter, because of the multidimensional nature of DDR, there has been great difficulty in linking individual contributions of specific programs to overall outcomes (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007). Moreover, there is little scientific information about the possible interaction of macro structures and individual and community level characteristics in producing DDR outcomes. For these reasons and because of the huge resources committed to the success of the Amnesty Program, it is tremendously important that we examine the program to see whether or how well it delivers the benefits that stakeholders hope for and that have been widely attributed to DDR all over the world.

### **1.1 Objectives of the Study**

This study has three main objectives. First, it is to review the multifaceted causes of the Niger Delta conflict. Although there is widespread agreement about the potential consequences of the conflict, there is much less agreement about the cause(s) of the conflict. While some studies link the conflict to agitation over resource appropriation and ecological damage (Olorode 1988; Ikein 1990; Ashton-Jones 1998; Iyayi 2000; Okonta 1998; Human Rights Watch 1998; Okonta and Douglas 2003; Watts 2009; Oyerinde 1998; and Obi 1997), others link it to political marginalization, ethnicity and corruption (Igbinovia, Okonofua, Omoyibo, and Omoruyi 2004; Okonofua and Ugiagbe 2004; Osaghae 1998; Saliu, Luqman, and Abdulahi 2007), poverty, unemployment and exploitation (Saro-Wiwa 1992; Eteng 1997; Iyayi 2008; Ukeje, Odebeyi,

Sesay, and Aina 2009; Peel 2010), and constitutionalism (Akiba 2004; Sagay 2008). These scholars and many others have fully explored the connections between the ethnic character of the state, formal politics and the violence in the Niger Delta. However, the contributions of petrol-capitalism (Watts 2003; Watts et al 2004) and the racialized global institutions that support it are either wholly undocumented or grossly under-theorized. Moreover, not much has been done to tease out what Ken Saro-Wiwa (1992) calls the “slick alliance” between petrol-capital and the Nigerian state - an alliance that has produced bitter outcomes for inhabitants of the Niger Delta. My goal, therefore, is not only to anticipate possible developments in the conflict dynamics but also to fully explore the causes of the violence as a way to understand the nature of the governability crisis that produced the violence in the first place.

Second, based on this review, the study will systematically examine the planning and implementation of the Amnesty Program in order to determine whether a gap between outputs and outcomes exists. Considering the vast amount of resources committed to the process and the great expectations concerning it, it is tremendously important that we gain an understanding of how and where these resources are being applied and whether they are achieving the impact stakeholders’ desire. This study has the capability to design and develop a formidable and potentially useful tool-kit for measuring the impact of this DDR intervention that might be applicable to similarly conflicted societies. This implies generating a framework for building peace that fully anticipates and engages the causes, contradictions, and consequences of the conflict in the Niger Delta.

Finally, the study will use the theories of conflict formation (Kaplan 1995; Homer-Dixon 1999; Klare 2001; Collier 2000, etc.) and conflict transformation (Lederach 1995;



Miall 2004) to understand and assess the performance of the amnesty program. These theories will help specify whether or how the program: a) reduces conflict related risks, b) influences conflict dynamics, and c) contributes to peacebuilding. This is crucial since a review of relevant literature yields very little in terms of systematic theories about post-conflict disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and reconstruction (Nillson 2005; Humphreys and Weinstein 2009). The study will take a different approach from the ‘paradigmatic benchmark’ (Pugel 2009) for measuring DDR success - whether or not a state relapses into war - a linear approach that ignores the context and dynamics of contemporary within state conflicts. Instead, this study will focus dialectically on the corpus of structural, cultural, relational, and personal changes (Lederach 1995) that are critical to post-conflict peacebuilding. Therefore, efforts aimed at eliminating the potential for violence and building sustainable peace might begin, at least, with making structural, cultural, relational, and personal changes and adjustments. Since the present intervention incorporates these as major activities, it is crucial that we gain an insight into how this is done and whether, in fact, they address some or all of the grievances that fuel the violence.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

This study addresses a six-part problem with respect to the Niger Delta conflict and the DDR intervention. First, the government’s framework for disarmament and demobilization is inadequately specified. It is articulated as the return of arms and the dissolution of armed groups. One problem with this simplistic conceptualization is that it does not properly anticipate or articulate potential risks with disarming and demobilizing ex-militants. For example, it is common for ex-combatants to rearm themselves in order to take advantage of expanding political opportunities (Alden 2002; Mehlum and Ragner 2002; Spear 2002; Gamba 2003). Re-armed ex-combatants may be recruited by combatants existing outside of the peace process (Mehlum

and Ragner 2002). This was the case in the Republic of Congo, where a Ninja splinter group led by Frederic Bitsangou Ntumi refused to demobilize. He recruited many ex-Ninjas who had earlier been demobilized and attacked Brazzaville (IRIN 2004). Ex-combatants may also recreate disbanded armed groups and commence post-war hostilities (Gamba 2003; Spear 2002). This was the case in Nicaragua in the 1990s where demobilized contra rebels and the Sandinistas (government soldiers) recreated parallel armed groups (Recontras and Recompas) from the ashes of their old organizations to first force the government to give them reintegration assistance, and then to fight each other (Spencer 1997). There is also the potential for ex-combatants to sell their military skills to armed actors involved in armed conflicts in foreign countries. This was the case in Angola and Sierra Leone where demobilized soldiers of the South African Defense Force (SADF) fought as mercenaries in civil wars in Angola and Sierra Leone (Kingma 1999). Similarly, ex-fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) have fought in Macedonia (ICG 2001). Apart from these, there is the potential for ex-combatants to demobilize and reintegrate into organized criminality (Alden 2002; Call and Stanley 2003; Mehlum and Ragner 2002). This was the case in Mozambique where after the signing of the 1992 Rome Agreement, ex-combatants transformed their clandestine military structures into dynamic criminal organizations (Alden 2002). Because of these shortcomings, it is likely that the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants in the Niger Delta may be incapable of contributing anything of value to the peace process, unless disarmament and demobilization are adequately conceptualized. This study has the potential to develop the framework for conceptualizing disarmament and demobilization and the metrics for measuring their impact.

Second, the conceptualization of reintegration is potentially problematic. There appears to be confusion over what reintegration entails and the stages or phases of its implementation.

For example, should reintegration stop at economic reintegration or should it include social and political reintegration? Economic reintegration (which appears to be the focus of the Amnesty Program) is important since unemployment and poverty are central to the Niger Delta conflict. Over 75 percent of Niger Delta youths are unemployed and almost half of these youths are unemployable because they lack skills applicable to modern industry (Okonta and Douglas 2003; Osaghae, Ikelegbe, Olarinmoye, and Okhonmina 2007; Saliu et al 2007; Watts 2009). The majority of ex-combatants in the Niger Delta appear to be illiterate, possessing only fighting skills that are inapplicable in peace times. Therefore, the economic reintegration of ex-militants through vocational training and job creation schemes is important to the peace process. Also very important, is their social and political integration, but the program appears to pay little attention to these. Because of their tendency towards violence (rape, physical abuse, mutilation, kidnapping, murder, etc), the return of ex-combatants may trigger extreme feelings of insecurity in their communities of return (Knight and Ozerdam 2004; Spear 2005; Nillson 2005). Moreover, ex-combatants have been shown to display difficulties in reconciling with their communities especially in cases where such communities were intensely victimized during the conflict. This was the case in Angola where ex-combatants belonging to the Jonas Savimbi UNITA movement engaged host communities in violence following the implementation of DDR (Nillson 2005). Also, after being disarmed and demobilized, some categories of ex-combatants (especially women, children, and disabled ex-combatants) constitute a weak and marginalized group in need of economic, psychological, and social assistance (Nillson 2005). This situation is often exacerbated by wartime illnesses that continue to plague ex-combatants in post-conflict periods. This was the case in Uganda and Ethiopia where a large portion of the demobilized combatants were HIV/AIDS positive (Kingma 2000). More daunting, perhaps, is the challenge

posed by disabled ex-combatants. For example, the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea produced about 18,000 disabled ex-combatants in Ethiopia alone (Collier 1994; Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer 2004). Apart from these, there is also the need to pay serious attention to political reintegration. The failure to incorporate ex-combatants into the political mainstream may have disastrous consequences. This was the case in Mozambique where demobilized guerrilla fighters from the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) were shut out of the political process consequently provoking intense violence (Nillson 2005). These reintegration challenges provides the rationale for understanding how reintegration is conceptualized and implemented in this DDR program and whether these have any impact in altering the conflict landscape of the Niger Delta. This study has the potential to develop a useful definition of reintegration that encapsulates the entire complex of economic, social, and political reintegration and that potentially roadmaps the effective reintegration of ex-combatants in the Niger Delta.

Third, studies of the Niger Delta conflict implicate economic cleavages (poverty, unemployment, resource control, corruption, etc) for the conflict (Osaghae 1998; Okonta and Douglas 2003; Saliu et al 2007; Watts et al 2004; Osaghae et al 2007; Watts 2009). Yet, the government's economic reconstruction plan is expressed as activities for ex-militants rather than as targeted macro outcomes. This minimalist approach (Muggah 2009) that ignores the wider context of the conflict may have little impact in reducing the conflict related risks or in positively altering the conflict dynamics. This study will investigate the government's reconstruction agenda in order to determine whether it has the potential to positively alter the economic landscape of the Niger Delta region. Before the outbreak of armed conflict, the government's development policies typically involved maintaining "rent-seeking, distributional coalitions" (Kang and Meernik 2005) that ossified economic development. Perhaps, the torturous process of

armed conflict has destroyed these pre-conflict distributional coalitions permitting the implementation of equitable, justiceable, and sustainable economic development policies and programs. We need to know.

Fourth, there have been relatively few systematic efforts to evaluate whether DDR programs actually work. What is predominant instead, is literature saturated with ‘lessons learned assessments’ that attempt to analyze the factors responsible for the successes or failures of DDR programs (Humphreys and Weinstein 2009; Ginifer 2003; Richards, Archibald, Bah, and Vincent 2003; Nillson 2005) and even these narratives have failed to incorporate variation in the key explanatory variables. For example, at the macro level, DDR studies have not compared variation in outcomes for communities that received intervention with those that did not receive intervention. At the micro-level, these studies fail to explain why some individuals and not others are able to successfully reintegrate after conflict (Humphreys and Weinstein 2009). Because of the lack of systematic comparisons, these studies fail to show how participation in DDR programs account for variation in outcomes. This study will overcome this shortcoming by conducting a natural experiment in which outcomes are compared for a matched sample of militants participating in the program (pseudo-experimental group) and militants not participating in the program (pseudo-control group). The use of a pseudo-experimental design will help to distinguish this study from past efforts and enable me investigate the sources of variation in institutional and individual level outcomes. More importantly, it may provide the much needed evidence of DDR workability that is critically lacking in the field.

Fifth, there appears to be gender bias in the implementation of the program. Women combatants constitute only about 0.6 percent or 133 out of the 20,192 ex-combatants participating in the DDR program. Yet, if we consider that women play an important role in civil

wars (IPRI 2002; Nillson 2005; Ortega 2009), we might expect that women are more directly involved in the Niger Delta conflict than their representation in the DDR program suggests. For example, about 30 percent of the Sandinista army in Nicaragua and between 25 and 30 percent of the guerillas in El Salvador were women (International Peace Research Institute 2002). This raises the possibility that the Niger Delta program may de-prioritize women who are likely to receive less reintegration support than males. There are several likely reasons for this. First, female combatants are not considered as posing the same level of threats as male militants. As a result, men have always been given priority in terms of reintegration assistance (Colleta et al 2004; IPRI 2002; Nillson 2005). Second, most female ex-combatants live in masculanized states with gendered institutions and symbolic systems. As a result, female ex-combatants are often alienated for breaching 'societal norms.' Because of this, many female ex-combatants are reluctant to disclose their status and fail to reintegrate through DDR. Instead, they often reintegrate into prostitution and drug addiction, or reemerge as mercenaries in another conflict (Bernard et al 2003). Third, female ex-combatants may be constrained by gender-specific obstacles in the post-conflict period. Women combatants tend to have less access to knowledge, skills, information, resources, and work opportunities than males (Nillson 2005). As a result, males are often better equipped to take advantage of reintegration benefits. Because of these gender-specific discriminations, female ex-combatants often feel empowered by war and may not want to return to their traditional roles, which in most instances condenses men's gender power over women. This reluctance may pose special challenges in the post-war period as was the case in Eritrea where the divorce rate for married ex-combatants rose to 27 percent (Kingma 2000) or in Chad, Namibia, and Nicaragua where domestic violence rate involving female ex-combatants spiked significantly (ICG, 2001). Thus, it is important to probe the involvement

of women not just as victims, peace enablers, and peacemakers but also as combatants and possible obstacles to the transformation process.

Finally, Humphreys and Weinstein reports that recent research in social psychology and anthropology show congruence between reintegration success and several factors including exposure to violence (Dyregrov, Jested, and Rundle 2002), age (Richards, Archibald, Bah, and Vincent 2003), and gender (Mazurana, McKay, Carlson, and Kasper 2002). Beyond these, however, their review of relevant literature yields little in terms of systematic theories about post-conflict DDR interventions. Considering that oil production, the appropriation of oil profits, ecological damage, and political and economic participation are driven by a peculiar type of extractive logic – petrol-capitalism - it is tremendously important that we develop a theory set capable of explaining the Niger Delta conflict context. This is crucial since most efforts to study the violence in the Niger Delta have been partisan, sensational, emotional, and lack theoretical depth (Ukeje et al 2009). This study will use a combination of conflict formation and conflict transformation theories to examine, analyze, and explain the performance of this DDR program. This is a novelty since no study has yet incorporated Lederach's model into the peacebuilding DDR infrastructure or for comparing outcomes across matched samples of program participants and non-participants.

### **1.3 Implications for Policy and Research**

The importance of peacebuilding in a world of constantly emerging and changing conflict cannot be overstated. The proposed research will provide the much needed answers to questions that vex global headlines: why is resource-related conflict seemingly intractable? Can disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) build long-term peace in resource-conflicted societies? Although Nigeria is the geographical focus of this study, the

similarity of oil-related tensions in Angola, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Indonesia, and Kazakhstan suggests that this study may be able to address a much wider audience. In that respect, the potential contributions of the proposed research are diverse. In terms of theory, the research will not only illuminate the theoretical analysis of resource conflicts but also contribute new insights into the potential application of a modified conflict transformation theory that fully contemplates prescriptive and policy questions about peacebuilding in resource contested societies. In terms of practice, the proposed research will demonstrate what works and does not work in DDR peacebuilding. It will convey to militants and members of Niger Delta communities the relevance of their participation in an intervention that portends to address the root causes of the violence in the region. From a policy perspective, this study will help situate this multi-component intervention within existing community-based structures such as community associations, civil defense groups, community development projects, neighborhood environmental protection programs, the Niger Delta Development Commission (NNDC), the National Economic Reconstruction Agency (NERA), the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in a cost-effective way that maximizes impact to this underserved population. The results will also interest students, researchers, activists, and practitioners in the multidisciplinary field of peacebuilding and governments facing debilitating internal conflicts, states emerging from resource-based civil war, and states facing the dire prospects of resource-related civil war. From a research perspective, my comparative approach will shed an important, but hitherto ignored, light on the micro- and macro-dynamics of the Niger Delta oil complex more generally, and the conflict and its transformation more specifically, that is missing from the scholarly literature. This will lay the foundation for more rigorous testing of the intervention using randomized control models in



which participants are introduced into DDR programs in more carefully managed stages. Finally, the results will be published in peer review journals of broad readership where it will provoke critical thinking and debates about the causes and consequences of armed conflict and the mechanisms for building long lasting peace.

## Chapter 2:

### A HISTORY OF NIGERIA

*Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression.*

*Obafemi Awolowo (1947)*

*The day when Nigeria becomes a true federation, still more a nation, is still far away.*

*Margery Perham (1947).*

## 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a historical perspective on the Niger Delta violence based on empirical trends since British colonial occupation. It begins with a brief analysis of the pre-colonial socio-political organization of these independent nation-states and the set of political transformations beginning with the British occupation that have taken place since. The chapter pays particular attention to the economic and environmental changes beginning with the discovery of oil in 1956 that are fundamental to an understanding of the Niger Delta violence. The chapter is divided into seven sections. This introduction is the first section and is followed by the section that discusses the pre-history of Nigeria. Section three discusses the creation of Nigeria and is followed by the section that describes contemporary Nigeria, its federal structure and myriad socio-political and economic transformations. Section five discusses the Niger Delta paying primary attention to its ecology and oil production. Section six describes the Niger Delta people paying close attention to the multi-ethnic composition of the Niger Delta. Finally, section seven examines the mainstay of the Nigerian nation: oil. It looks at the transformation of the Nigerian economy from agriculture-centered to one dependent on oil mining.

## 2.1 A Pre-History of Nigeria

Sagay (2008:350) has observed that in the beginning, there was no Nigeria. According to him:

There were Kingdoms like Oyo, Lagos, Calabar, Brass, Itsekiri, Benin, Tiv, Bornu, Sokoto Caliphate (with loose control over Kano, Ilorin and Zaria etc), Bonny, Opobo etc. Prior to the British conquest of the different nations making up the present day Nigeria, these nations were independent nation states and communities independent of each other and of Britain.

Further, he observed that there were Ijaws, Igbos, Urhobos, Itsekiris, Yorubas, Hausas, Fulanis, Nafes, Kanuris, Ogonis, Gwaris, Katafs, Jukuns, Edos, Esans, Ibibios, Efiks, Idomas, Tivs, Junkuns, Biroms, Angas, Ogojas and so on, but there were no Nigerians. The various states were for the most part, remarkable for their size and well developed political institutions. For example, Benin Kingdom (present day Edo state) that started as a little city-state on the Benin River rose to an extensive empire embracing many tribes. At the peak of its power in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Benin Empire stretched from Lagos to the Niger and from Idah in the north to the coast.

The story was not different in Yoruba land, where Oyo rose from a small and insignificant Yoruba town on the northern borders of present Oyo state to a great empire. By the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Oyo Empire stretched from Benin in the East to the Western frontiers of Togo in the West, and from Nupe in the north, to the Mangrove swamps to the south. By this time, it had become the largest of the forest states of West Africa. As an empire, Oyo achieved a very high degree of efficient imperial administration based upon well-fashioned political institutions.

The peoples of the Niger Delta were also independently governed and had states with well developed structures. It was the great center of trade with Europe and the principal commodities of trade were slaves in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and palm oil in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These trades, particularly the slave trade, led to the emergence of city-states along the coast, which arose principally as a result of the emigration of people from the hinterlands to the Delta fishing villages, to take advantage of trade with Europeans. In this manner arose the city-states of Sapele and Warri inhabited by the Urhobos and Itsekiris (part of present day Delta state); Brass, Akoso,

Twoa, and Nembe inhabited by the Kalabaris and Ikwerres (part of present day Rivers state); Buguma, Abonnema, and Bakana inhabited by the Ijaw (present day Bayelsa state); Bonny inhabited by the Ibeno (part of present day Rivers state); and Creek town, Henshaw town, and Duke town in Calabar inhabited by the Efiks (present day Cross River and Akwa Ibom states). The City-States of the Niger-Delta had remarkably sophisticated structures and institutions that regulated commerce, religion, education, health, and family life and ensured group survival.

Unlike the Niger-Delta States which sprung up following the expansion of trade in slaves and palm oil in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the occupation of the forest belt area between the Cross River east of the River Niger and Benin, west of the River Niger, and between Igala to the north and the Niger Delta city-states by the Igbos cannot be known for certain. However, it is estimated that the Igbos have occupied this area since the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD. Onwubiko (1972) argues that Igbo land was the most densely populated area of West Africa. This was very much a result of the population movement from Benin in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century eastward, which led to the increased population of the Western or Ika Igbo country. Similarly, the migration of people fleeing from the Fulani slave raids in the north, led to the increase of population in eastern Igbo country. The Igbo political organization was a peculiar one. This was largely due to the geographical location of Igbo land in the heart of the tropical forest, which provided immense obstacles against invasions from external enemies. As a result, the Igbos could not be conquered and hence an empire could not be established in Igbo land. Thus, the Igbos who are by nature very egalitarian and independent never evolved a centralized political structure like the Edos or Yorubas, but maintained small village republics where every adult male had a direct say in governance. Again, the internal political organization of the Igbos took into cognizance, their culture, family life, occupation, and geographic conditions, and worked excellently well in the

regulation and support of the social behavior of the Igbo people.

The northern fringes of present day Nigeria is populated by Hausa-Fulani peoples. The history of the present day Hausa-Fulani population is intricately linked to the Fulani Jihad led by Uthman Dan Fodio in Central Sudan in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Fulani are a nomadic, cattle-herding people who due to their nomadic nature were the first among the Hausa states to come into contact with Islam and Led by Uthman, sought to Islamize the region through Jihad (holy war). The main political consequence of this Jihad was the Fulani conquest of most of what later became northern Nigeria. The Fulani conquest of Hausa land started with Uthman's victory over the army of Mohammed Yunfa, king of Gobir, in 1804 (Usman 1979). After his defeat, Yunfa warned other Hausa kings of the growing Fulani danger, as the Fulani, excited by Uthman's victory began to rally round him in large numbers. To preempt the Fulani's, the Hausa kings started to attack the Fulani communities within their states. This unprovoked attack served to mobilize Fulani support for Uthman. The Jihad thus, apart from being a religious war, was also deeply racial. Onwubiko (1982) recounts that in 1805 leaders of Fulani communities all over the North came to Uthman who gave them flags that symbolized their authority, enjoining them to conquer unbelievers in their areas and to establish true Islam. Consequently, independent Hausa states such as Kebbi, Zaria, Katsina, Gobir, and Kano were conquered between 1805 and 1809. By 1809, the conquest of the entire Hausa land was almost complete. Following the success of the Fulani Jihadist in Hausa land, the Jihad was extended to non-Muslim areas outside Hausa land that had considerable concentrations of Fulanis. Adamawa (1806), Nupe (1810), Ilorin (1835), all fell to the Fulani Jihadists. Thus, through the Islamic holy war of Uthman Dan Fodio, the Sokoto Caliphate (a loose confederation of over 30 emirates) was established in northern Nigeria with headquarters in Sokoto.

## 2.2 Colonial Rule

At the Berlin Conference of 1885, the major European powers established parameters for gaining control over independent African states. Not only did the conference allocate areas of exploitation, it also enunciated the principle of governance otherwise known as the “dual mandate.” The dual mandate makes clear that the colonization of independent African states was for the benefit of both Africa and Europe. Under the terms of the mandate, Europe was to have unfettered access to Africa for its resources and trade, while Africa would benefit from Europe’s superior civilization (Lugard 1965; Perham 1956; 1960; Taiwo 1999). Under these terms, Britain’s claim to the territory known today as Nigeria were formally acknowledged and it wasted little time in establishing its presence there.

Immediately following the partition and the settlement of territorial boundaries, the British encountered certain problems, including:

**A) Securing native recognition for British authority:** The British had difficulties in securing native recognition of British authority in areas under their territories. When the treaties of protection were signed by native rulers, these rulers did not understand the true implication of the treaties they signed. However, when the colonial powers began to set up administrations in these territories by appointing and posting officials, the real intention of the treaties became clear. Many native rulers unwilling to lose their powers to the British, consequently took up arms to defend their sovereignty and freedom. An example of such resistance was the Bornu and Fulani resistance to British occupation, which took the British six years (1900-1906) to quell (Onwubiko 1982).

**B) The existence of sophisticated political institutions in the territories:** This posed a

second major problem for the British. As we have seen from the nation-states such as Oyo, Benin, the city-states of the Niger Delta, the stateless societies of the Ibos, and the Fulani Emirates of Northern Nigeria, important political institutions (a hierarchy of officials, systems of justice, taxation etc) had been evolved. The native people were thus, ambivalent about the colonial system as they clearly preferred their own system, which evolved rationally from a natural admixture of local conditions and contact with other nations and which for centuries succeeded in regulating life and death in those societies.

**C) Inadequate Administrative Personnel:** Added to the two problems discussed above, is the difficulty Britain had with posting adequate British personnel to man the new colonial administrations in the face of the meager financial resources available for such a venture. This administrative problem was worsened by the multiplicity of languages and differences in culture and customs of the new country, Nigeria.

To manage these problems, the British adopted the indirect rule system of administration in Nigeria. This method of colonial administration sowed the seed of discord among ethnic nationalities in Nigeria and has continued to fuel embers of hate, suspicion, fear and domination in contemporary Nigeria. It also produced a synthetic racial system or what has been called “ethno-climatocracy” (Nwokeji 1994) where Nigerians accessed national opportunities and resources through their ethnic locations.

Indirect rule has been defined as a system of administration whose “essential features were the preservation of the traditional political institutions and their adaptation under the tutelage and direction of the British administration, to the requirement of modern units of local Government” (Coalman 1958). It is a system which allows traditional rulers to rule under the

supervision of British officials. The system was first introduced in Northern Nigeria by Lord Lugard after he had conquered native resistance to colonial rule between 1900 and 1906. However, Lugard was not the initiator of the idea, which by that time had been successfully used in such places as India and Uganda. However, Lugard must be given credit for its rigid implementation in Nigeria. In 1965, after his retirement from the colonial service, Lugard published his book the “Dual Mandate,” which attempted to rationalize the exigency of the indirect rule system. According to him, “Europe is in Africa for the mutual benefit of our own industrial classes and of the native races in their progress to a higher plane; that the benefit can be made reciprocal; and that it is the aim and desire of civilized administration to fulfill this mandate.” Unfortunately, the higher plane for Africans was determined by Europeans who also determined the means by which Africans could attain this “higher plane.” In fulfilling Europe’s self-imposed mandate, the resources (natural and human) of Africa were plundered and a specific genre of development, which guaranteed the perpetual underdevelopment of Africa, was imposed.

The indirect rule system was immediately successful in Northern Nigeria because of the institutions of the large Fulani Emirates, which were easily adaptable to indirect rule. The Fulani emirs were retained as the governing class but were supervised by British administrative officers. The Emir and his court, a native treasury that supervised the collection of taxes, and a native court that administered justice were the hallmarks of the indirect rule system in Northern Nigeria.

In the west, indirect rule was not as successful as it was in the north. This was because the British administration attempted to restore supreme authority of Yoruba land to the Alafin of Oyo, whose influence had diminished considerably in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The independent Yoruba



Obas resented and resisted this situation. This was further worsened by the failure of the British to incorporate the influential western-educated elite in local administration, thus provoking serious protest from these people. Finally, the indirect rule system could not achieve the success it achieved in the North because the British lamely thought that Yoruba Obas had the autocratic powers of the Emirs of the North who could rule without the council of chiefs. This was not possible in the west because the Oba existed within a chieftaincy system that strongly incorporated chiefs in the decision making process. Without the chiefs, the Obas could not control the people.

In Eastern Nigeria, the indirect rule system failed woefully. This was because the Igbo society being a stateless, egalitarian society with a system of village democracy had no established centralized traditional authority in the mould of the Yoruba Obas or the Emirs of Hausa land, able to command the obedience of their people. Anxious to achieve the success it achieved in Northern Nigeria, the British reacted to the stateless, chiefless nature of Igbo society by creating chiefs by warrant and vesting them with powers hitherto unknown in Igbo society. These chiefs utilizing their arbitrary powers and control of the courts became impossibly tyrannical and unpopular. The use of these unpopular chiefs to collect taxes in the East led to the famous Aba Women Riot of 1929, which had the chiefs and the native courts as the principal targets (Van Allen 1971; Mba 1982).

Thus, while indirect rule theoretically preserved indigenous political institutions, the nature and substance of these institutions were significantly altered. Because the British were primarily interested in furthering their economic agenda, local communities and people were manipulated to secure British advantage. The system of agriculture was transformed to facilitate exports and a new category of wage workers were created that are the precursors of the modern

Nigerian civil servant who is essentially parasitic and live off the labor and sweat of the tiny minority involved in agriculture, mining, construction, entertainment, and industry. These economic changes in turn produced corresponding changes in the social structure of society. Overnight, radical demographic changes occurred. For example, there was a rise in rural-urban migration, which depleted the villages and overpopulated the cities. Apart from the problem of overpopulation, this demographic shift also significantly reduced the area of land under cultivation and put great pressures on cities to provide for its expanding populations. Also, gender roles shifted as more women were increasingly engaging in paid employment. This brought changes in the composition of the Nigerian family and ushered in an era of single women uncharitably described as “ladies” or loose women. Finally, it encouraged the development of a new class of middle-class elites who were both empowered by the colonial system and frustrated by their socio-political emasculation by the British/chiefs coalition.

### **2.3 The Creation of Nigeria**

As we have seen, independent states existed in the form of kingdoms and empires (Benin, Oyo, and Hausa-Fulani etc), city-states (Niger Delta), and stateless societies (Igbo). But there was no Nigeria. In 1849 John Beecroft was appointed as the British consul in Nigeria in a bid to protect the lives, properties and trade of British traders. Beecroft’s appointment began the series of political and social changes that gradually subsumed the territory that is today known as Nigeria under British imperial rule. The appointment of Beecroft was soon followed by other policies that unified these nation-states under British colonial rule, including the gunboat diplomacy that enforced the one-sided agreements of the protection of British traders and the signing of the protection treaty that ceded control to the British. According to Sagay (2008:352), a typical protection treaty contained the following clauses:

The British majesty hereby undertakes to extend to them (protected people) and to territory under

their authority and jurisdiction her fraction favors and protection.

Consequently,

Protected people were prohibited from entering into any correspondence, agreement or treaty with any foreign power or nation except with the knowledge and sanction of Britain. Any disputes between the native chiefs themselves or between them and British or foreign traders had to be submitted to the British council. Native chiefs were bound to act on the advice of the British officers in matters relating to the administration of justice, the development of the resources of the country, the interest of or in any matter in relation to peace, order and good government and the general progress of civilization.

Armed with the protection treaties and emboldened by the 1885 Berlin conference of partition, Britain invaded, conquered and colonized the independent states of modern Nigeria independently, before foisting an amalgamation in 1914. Thus, in 1813, Lokoja and Benue became parts of the Niger Coast Protectorate; in 1815, the oil Rivers Protectorate was established; and Lagos was annexed in 1861. In 1896, all Yoruba land south of Ilorin came under the control of the Lagos Government and was administered as the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos. In 1897, Benin became a part of the Niger Coast Protectorate. In 1900, the Niger Coast Protectorate was renamed the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and in 1906, the Protectorate was merged with the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos and became known as the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria (Sagay 2008; Falola and Heaton 2008).

A chartered company, the “Royal Niger Company” administered Northern Nigeria on behalf of the British government before 1900, even though the British government had declared a protectorate over areas claimed by the company in 1887. In 1900, however, the British government took over direct administration of the area from the RNC and renamed it the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria with Lord Lugard appointed its first High Commissioner. Consequently, Bida and Adamawa (1901); Bauchi, Gombe, Zaira, and Kano (1902); and Sokoto (1903) were conquered by the British. Finally, on January 1 1914, the two separate governments (the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria and the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria) were

amalgamated as the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria with Lord Lugard as its Governor-General (Onwubiko 1982).

We see, then, that Nigeria was made by Britain. In fact, the name “Nigeria” was chosen by Flora Shaw a correspondent of the “Times of London” and mistress of Lord Lugard, the founding Governor-General of Nigeria, as a tribute to the Niger, the third longest river in Africa (runs for 730 miles through Nigeria into the Gulf of Guinea) and the main artery of commerce and communications in the West African sub-region. Justifying her choice of name in the “Financial Times of London” of January 8, 1897 she argued:

The name Nigeria applying to no other part of Africa may without offence to any neighbours be accepted as co-extensive with the territories over which the Royal Niger Company has extended British influence, and may serve to differentiate them equally from the colonies of Lagos and the Niger Protectorate on the coast and from the French territories of the Upper Niger (See Omoruyi 2002).

The new unified territory (Nigeria) came to cover 356,668 square miles – roughly twice the size of the US state of California and three times the size of the United Kingdom. It is bordered to the south by the Bight of Benin and Biafra, on the west by Benin Republic, on the north by the Republic of Niger, and on the east by the Republic of Cameroun. It stretches roughly for 700 miles from west to east and 650 miles from south to north, covering an area between 3° and 15°E longitude and between 4° and 14°N latitude (Falola and Heaton 2008).

Several of the founding fathers of modern Nigeria attest to the forced creation of Nigeria and trace much of the nation’s problems especially those concerning ethnic rivalry and political instability to this founding. The British assembled the various nation-states to form the artificial political entity Nigeria in a piecemeal fashion that completely ignored the historical, cultural, political, social and environmental trajectories of these nation-states. This has created distortions in Nigeria’s quest for nationhood leading to conclusions that Nigeria is “a mere geographical expression”(Awolowo 1947) comprising of “inconsistent cognitive elements” (Ijomah 1988)

lacking clear linguistic or behavioral assertions crucial to maintaining unity and stability. Thus, several decades after the "amalgamation," inconsistencies in British colonial policy continues to reinforce ethnic cleavages that are antagonistic to the development of nationhood. For example, while it is easy to create the facade of a state "within some constitutional or unconstitutional frameworks" that is acceptable to the international community and foreign governments, "the question of nationhood cannot be created by the fiat of men however powerful. A nation must evolve from some tortuous natural process of evolution" (Babalola 2001). Even Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (the first Prime Minister of Nigeria) considered a direct beneficiary of British colonial statecraft argued at the 1948 Legislative Council, that:

Since 1914 the British Government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian people themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs and do not show themselves any sign of willingness to unite ... Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country (See David-West 2002).

The British "intention" was purely economic. British economic policy had three main motions: to expand commerce through the exportation of raw materials (cash crops and mineral resources) and the importation of finished goods, to integrate Nigeria into the global cash economy based on the UK currency, and to force Nigerians to work for that currency (Falola and Heaton 2008). The British economic policy also required that Nigeria be self-supporting. This meant that Britain was not to invest in the economic development of Nigeria. To ensure that its interest would remain protected even after independence especially considering the overwhelming success of indirect rule in the north, the British designed a political system that put the north firmly in control and gave the British unfettered access to Niger Delta resource wealth. According to Lord Harcourt the British Colonial Secretary at the time:

We have released northern Nigeria from the leading strings of the treasury. The promising and well-conducted youth of the north is now on an allowance on its own and is about to effect an alliance with a southern Lady of means. I have issued the special license and Lord Lugard will perform the ceremony. May the union be fruitful and the couple constant (See Sagay 2008: 365).

From the onset of this union, the north was to be the dominant, controlling partner and groom, and the south, bride. The plan of colonial Britain was to retain political and economic control through local northern surrogates who would protect British interests even after political independence. This plan along with other mediating factors has produced the near endless schism that describes the failing nature of Nigerian federalism. It is no exaggeration to argue that the Niger Delta conflict results partly from the deliberate political manipulation of Britain and “strike to the very heart of Nigeria’s political future” (Watts, Okonta and Kemedi 2004). In essence, “many of the post-independence socio-political and economic formations are a direct consequence of the state-building and economic integration process begun under colonial rule” (Osaghae 1998: 1). While it may be counter-intuitive to hold the British fully to account (because of what Sultan Ahmadu Bello called the “mistake of 1914”) for the Niger Delta crisis, it is crucial, given the “deep roots of post-independence structures and processes, as well as continuities between colonial and post-colonial formations” (Osaghae 1998: 1) that we establish a direct link between British colonial economic policies and the present Niger Delta crisis. At least, it is the economic objectives and policies of colonial Britain that ultimately produced a Nigerian economy that is wholly dependent on export and lacking in diversity. If we combine this with an inherited political structure designed to institute and sustain northern political hegemony even in the face of widespread political, economic, and demographic changes, we see that the violence in the Niger Delta today is partly an indictment on the colonial and post-colonial statecraft of Britain.

## **2.4 Modern Nigeria**

With a population of 152,217,341 people, Nigeria today is Africa’s most populous country and the 8<sup>th</sup> most populous nation in the world. One out of every four Africans is a

Nigerian. It consists of a humongous central government with extensive and excessive powers, thirty-six federating states (plus the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja) and 774 local government areas loosely organized under six amorphous regions: north east, north west, north central, south east, south west, and south south. It has over 250 ethnic groups the most dominant being the Hausa-Fulani (29%) in the north east and north west, the Yoruba (21%) in the south west, and the Igbo (18%) in the south East. A mix of minority ethnic groups with a smattering of Igbo populations populates the south south and north central regions. For example, the dominant ethnic nationality in the south south is the Ijaw (10%) with a population of about 30 million people. The north central region is home to the middle belt minorities: Kanuris, Tivs, Igalas, Junkuns, Nupes, Zango-Katafs and Biroms surrounded by Hausa-Fulani populations (CIA 2010).

Historically, the main artery of commerce and communication in Nigeria has been the River Niger from which Nigeria got her name. The River Niger is the third longest River in Africa and flows about 4000 kilometers. It flows from Guinea through Mali, Niger, and Benin and enters Nigeria from the north western state of Kebbi. The River Niger empties into the Gulf of Guinea through its many branches and tributaries in the Niger Delta region. A second important river is the Benue, which is the Niger's largest tributary and flows 1400 kilometers from Cameroon into Nigeria, where it empties into the River Niger. The Niger merges with the Benue in the confluence town of Lokoja in the north central region. Other important rivers are the Sokoto, Kaduna, and Ethiope (tributaries of the Niger) and Donga, Katsina Ala, Gongola, and Ibi. All of these rivers merge into the Yobe River, which flows along Nigeria's border with Niger and empties into Lake Chad.

The nation-states or nationalities that make up modern-day Nigeria feature diverse geographic, cultural, linguistic, and ethno-religious characteristics (Crowder 1978; Onwubiko

1982). For example, while the area around the Niger Delta contains dense mangrove swamps, the other parts of the south are heavily forested and these forests open up to the hills and plateaus of the middle belt in the north central region. Further north are the plains of the savanna, which lead to the semi-desert region known as the Sahel (Falola and Heaton 2008). The eastern region comprises dense forests and mountains that for decades provided natural protection for the inhabitants of the region.

The climate in Nigeria is arid in the north, tropical in the center, and equatorial in the south. Weather variations are determined by the interaction of moist southwest monsoon and dry northeast winds. Mean maximum temperatures are 30<sup>o</sup> C-32<sup>o</sup> C in the south and 33<sup>o</sup> C-35<sup>o</sup> C in the north. High humidity is present in the south from February to November and from June to September in the north. Low humidity coincides with the dry season. There are two main seasons in Nigeria: the wet season, which lasts from February to November (June to September in the north), and the dry season, which lasts from December to January (October to May in the north). During the dry season, rainfall is very high in the south ranging from 2000 millimeters in coastal zone and 3550 millimeters in the Niger Delta. Rainfall is very light in the north (ranging from 500 to 750 millimeters) and temperatures are very high, usually in the 90's and 100's. The dry season begins with the strong cool wind that blows from the Sahara called the "harmattan." Although the harmattan brings relief from the heat, it also brings particles of sand, which causes blindness and increases the desertification of the northern savannas (Falola and Heaton 2008).

Nigeria is home to a wild array of natural resources some of which have made Nigeria famous. Such mineral wealth as crude oil, natural gas, coal, tin, limestone, niobium, lead, zinc, silver, gold, and diamonds dot its landscape. However, it is her oil deposits found in small fields in the Niger Delta that have made Nigeria both famous and ignominious. Nigeria has proven oil



reserves of 36.2 billion barrels and proven natural gas reserves estimated at 182 trillion cubic. From the early 1970s, oil has become the single most important cash commodity in Nigeria replacing agricultural cash crops like cotton, groundnut and cocoa as the dominant cash earner for Nigeria. Today, sale of crude oil constitutes over 90 percent of Nigeria's export earnings and 80 percent of domestic revenue (Osaghae 1998; Watts 2009). Dependence on crude oil as the main revenue source has contributed immensely to Nigeria's economic and political instability since crude oil is susceptible to the vagaries and fluctuations of world petroleum prices. Also, the plunder of oil wealth by local and national leaders have crippled the nation, led to structural underdevelopment, and impoverished the vast majority of the population 70 percent of which live below poverty lines (Okonofua and Ugaigbe 2004). The lootability of oil has facilitated the rise of new billionaire politicians who use their stolen wealth to facilitate entry into politics and to perpetuate themselves in power. It has also facilitated the rise of local warlords and chieftains who prey on oil and its associated products and challenge the authority of the state and its instruments of coercion. The conflict in the Niger Delta results partly from the schisms between these groups.

Nigeria's population is very diverse. It consists of over 250 ethno-linguistic groups speaking over 400 languages. Because of its ethnic diversity and abundant cultural and religious forms, Nigeria is often the theater of violent inter-ethnic and inter-religious confrontations. As Ijomah (1988) observes, the British in creating Nigeria focused more on the economic potentials of the new state and less on the cultural, spiritual, political, social, and economic needs of the people. Very little attention was paid to the almost irreconcilable cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and religious differences among the various nation-states that make up present day Nigeria. As a result, otherwise minor skirmishes and misunderstandings have blown out of proportion and

resulted in violent confrontations that have produced countless deaths, social displacements and destruction of properties.

For example, Nigeria's religious population is split between Islam (50%), Christianity (40%), and indigenous beliefs (10%). This religious configuration has frequently resulted in violent confrontations perpetuated by religious extremists and fanatics especially in the Muslim dominated north. Since independence, there have been over 20 cases of severe ethno-religious conflicts resulting in over 100,000 deaths, the displacement of millions of people, and the destruction of property worth billions of naira. The most horrific of these ethno-religious conflicts were those involving the Maitatsine, which started in 1980 in Kano and spread through five northern states, eventually ending in 1985. The Maitatsine was a Muslim extremist sect led by Mohammed Marwa an immigrant from Cameroun, which went on rampage killing Christians in several northern cities. It began in Kano in 1980 and in only several days of fighting resulted in the deaths of 4,177 people in Kano alone before spreading to other northern states including Kaduna (Zaria), Bornu (Maiduguri and Bukumkutu), Gongola (Jimeta, Dobeli, Zango, Yelwa, Va'atita, Rumde, and Nassarawa), and Bauchi (Pantami). By the time it ended in 1985, over 30 thousand people (mostly Christians) had been killed and property valued at billions of naira destroyed. The killings also forced the migration of many Igbo Christians based in the north who were the principal targets of the anarchists. Within the last five years, another Islamic fundamentalist group "Boko Haram" (meaning no to western education) have ravaged the north killing over 10,000 people and displacing thousands.

Young people perpetrate most of the ethno-religious killings in Nigeria. The population of Nigeria is overwhelmingly youthful. The 2005 provisional census estimated that 64.7 million of Nigeria's 140 million people were under the age of 24, while only 2.9 percent were over 65

years. This is not surprising since the average life expectancy has been decreasing now estimated at 47 years (CIA 2010) mainly due to poverty, malnutrition, inadequate health care, pollution, and the spread of communicable disease including HIV/AIDS. Still, the average population growth rate is 1.9 percent, meaning that the ratio of young to middle age and older persons continue to rise. While this is a good sign, at least, in terms of the size of the nation's working population and for development, Nigeria has historically been unable to utilize its abundant human capital for socio-economic and political transformation. In fact, the problem with Nigeria is most noticeable in the arena of politics where successive governments have used the youths as weapons of destruction against perceived opponents or for distorting the electoral process through rigging, ballot box stuffing, vote snatching, and thuggery.

Politically, Nigeria is organized under a federal structure. At independence, the nationalist leaders that won independence (Sultan Ahmadu Bello, Tafawa Balewa, Obafemi Awolowo, Nnamdi Azikiwe, Anthony Enahoro, Mbonu Ojike, etc) opted to maintain the existing colonial parameters, consisting of three regions: north, east, and west, each with a premier and a prime minister at the center in Lagos. Following agitations by ethnic minorities for the creation of a new region to accommodate their interests and to speed up the development of their communities, a fourth region – the mid-western region – was created in 1964. In 1967, General Yakubu Gowon (the head of state at the time) in order to resolve the heightened fear of military coups and ethnic restlessness and to checkmate the Biafran secession threat, decided to create twelve states out of the existing four regions. The new states were: North-Western State (comprising Sokoto and Niger Provinces), North-Central State (comprising Katsina and Zaria Provinces), Kano State (comprising Kano Province), North-eastern State (comprising Bornu, Adamawa, Sardauna, and Bauchi Provinces), Benue/Plateau State (comprising Benue and

Plateau provinces), Lagos State (comprising the Colony Province and the Federal Territory of Lagos), Western State (comprising the existing Western Region but excluding the Colony Province), Mid-Western State (comprising the Mid-Western State), East-Central State (comprising the existing eastern Region but excluding Calabar, Ogoja, and Rivers Provinces), South-Eastern State (comprising Calabar and Ogoja Provinces), and Rivers State (comprising Ahoada, Brass, Degema, Ogoni, and Port Harcourt Divisions).

In 1976, following more ethnic agitations for the creation of states, more states were created by governmental fiat, increasing the number of states to 19 (Anambra, Bendel, Bauchi, Benue, Bornu, Cross River, Gongola, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers, and Sokoto states). Still more agitations led to the creation of two additional states in 1987 (Akwa Ibom from the existing Cross River state and Katsina from the existing Kaduna state). In 1991, 12 more states were created out of the existing 21 state structure. The new states were: Abia (carved out of Imo state), Adamawa (created from Gongola state), Akwa Ibom (carved out of Cross River State), Delta (created out of Bendel state), Edo (created out of Bendel state), Enugu (carved out of Anambra state), Jigawa (carved out of Kano state), Kebbi (carved out of Sokoto state), Kogi (carved out of Kwara state), Osun (carved out of Oyo state), Taraba (created from Gongola state), and Yobe (carved of Borno state). In addition, the federal capital Territory was moved from Lagos to Abuja. Finally, in 1996, five more states were created including Bayelsa (carved out of Rivers state), Ebonyi (carved out of Abia and Enugu states), Ekiti (carved out of Ondo state), Gombe (carved out of Bauchi state), Nassarawa (carved out of Plateau state), and Zamfara (carved out of Sokoto state).

The politics of state creation in Nigeria is without doubt the politics of ethnicity. Ethnic consciousness continues to play a major role in the political process and in the distribution of

political positions, patronages, and rewards. Because of this consciousness, a federal character system, which attempts to balance power, opportunities, and rewards across the complex geo-political divide has been in place for a long time and has pushed merit to the background. Today, the federal character arrangement exists in virtually every aspect of Nigerian life including education where students from particular regions are expected to score higher than students in other regions to assure of places in the universities. States in northern Nigeria are traditionally designated educationally disadvantaged states while many in the south are considered educationally advantaged. Also, in politics, a zoning formula was put in place to ensure that power (at the center) rotated among the six geo-political regions. The politics of zoning is an attempt to resolve longstanding political injustice foisted by a British colonial system that took advantage of Nigeria's ethnic diversity to impose northern rule on the rest of Nigeria. This imposition was achieved through the manipulation of census results.

After reconstructing the geopolitical map of Nigeria, the British proceeded to conduct a series of censuses, which were deliberately rigged in favor of the north (Sagay 2008). For example, the first ever Nigeria-wide census, which was conducted in 1931, was rigged to give the north numerical advantage over the south. Out of a population of 19,930,000 the north was awarded 11,434,000, the west at 3,855,000, and the east at 4,641,000., with a plurality of 2,938,000 people in favor of the north (Sagay 2008). Thus, from the very beginning, a permanent majority in population, which was intended to translate into a permanent majority in the future federal legislature and consequently a permanent control of power, was programmed for the Hausa-Fulani political elite. On the basis of this figure, the north during the 1950 National Conference, demanded for at least half the seats in the central legislature as a condition for remaining a part of Nigeria. Consequently, according to Sagay, in 1951 the colonial officials

distributed seats in the central legislature thus: north – 68 seats, west – 34 seats, and east – 34 seats.

In the 1952 census, the scenario of the 1931 census was repeated. This time, the increase of population in the twenty-one years between 1931 and 1952, was so carefully and masterfully doctored, that the birth and death rates in the three regions were virtually the same, and the difference in population between north and south remained very identical to the 1931 figure. Thus, out of total population of 31,540,000 the north had 16,540,000, the west 6,369,000, and the east 7,971,000. Again, the north had an advantage of 2,500,000 people. With these results, seats were distributed that made it possible for the north to gain political control. Even if the west and east (collectively known as the south) had pooled resources together to challenge the north, they would have failed. For example, in the last nation-wide elections before independence, Sir James Robertson, the Governor-General, recognizing the strategy they had so carefully worked out, invited Sir Tafawa Balewa of the Northern People's Congress (NPC) to form the new government even though the counting of votes had only just begun. When the final results were announced, the NPC did not have a simple majority in the House of Representatives. It was clear from the results that the Nnamdi Azikiwe led National Council of Nigerian Citizens (From the east) with 89 seats could have successfully formed a coalition government with the Obafemi Awolowo led Action Group (from the west) with 73 seats and put the NPC with (134 seats) in the opposition. Professor Omo-Omoruyi explains the preemptive action of Sir James Robertson, thus:

Sir James Robertson was a shrewd implementer of the northern rule earlier fashioned by Lords Harcourt and Lugard. Sir James was especially recruited by the British government in 1955 because of his experience in Sudan with an identical situation to Nigeria's. He is on record as confessing that he did not handle this phase to the satisfaction of Dr Azikiwe and Chief Awolowo. Sir James confessed that he invited Balewa to form the government in 1959 by persuading some of the southern members to support him and after Sir Abubakar had assured him that he will get a southern group to work with him. Sir James did this before the results were announced. He confessed that he did this to appease the Sardauna of Sokoto, the leader of the NPC, to stop him

from taking the north out of Nigeria (Omoruyi 1999: 25).

The story of the 1963 census (the first after independence) was not different. The north, imitating their British allies, expertly doctored the figures to achieve pre-determined results (Sagay 2008). The eastern region particularly challenged the result with such venom that the country dangled dangerously on the precipice of anarchy. The unjust manipulation of the census to facilitate permanent northern political control was part of the grievances of the east in their ill-fated attempt to pull out of Nigeria through the creation of the Republic of Biafra. As a result of their declaration (of cessation), a bloody civil war was fought from 1967 to 1970, which resulted in the death of over 1 million easterners and the total destruction of all infrastructures in eastern Nigeria. At the end of the war in 1970, the east was brought back under direct political control and supervision of the north, and permanently shut out of the Nigerian presidency.

The 1991 provisional census was also condensed to maintain the carefully designed colonial program. Out of a total estimated population of 88,504,477, the north was awarded 47,261,962 and the south 41,242,512 (National Population Commission, 1991), thereby maintaining the colonial margin. According to Sagay:

The most absurd aspect of the announced figures is the attempt to equate Kano State with Lagos State. While Lagos is given a figure of 5,655,751, Kano, in order to match that, is given a figure of 5,632,040. Any honest observer knows that the Lagos population cannot be anything less than 15 million. But by the legacy of colonial manipulation, the most populous state in the south must not be allowed to have larger population than the most populous state in the north. That is not all, having kept the population of Lagos state down to just over 5 million, the state is allocated only 20 local governments whilst Kano and Jigawa states (officially with a combined population slightly less than Lagos), are allocated a total of 71 local government councils. Again, while Lagos State has only 24 members in the House of Representatives, Kano and Jigawa (with a smaller combined population), have a total of 35 seats (Sagay 2008).

It follows logically, therefore, that no bill can pass through the House without the concurrence of the northern states, even though bills will sail through smoothly even if the whole southern representatives oppose them. Sagay concludes that the implication of this is that “the south is the object of internal colonialism; that the British merely handed over colonial authority to the

Arewa north, and the Arewa north is determined to sustain this colonial relationship with the south indefinitely.”

Sagay is on point especially when we consider the confessions of Donald Duke, a former two-time governor of Cross River state. Speaking before an audience of pro-democracy activists, Duke admitted that the 2006 census was rigged. According to Duke (2010):

When we conducted the census in 2006 or so, the raw figures said we were over two hundred million; when they went and processed the figures it came down to 140 million. When you look at those figures and compare to those we had in 1991 at a growth rate of 2.1 or something like that, it is really just an extrapolation, because we were too embarrassed to admit our true numbers.

The question is why did the government tamper with the results? If the government could reduce the census figure unilaterally by about 60 million people to achieve some untoward purpose, could it also have inflated figures for particular communities, states, and regions? Also, how is economic policy made in Nigeria? Is it conceivable that those who design our economic, health, education, and transportation policies act on purely speculative information? What other information about Nigeria and its people are based on this type of fiction? The questions are endless.

We cannot discuss modern Nigeria or its series of political transformations without discussing the role played by the military. Today, Nigeria is in its Fifth Republic and is experiencing the longest uninterrupted period of civilian rule in its history. For most of Nigeria's history, the military has been in power. The Nigerian military through history has been influenced by two Key variables. The first is the colonial roots of the military, which has had tremendous impact on the way the military perceived, or used to perceive, its role, types of issues around which defense policy should be structured and its strategic and tactical doctrines. The second variable is based on the requirement of law enforcement and territorial defense. These two variables made the Nigerian armed forces militaristic in orientation and design as an



instrument of control rather than an institution for the development of society.

Since 1970 (the end of the Nigerian civil war which was fought between forces loyal to the Biafran leader Lieutenant Colonel Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu and the federal forces led by Colonel Yakubu Gowon, the Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces) all significant political power has been concentrated in Nigeria's military. Following the first coup, which brought General Aguiyi-Ironsi to power in 1966, various configurations of military governments have controlled the political destiny of Nigeria. Between 1966 and 1975, power was concentrated in the Federal Military Government headed by Yakubu Gowon (a Christian northerner) whose position as chairman of the Supreme Military Council was unassailable. Gowon's regime was criticized principally for corruption which had become widespread, and for inefficiency (which saw the government squandering an oil boom) and for growing criminality among the population. Gowon was eventually toppled in a bloodless military coup in July 1975 and replaced by Brigadier Murtala Ramat Muhammed, a Muslim northerner. Muhammed's regime was short-lived despite the promise he showed early when he was assassinated following an unsuccessful military coup in February 1976.

Muhammed was succeeded by a reluctant Lieutenant General Olusegun Obasanjo, a southern Christian of Yoruba extraction, who pledged to hand over power to civilians in 1979. Obasanjo kept Muhammed's structure and continued with his reform agenda. In 1979, Obasanjo approved a new constitution for Nigeria, which was modeled after the constitution of the United States. The constitution provided for a separation of powers among the executive, legislative and judicial branches. Thereafter, he presided over the conduct of an election the results of which were hotly challenged but which ushered in the Second Republic led by President Shehu Shagari a northern Muslim from Sokoto state. Obasanjo also began the plan to move the federal capital

(and seat of government) from Lagos to Abuja.

The Second Republic was short-lived. In December 1983, the military led by General Muhammadu Buhari a northern Muslim, overthrew the civilian regime of Shehu Shagari. The principal reason given by the military for the coup was Shagari's profligacy and the dwindling oil fortunes. The military promised several reforms including the reduction of corruption in government, a drastic trimming of the federal budget, and "war against indiscipline." The government emphasized hard work, discipline, patriotism, and environmental hygiene. While these appeared to be lofty programs, the gains were slow in coming and Buhari's regime was eventually toppled in what many consider a palace coup in August 1985.

General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida a northern Muslim headed the new regime. Babangida's regime faced stiff opposition from the military and civil society groups notably the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) and the labor movement. Under Babangida, Nigeria's economic recession appeared to worsen. To address this, Babangida introduced the Structural Adjustment Program, which obtained about \$4.2 billion in support from the World Bank and the IMF and the rescheduling of its foreign debts. These supports were conditioned to a series of currency devaluations and trade liberalization. The results of the SAP were declining productivity, a decline in real income, rising unemployment, increasing levels of poverty, and increases in crime. Apart from these, Babangida presided over a transition program that was considered one of the longest in Africa. From 1985 until 1993 when he left office, Babangida promised a series of political reforms that would culminate in the handover of political power to civilians. Critics insisted that Babangida had no desire to handover and labeled him a "fox" or a "Maradona" who was playing soccer with the Nigerian people. An evidence for this charge was the 1992 presidential elections that he organized and which was ostensibly won by Bashorun

Moshood Kashimawo Olalekan Abiola but was annulled by Babangida for no good reason. Babangida was eventually forced to “step aside” in 1993 by a coalition of local and international coalition groups. He handed over power to an Interim National Government led by Chief Ernest Shonekan, a southern Christian.

In November 1993, General Sani Abacha who remained in office till his death in 1998 toppled the Interim National Government. During his time in power, General Abacha suppressed dissent, orchestrated phantom coups (in order to jail or kill opponents) and perpetrated countless human rights violations that resulted in the imposition of stiff economic and social sanctions on Nigeria. Abacha also presided over a transition program that saw the registration of five political parties all of which adopted Abacha as their sole presidential candidate. Under Abacha, amorphous groups such as the Youths Earnestly Ask for Abacha (YEAA) dotted the political landscape and benefitted immensely from Abacha’s largesse. Corruption was also taken to whole new levels such that following Abacha’s death in 1998 he was believed to have siphoned over US \$10 billion into foreign accounts. Upon Abacha’s death, General Abdulsalam Abubakar a northern Muslim and next in command to Abacha took over control of government and immediately commenced a transition to civilian rule. To actualize that process, he released all of the political leaders incarcerated by General Abacha including General Olusegun Obasanjo (rtd) but not before the death of Bashorun M.K.O. Abiola and retired General Shehu Musa Yar’Adua in custody. General Obasanjo eventually won the presidential elections and was sworn-in in April 2007. He remained in office till April 2007 and was succeeded by Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar’Adua (younger brother to the late General Shehu Musa Yar’Adua) who died in office in 2009.

It stands to reason, therefore, that much of the political fissures in Nigeria today results

from the structural foundation of Nigeria and particularly from a British colonial legacy of ethnic manipulation, and economic and cultural exploitation. This foundation of deliberate distortion and manipulation without regards to the cultural, social, political, and economic trajectories of the various nationalities in the Nigerian project continues to haunt development in Nigeria. When these conditions mesh with a culture of corruption, fiscal indiscipline and recklessness, and over dependence on crude oil as the nation's only economic activity with its own extractive and distributive logic, we have a disaster waiting to happen.

## **2.5 The Niger Delta People and Environment**

The Niger Delta is the territory that lies between the estuaries of the Benin River to the West and the Cross River to the East of the River Niger. It covers a distance of about 270 miles along the Atlantic Coast and stretches for about 120 miles inland. The region is described as the largest wetland in Africa and the second largest in the world after the Mississippi (Nseabasi 2005; Saliu et al 2007). It is criss-crossed by an intricate watery maze of marshlands, labyrinthine creeks, tributaries, and lagoons, which link together the main rivers: Forcados, Nun, Benin, Brass, Bonny (all estuaries of the River Niger), Kwa-Ibo, the Cross and other separate streams. The region is inhabited by numerous ethnic nationalities such as the Ijaw, Urhobo, Isoko, Itsekiri, Ogoni, Igbo, Kwale, Kalabari, Ikwerre, Okrika, Ibani, Ekpeye, Gokana, Eleme, Ndoni, Abua, Ogoni, Odual, Edo, etc (Okonta and Douglas 2003) and comprises the six littoral states of Akwa-Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers (Saliu et al 2007). The highly diverse nature of the Niger Delta makes it prone to inter-ethnic hostilities and violence. For example, there has been a long-running battle between Ijaws and Itsekiris and between Itsekiris and Urhobos in Warri, which has resulted in countless deaths and destruction of properties estimated at billions of naira. The region is also home to a wide array of animal and aquatic life,

giant ferns and towering mangrove plants and its creeks and swamps lie atop one of the biggest reserves of crude oil in the world, currently estimated at 34 billion barrels (Time magazine 2006).

The Niger Delta topography poses enormous "first nature" geographic challenges and provides a difficult geographical context for its development. These challenges present governments, communities, and businesses (including the oil conglomerates) with a range of "second nature" challenges in regards to infrastructure, service delivery, and economic development (Higgins 2009). However, these first and second nature challenges are not the only challenges hampering poverty reduction and development in the Niger Delta. Other forces including pollution, political instability, ethnicity, and corruption feature prominently in the Niger Delta problematic and until an approach that takes in this context is adopted, peace may continue to elude the region.

Despite these challenges, the discovery of crude oil in the late 1950s has transformed the Niger-Delta region from a primarily fishing and agrarian economy into a complex web of economic and industrial activities of unimaginable proportions. Overnight, the serene and peaceful creeks and swamps were turned into a convoluted sprawling mass of industrial waste, noise, pollution, overpopulation, exploitation, poverty, deprivation, and squalor. Yet, out of this utter mess, flow out millions and millions of barrels per day of the world's most sought after natural resource – crude oil. Oil production from the region is the major source of revenue for the Nigerian government and has put the Nigerian state at a strategic position in the global calculations of industrial states and their multinational oil corporations (Saliu et al 2007). Paradoxically, the region that bears these riches is also home to some of Africa's poorest peoples (existing on less than \$1 a day), and is the theatre of the continent's worst environmental

destruction (Okonta and Douglas 2003; Time magazine 2006). This is why Agbu (2005:81) argues that “Nigeria’s Niger Delta and its human travails are indeed one where what may be regarded as potential ‘paradise on earth’ has turned to ‘hell on earth’ for the peoples of the area as a result of cumulative practice of environmental degradation caused by oil exploration.”

Osuoka (2003) and Saliu et al (2007) argue that the indiscriminate manner and lack of concern for the environment with which oil is mined and exported and its revenue appropriated has disrupted the fragile ecology of the Niger Delta leaving it desolate and decrepit. According to Osuoka (2003), all stages of oil activity from exploration and drilling to transportation, result in the destruction of the natural environment and the livelihood of the local inhabitants who depend on the land and creeks of the Delta for their survival. When these are combined with the perennial problems of oil spill and blowouts resulting from the use of outdated and ill-maintained facilities and equipment, the ecological disaster in the region becomes the worst in the world (ICG 2006) and this has accelerated the deterioration of the socio-economic and health conditions of peoples of the region. As Bassey (2009) observes, one consequence of the mindless exploitation of oil in the Niger Delta is that the people already impoverished by the economics and politics of oil exploitation continue to subsidize the costs of crude oil and augment the profits of the oil majors through the personal and collective losses they suffer in environmental services, quality of life, and environmental degradation.

Higgins (2009) reports that disaggregated human development indicators paints a dismal picture for the Niger Delta. For example, energy availability is low despite the fact that the Niger Delta provides the United States with one fifth of its energy needs (UNDP 2006). Bayelsa state which is the second largest oil producing state in the Niger Delta (behind Rivers state) is not linked to the national power grid. Also, while the Niger Delta hosts a large number of freshwater

distributaries and vast groundwater reserves, no part of the Niger Delta boasts regular supply of portable water (UNDP 2006). More damning is the health care condition of the Niger Delta. The HIV/AIDS prevalence rate is among the highest in Nigeria. In fact, some health indicators for the region are below the national average (Higgins 2009) including higher than average infant mortality and post-neonatal mortality rates (UNDP 2006). According to Higgins (2009), the Niger Delta also performs very poorly in terms of health treatment. For example, only 25.1% of children with acute respiratory infections and fever sought medical attention from health providers, compared with 49.5% in the north central region and 52.6% in the south west region. Also, in a 2003 NDHS survey, 34.8% of indigenes reported that the distance between their residence and health facilities was a major problem and this was the largest proportion for the nation. Similarly, 47.1% of Niger Delta women surveyed reported poverty or lack of money as the major barrier they face in accessing healthcare and this was the highest regional figure, which was also much higher than the national average of 30.4% (UNDP 2006).

The implication of this is that the over four decades of consistent oil production in the region has brought enormous wealth and influence to Nigeria and its leaders at the same time that it has pauperized the local inhabitants and compromised their health. Perhaps, it is for this reason that Ken Saro-Wiwa (1992:42), the Ogoni playwright and activist (judicially murdered by the Gen. Abacha military junta for his resistance to oil production) describes oil production in the Niger Delta as:

An ecological war in which no blood is (apparently) spilled, no bones are broken, no one is (assumedly) maimed, so few are alarmed but men, women and children die, flora, fauna and fish perish, air, soil and water are poisoned; and finally, the land and its inhabitants die.

Saro-Wiwa was only half correct. The Niger Delta war has witnessed a tremendous amount of bloodshed.

## **2.6 Oil Dependency**

The socio-economic and political fissures created by the British exist to this day and continue to prevent the development of a strong national identity for Nigerians. Today, despite 50 years of nationhood, Nigerians either continue to see themselves as different nations: Edos, Kanuris, Hausas, Igbos, Yorubas, Niger Deltans; or bound exclusively by religion: Christians or Muslims. These divisions have become sharper following the increasing violence in the Niger Delta region, which parallels increasing religious extremism and sectarian violence in northern Nigeria. The violence in the Niger Delta has slowed down what has been a rapid expansion of the petroleum industry.

Located almost exclusively in the Niger Delta, petroleum has become Nigeria's economic mainstay and chief export earner (Okonta and Douglas 2003; Osaghae 1998). Instead of contributing to the overall development of the country and to improved living conditions for its citizens, oil wealth is distributed unevenly in a manner that benefits only those with access to state power and therefore, to the licenses, contracts, and revenues accruing to the government from the petroleum sector (Falola and Heaton 2008). Also, oil wealth is used exclusively to build sophisticated infrastructures in the nation's capital (Abuja) and many other cities across the nation, while the Niger Delta region from where the wealth is derived is neglected and its people economically, socially, culturally, and politically marginalized. The result of this is the growing dissonance between government and the Niger Delta people; a disconnection that has severely weakened the collective conscience or the moral fiber and structural regulatory capacities of the state. This has created a mass society of extreme discontentment, extreme disillusionment, and collective regional despair. Seen in this way, we could argue that the Niger Delta violence was a disaster waiting to happen.



Commercial quantities of oil was first discovered in Oloibiri, a small rural community in the heart of present day Bayelsa state in 1956 by Shell-BP Development Company (a joint venture of Royal Dutch Shell and British Petroleum) (Okonta and Douglas 2003; Osaghae 1998). Two years later, commercial drilling began and since then hundreds of wells have been exploited. As more wells were discovered, crude oil excavation increasingly became the nation's primary export commodity, replacing cocoa, groundnut, cotton, palm oil, and rubber (Osaghae 1998). By the 1970's crude oil production had grown exponentially as did the revenue generated from it. For example, in 1958 (the first year of commercial production), revenue from crude oil was a paltry N200, 000. By 1970, revenue from crude had reached N166 million and in 1976, Nigeria made N5.3 billion from crude oil sale.

The growth of the petroleum sector was occasioned by a global scarcity of petroleum products, which forced prices up. In 1973, for example, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Nigeria became a member in 1970) embargoed western countries over their support for Israel in the Yom Kippur War. This created extreme scarcity and pushed the price for a barrel of crude oil from \$3.80 in October 1973 to \$14.70 by January 1974 (Falola and Heaton 2008). By 1981, the price per barrel of crude had reached an all-time high of US\$38.77 and it has been increasing since then. Today, Nigeria is rated the fifth largest exporter of crude oil within the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Osaghae 1998) producing an average 2.2 million bpd and constituting nearly 40 percent of Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product, over 80 percent of annual revenue and 95 percent of Nigeria's foreign earnings (Osaghae 1998; Agbu 2005).

Corresponding to increases in oil revenue was an increase in the nation's dependence on oil revenue. Petroleum revenue was so constant and relatively easy to derive, that it was convenient for government to condition itself exclusively on it. Subsequently, the government

increasingly divested itself from exploiting and developing other revenue streams. Even traditional mechanisms for generating revenue such as taxation and customs duties were neglected and these became exclusive cash cows for corrupt government officials who milked them for personal gain. Similarly, agriculture, which was the most dominant economic activity in Nigeria prior to the discovery of oil, was neglected and overnight; Nigeria became a state dependent upon a single natural source. For example, between 1975 and 1978, the total area under cultivation fell from 18.8 million to 11.05 million hectares at the same time that food imports rose from US\$353.7 million to over US\$1 billion (Osaghae, 1998). According to Osaghae (1998:97) “the neglect was so serious that oil palm, rubber, groundnut, for which Nigeria was once among the world’s leading producers, were being imported to offset local shortfalls.” Other sectors that were necessary to stabilize and balance the economy were similarly neglected. Manufacturing, which in 1970 accounted for 9.4 percent of GDP fell to 7.0 percent in 1974 and has been decreasing since. The net result of the dependence on oil was that the Nigerian economy became increasingly vulnerable to the “fluctuations and shocks of the world market” (Osaghae 1998).

Mirroring the decline in agricultural and manufacturing activities is the standard of living, which has since the late 1970s taken a nose dive following the implementation of the recommendations of the 1970 Dina Commission. The commission was set up by the Gen. Gowon military administration shortly after the three year Nigerian civil war (1967-1970), to among other things review the existing system of administration and make recommendations on how to make it better and more acceptable. Its report rejected the historical approach to revenue allocation as a constitutional exercise and recommended that it be established as an instrument of development planning and national integration. This recommendation sought to establish the

centrality of the federal government by giving it control over disbursements of the expanded Distributable Pool Account (DPA) and all principal tax receipts and major share of royalties from oil. In terms of oil revenue, for example, a distinction was made between onshore and offshore oil, dealing a fatal blow to the oil producing states and communities. This meant that these states and communities were to be excluded from any share in offshore royalties (the federal government was to retain 60 percent, DPA 30 percent, and 10 percent to a special contingency account), and were to receive 40 percent less than previously for onshore royalties under the principle of derivation (Osaghae 1998). In essence, the proportion of oil revenues allocated on a derivation basis “declined from 50 percent of mining rents and royalties in 1969, through 2 percent of the Federation Account in 1981, to only 1 percent of mineral revenues in the account during the period from 1989 to 1999” (Suberu 2001).

Because federal might had burgeoned following the oil boom and the Dina commission report, the government began to spend heavily on defense and prestige projects to the disadvantage of agriculture, housing, manufacturing, water resources, and energy, which had direct bearing on the people’s standard of living. For example, defense expenditure rose rapidly from 1972 and hit the N1 billion mark for the first time in 1975 (Adekanye 1981). Also, Nigeria became Africa’s big brother and gave aid to the following countries for different purposes: Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, and Mozambique at independence; Mali, Senegal, Upper Volta or Burkina Faso, Chad, Mauritania, Niger, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Somalia for drought and natural disasters; and Niger, Zambia, Sudan, Sao Tome and Principe for undisclosed purposes (Akinyemi 1979). The total estimated expenditure for the country rose from N2 billion in the second National Development Plan (1970-1974) to N43 billion in the third national Development Plan (1975-1980). Because the boom was expected to continue in the

1980s, the planners of the third national Development Plan footnoted that “finance is unlikely to be a major problem during the third national development plan period” (Osaghae 1998).

While the new structure expanded the federal government’s influence as the sole allocative and distributive authority, it heightened concern over the expanding federal government role. More importantly, the new structure grossly undermined the oil producing communities and paid inadequate attention to problems like pollution and widespread ecological damage that destroyed the productive capacities of the Niger Delta peasant and their forced conversion to unskilled migrant workers. The new structure was seen by members of oil-producing communities as a deliberate policy to oppress minorities since the principle of population (which favored the ethnic majorities) took precedence over that of derivation. This perceived injustice, which has produced a mass society of impoverished, critically sick, unskilled, disenfranchised and powerless people and communities (USAID 2006), is cited by militants as one of the primary reasons they are up in arms against the forces of the state and the multinational oil companies.

## Chapter Three:

### LITERATURE REVIEW

*[There] is in our land, at the moment, what can well [be] described as a whirlwind of violence and which to everyone's discontent is furious, intractable and insuperable. You only need to read the newspapers to confirm how true this is. The headlines have become scary, the top stories have become unrelentingly morbid and stupefying. What we are reminded of as we read such details are intimations of our mortality, how life have become so difficult, and although the events are reported as someone else's experience, the fingers point alarmingly towards us.*

*Rueben Abati (1996)*

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the dynamics of the Niger Delta conflict including its causes and consequences as well as the DDR intervention. The review addresses two broad constellations of causes: domestic and international. While the review of domestic forces systematically links the conflict to political, economic, and environmental conditions most notably federalism, ethnicity, political instability, corruption, and ecological damage, the review of international forces pay close attention to global racism and its linkage to petrol capitalism - an increasingly vicious form of global capitalism. Together, these forces have provided the needed veneer for the expression of violence and have immense systematic effects on the conflict risk. Along this line, the review details the trajectories of the conflict especially its manifestations and the roles various forces including the state, oil conglomerates, local communities, community elders and youths play in the conflict. It also focuses on the genderization of the conflict especially dichotomizing between female and male roles in the conflict. Finally, the review examines the environment of DDR peacebuilding, detailing its processes, challenges, and prospects.

### **3.1 Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict**

The violence in the Niger Delta results from two major forces: domestic and international. Without doubt, domestic forces have played and continue to play a major role in the Niger Delta violence. In fact, most of the intellectual accounts of the Niger Delta violence focus on the relationship between the violence and these domestic forces including federalism/constitutionalism, political instability, corruption, resource predation, resource control, pollution, poverty, ethnicity and ancient hatreds, and political and social marginalization. I will discuss these in some detail, shortly. However, it is important to note that these are not the only causes of the Niger Delta violence. For that matter, the contributions of domestic forces to the violence is tangential to the more invidious role played by international forces – specifically the system of global racism that is the chemical power that drives petro-capitalism and fuels the “petrol-insurgency” in the Niger Delta. I will discuss these international forces within community contexts where their influence was primarily felt especially in the oil fields of the Niger Delta. I will also use the opportunity to begin introducing some of the important concepts that are pivotal to our understanding of the Niger Delta conflict context.

### **3.2 Domestic Forces and the Development of the Niger Delta Conflict**

A broad array of domestic forces has been blamed for the Niger Delta violence. Domestic forces suggest interplay of local conditions, experiences, processes, and relationships that have fueled widespread frustrations, resentment, anger and violence. I will briefly focus on these forces, at least to show that the violence manifesting in the swamps and creeks of the Niger Delta today, are not occurring by happenstance. Instead, like a house is built brick upon brick, the violence have been building up for several decades.

### *Economic Exploitation and Exclusion*

Scholars (Offiong 1980; Ikein 1990; Olorode 1998; Iyayi 2000; Okonta 2000; Okonta and Douglas 2003; Ukeje 2001; Watts 2009) have argued that decades of oil exploitation in the Niger Delta has transformed Nigeria's political economy making it one of the most resource-dependent nations on earth. Yet, instead of turning Nigeria into one of the most prosperous states on the African continent, oil production has accentuated the socio-political and economic woes of the oil-rich Niger Delta region. These scholars and many others argue that it is the disparity between the wealth appropriated from the region and the economic marginalization of indigenes of the region that accounts for the conflict. For example, a World Bank Panel report on the Niger Delta observed that despite substantial resource flows to the government, and significant natural resource endowments, the people of the Niger Delta are destitute. It described the Niger Delta as an “iconic representation of destitution amongst the possibility of wealth” (World Bank 2007). It observed that the Niger Delta people are excluded from the wealth generated by their resource-rich region and the region having the highest unemployment rate in Nigeria substantiates this. A 2006 UNDP report also noted that remote rural communities in the Niger Delta have limited economic opportunities and often cannot access employment benefits from the oil conglomerates because they lack capital resources or skills.

Shell, the largest multinational corporation active in the region, disagrees. Instead, it implicates political, social, and environmental concerns as the key factors that provoke militancy in the Niger Delta (SPDC 2007). Curiously, Shell subsumes economic issues such as resource control and resource distribution under political factors arguing that this is complicated by a high population growth rate that puts pressure on land through over-farming, deforestation, and soil erosion; the emergence of a new generation of well-educated youth attuned to the disparity

between urban and rural areas and convinced that multinational oil companies (MNOCs) have the capability to redress this gap; and communities that believe that the best way of extracting a greater share of oil wealth is by holding MNOCs to ransom. Shell, however, does not address the charge of economic exploitation, which many scholars, militants, and rights groups blame as partly responsible for the violence. For these researchers, the gap between the billions of dollars MNOCs appropriate each year as oil surplus or profit and the privation of the peasants who are forced out of their traditional homesteads and economic activity by oil-induced pollution, describes economic exploitation. Also, Shell does not address the wide scale corruption among Nigeria's political class and the misappropriation and misapplication of oil revenue that has bloated the bank accounts of a few while the majority of the Niger Delta inhabitants languish in poverty. Finally, it also does not address the role MNOCs play in courting, promoting, maintaining, and reproducing corruption and graft as rational business and profit-building strategies (Okonofua forthcoming).

Clearly, the problem in the Niger Delta demonstrates how total dependence on export-focused non-renewable resource extraction can stifle human development, impoverish local communities, and provoke and exacerbate violent conflict (Osuoka 2003; Higgins 2009). According to the UNDP (2006) while the Niger Delta oil wealth accounts for the bulk of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings (amounting to about \$231 billion between 1970 and 1999), these vast revenues have not translated to positive human development outcomes for the people. Higgins (2009) and the International Crisis Group (2006) argue that the slow pace of systemic reforms and lack of jobs, water, schools, electricity and clinics in some parts of the Niger Delta have not only encouraged militancy in the region but have also boosted support for the insurgents among local populations.



Higgins (2009) argues that the federal government support for development in the Niger Delta (both politically and financially) is in itself problematic. One of the mechanisms through which the federal government has attempted to stimulate economic development in the Niger Delta is the NDDC. The NDDC along with many other development planning institutions have failed because they are impositions from the federal government and adopt a top down approach to development planning and implementation. The amnesty program may also suffer same fate as local communities and militant groups appear to have had no say in determining the composition of members of the amnesty committee. They also appear to have no say in the types of programs, activities, and services performed by the committee. Like other institutional responses to the problems of the Niger Delta, there is the danger that local communities and militant groups that historically have experienced marginalization and deprivation may perceive the amnesty as a political party agenda designed to pursue the aims and ends of the ruling People's Democratic Party.

#### *Social and Political Exclusion*

Since independence, national political power has revolved around the “big three” ethnic nationalities: Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo. Thus, political access for minorities until now was closed. Moreover, elections since 1999 have been widely rigged in the Niger Delta states and most of these fraudulent results are sustained by violence and threats resulting in huge democratic deficits. Because the people are economically exploited and deprived of the opportunity to alter state economic and social policy through the instrumentality of elections, they are bitter and angry. Because many Niger Delta youths are convinced that formal institutions and local customary institutions (particularly the system of kingship) have failed and are incapable of redressing grievances, they have turned to violence and militancy to challenge

the government and extort money and oil from the oil conglomerates (World Bank 2007).

Shell (2007) agrees. It notes that at the social level "anger is growing and increasing militancy is overthrowing traditional social order in some communities" leading to a situation where a "complex and dynamic fragmentation of communities characterized by frequent power shifts between factions" makes it virtually impossible to redress some of the grievances of the communities including the payment of compensation for damages caused by oil spill and land acquisition. Thus, it is the inter-ethnic strife in the region that disrupts the efficient allocation of resources and welfare especially to that segment of the population that is in dire need. While this may be true, Shell fails to explain what generates inter-ethnic strife in the first place and the role it plays in provoking and maintaining such strife. For example, Osaghae (1998), Okonta and Douglas (2003) and Okonofua (forthcoming) argue that the oil companies orchestrate the inter-ethnic conflict in the Niger Delta in a modern day attempt at "indirect rule." The strategy is to encourage oil-bearing communities to dissipate energy in fighting over which community or communities should benefit from specific welfare and rehabilitation projects to the point where no community benefits. Thus, the Ijaw/Ilaje conflict and the Urhobo/Itsekiri conflict, for example, results from MNOCs stoking ethnic fires to facilitate oil production and expand its profit base.

### *Environmental Degradation*

According to the World Bank (2007), oil exploration and production has generated serious environmental damages at several levels: land, water, and air pollution, depleted fishing grounds and territories, and the disappearance of wetlands. These serious environmental conditions have provoked serious hardships for local peoples whose sources of livelihood has been severely impacted. Many local populations have been displaced from ancestral lands and

local resources and thrust into dependent relationships in overpopulated cities with no skills, craft or vocation to sustain them. The environmental devastation of the Delta has put pressure on local communities who continue to suffer from poor or inequitable land use practices (UNDP 2006). Existing measures to counterbalance the environmental damage are at best haphazard and inadequate and grossly underestimate the enormity of damage to the Niger Delta ecology. This chronic underestimation which translates to gross nonchalance is a major source of community discontent and violence (World Bank 2007).

Shell agrees that environmental pollution including oil spills is one of the main grievances of Niger Delta communities. However, it blames the spills on sabotage. According to Shell, between 1988 and 1994, about 28 percent of the spills at its operation areas were due to sabotage. By 1994, oil spills caused by sabotage accounted for 35 percent of all oil spills in its area of influence and this figure is increasing. Increases in sabotage-induced oil spills results mainly from the operations of the militant groups who target oil facilities. While Shell is right to highlight damages caused by warring groups, it does not address that percentage of oil spill that results from the routine business of oil production. It also does not address pollutions caused by effluent and other wastes it deliberately discharges into the environment, or spills caused by defective and obsolete equipment. Studies show that much of the Niger Delta violence results from grievances over pollution (Naanem 1995; Gbadegesin 1997; Eteng 1996). For example, Eteng (1997:4) argues that:

Oil exploration and exploitation has over the last four decades impacted disastrously on the socio-physical environment of the Niger Delta oil-bearing communities, massively threatening the subsistent peasant economy and the environment and hence the entire livelihood and basic survival of the people.

Up to 1.5 million tons of oil, which amounts to more than 50 times the pollution recorded in the Exxon Valdez tanker disaster, has been spilt in the Niger Delta over the past 50 years

(Brown 2006). Quoting a panel of independent experts from the World Wildlife Federation UK, the World Conservation Union, and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, Brown (2006) observed that damage to the fragile mangrove forests over the past 50 years amounts to a catastrophic oil spill occurring every year in one of the world's most important ecosystems. Apart from threatening rare species including primates, fish, turtles, and birds, the pollution is destroying the livelihoods of many of the 30 million people living in the region, damaging crops and fueling the upsurge in violence. The Niger Delta which is home to 7,000sq of the world's remaining 9,000sq of mangrove and some 60 percent of West Africa's fish stock is now one of the five most polluted spots on the planet. Brown argued that the impact of oil and gas drilling especially pollution was a significant contributor to the violence and instability in the Niger Delta. This situation is worsened by the people's perception that oil companies are complacent or slow to act on legitimate complaints. For example, while local peasants were groaning under the yoke of pollution, which is unaddressed by Shell and the other oil companies, Shell alone boasted profits of \$22.94bn (€13.12bn) and extracted 900,000 barrels of crude oil a day in 2005 from its activities in the Niger Delta (Brown 2006). Environmentalists accuse Shell of using obsolete equipment to rake in billions of dollars in oil profit while paying little attention to how its ageing pipes steadily leak millions of gallons of crud oil into the pristine waters of the Niger Delta.

#### *Poor Infrastructure and Service Delivery*

A World Bank Panel Report (2007) describes the situation of the Niger Delta as “akin to a human emergency” and the UNDP (2006:15) describes the infrastructure and social services available as “generally deplorable.” The neglect of infrastructure in the Niger Delta is either blamed on the difficult terrain or the intransigence of local communities. In either case, the

neglect criminally deprives local populations of access to fundamental social services. For example, the International Crisis Group (2007) observes that the town of Edeoha in Rivers state lacks basic services such as water, healthcare, education, electricity, and jobs. Also, the presence of the state is minimal with no local government office, a primary school that lacks chairs and desks, and a hospital that is twenty kilometers away and lacks medicine and equipment. This situation exists in the majority of communities in the Niger Delta and draws the flak of community leaders and militant organizations who insist that oil majors must contribute to the development of the region.

Oil companies often argue that some of the complaints of the communities, especially those that demand that they play more active roles in the development of the communities, are illegitimate. They argue that what communities demand is that they become some kind of alternative government and provide services the government ought to provide (Ukeje 2001). They argue that this would amount to double taxation and erode their profitability since various legislations enacted by the federal government particularly the Petroleum Decree No. 51 of 1969, the 1978 Land Use Act, and the 1999 Production Sharing Contracts Act established the general frameworks for the exploitation of oil resources including the applicable royalties, tax regimes, and the manner of allocation of costs between oil companies and government. The law provides for the payment of a flat rate of 50% tax on petroleum profits by MNOC's, and sets different royalty regimes, depending on the water depth in which the operation is carried out ranging from 12% for depths of 200-500m to 0% for depths in excess of 1000m. Operations in inland basins attract a flat royalty of 10% (Pengassan 2009). Shell also claims it pays compensation to the communities for the surface rights of all land acquired in the course of its exploration and production activities, and for ecological damage due to its operations. It says its compensation

rates are fair and equitable and that all parties including the communities are happy and satisfied (Okonta and Douglas 2003).

This position has been severely challenged by the communities. For example, Shell admitted that between 1973 and 1993, it extracted 634 million barrels of oil from its ninety-six oil wells in Ogoni alone. It claims that before it withdrew from the area in January 1993 following community resistance, Ogoni accounted for 1.5 percent of its Nigerian operations. Ogoni land is only about 400 square miles and from here Shell is estimated to have extracted oil worth over \$30 billion. Shell claims that it spends about \$20 million each year on community development projects in Ogoni and other Niger Delta communities, a claim local NGOs and rights groups hotly contest. In fact, these NGOs insist that between 1970 and 1988, Shell spent a paltry \$200,000, or approximately 0.000007 percent of the value of oil extracted from the region on community development projects (Saro-Wiwa 1992). Despite these counter claims, Shell's argument brings into sharp relief the role government (local, state, and federal) play in the violence. We can briefly discuss the government's role from three directions: federalism, corruption, and poor governance/political instability.

### *Federalism*

Sagay (2008) and Akiba (2002) blame the Niger Delta violence on the nature of Nigerian federalism. They argue that the crisis in the region is not only over environmental justice and resource appropriation and distribution but also a struggle to create a stable and equitable socio-political system. The communities through the militant groups and other rights and socio-cultural groups seek redress within a federal structure they see as firmly stacked against them in terms of revenue allocation and the parlous state of infrastructure in the region. For this reason, the crisis in the Niger Delta involves much more than agitations over ecological

damages, developmental issues, or security issues. Instead, the crisis results from a combination of all these and is complicated by the struggle for a true federal and fiscal structure (Akinyemi 1979).

By any standard of assessment, Nigeria's federal system (which has undergone numerous changes since independence in 1960) has been unable to manage and contain the nations countless ethnic, sub-ethnic, regional, and religious cleavages. Some analysts argue that the federal system has never been properly and fully established and therefore remains a work in progress. These scholars advocate for the incorporation of fairness, justice, and equity into Nigeria's federal structure as a way of dealing with perceived shortcomings (Suberu 2001). To these scholars, then, Nigeria's federal structure has not failed; instead, it has never been properly or objectively applied. For example, Suberu (2001) argues that various military and civilian administrations have manipulated the federal system for their own gains in disregard for national development or the reduction or elimination of ethnic, religious, or regional tensions. Instead, ethno-religious cleavages have enhanced the power and influence of the federal government thereby distorting Nigeria's federal structure.

Other scholars disagree (Osaghae 1998; Sagay 2008; Akiba 2004; David-West 2002; Nwabueze 2001). They argue that Nigeria's federal structure privileges the majority ethnic groups, is responsible for Nigeria's political instability, and exacerbates corruption, nepotism, and conflict. David-West (2002) for example, argues that Nigeria's vaunted federalism is at best a "parody of federalism. It is to all intents and purposes unitarism dressed out in an elegant facade of federalism." One proof of this is the recurring controversy over resource control. Another proof is the country's contentious revenue sharing practices. For example, the federal government allocates to itself a disproportionate amount of national revenues leaving the states

and local governments with barely enough to pay salaries and wages and to maintain political patronages. This disparity has the unfortunate effect of increasing the competition by the major ethnic groups (Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo) for control of the central government and its vast resources to the detriment of the minority ethnic groups some of which are the storehouses of the nation's natural resource wealth. Thus, the federal structure with an allocative rather than derivative revenue sharing formula is partly responsible for the lack of economic and infrastructural development in the Niger Delta region and the political marginalization of its people.

### *Corruption*

Corruption has been shown to cost the Nigerian government as much as 60 percent of its tax revenues and increases with the expansion of the public sector (Okonofua and Ugiagbe 2004; USAID 2006). When at the highest level of government power is concentrated in a few hands, the corruption bug quickly contaminates the entire society, including the judiciary, legislature, police, military, school, and medical workers. For example, following the death of Nigeria's late maximum dictator Gen. Sani Abacha, over US\$ 5 billion was recovered from secret overseas accounts belonging to him and his family. It is estimated that between December 1993 and June 1998, over \$10 billion was stolen by Gen. Abacha and his associates. And these funds were revenues accruing to the state from oil production. When Abacha took over the reins of government in 1993, he commissioned the renowned economist Dr. Pius Okigbo to examine the finances of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) during the Babangida years. The Babangida administration (1985-1993) is believed to have turned corruption (and advance fee fraud) into an industry and in the process appropriated billions of dollars of oil revenue for himself (Okonta and Douglas 2003). While submitting his report, Okigbo accused Babangida and members of his



government of gross corruption. According to him:

Between September 1988 and 30 June 1994, US\$12.2 billion of the \$12.4 billion [in the dedicated accounts] was liquidated in less than six years ... they were spent on what could neither be adjudged genuine high priority nor truly regenerative investment; neither the president nor the Central Bank Governor accounted to anyone for these massive extra-budgetary expenditures ... these disbursements were clandestinely undertaken while the country was openly reeling with a crushing external debt overhang (Fayemi 1995).

Losses like this that are due to corruption total more than Nigeria's foreign debt and corruption diverts foreign investment, reduce valuable expenditure on social sectors (roads, bridges, health and education), leads to bogus capital projects, reduced asset life, and undermines the creation of a professional, meritocratic civil service (Okonofua and Ugiagbe 2004). Alassane Ouattara (2001) argues that an environment prone to corruption is one where public officials are not accountable for their actions, where law does not exist, and where the respect for basic human rights is breached. This implies the vicious circle whereby poor governance has kept the formal private sector small, public institutions weak and corrupt, and rules and regulations complex, inequitable, and arbitrarily enforced. In such an environment, social decay spreads and the young who have neither political nor economic opportunities become disillusioned. These persons are left only with four choices: to join the corrupt, to go abroad, to hide in the informal sector, or to violently challenge what they perceive to be the source of their problems. The Niger Delta militant appears to fall into the fourth category.

#### *Political Instability and Poor Governance*

Scholars have argued that political instability in Nigeria is partly responsible for the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta region and by implication, the Niger Delta violence (Ake 1996; Ukeje 2001). Beginning with the Gowon administration (1966-1975) to the present, governmental instability, especially the lack of continuity in government policy, has had adverse effects on the economic and social development of the region. For example, there has been only two recorded civilian to civilian transfer of power in Nigeria since its independence in 1960.

Apart from the Obasanjo-Yar'Adua transition in 2007 and the Yar'Adua (Jonathan)-Jonathan transition in 2011, every transition in Nigeria has been predicated on a military coup or midwived by a military regime.

Military governments typically begin by suspending the constitution, closing all airports, seaports, and borders, and suspending the policies of the past administration while hastily contriving new policy directions. In furtherance of their goals, they dismiss all or key government officials responsible for policy implementation and replace them with people new to the demands of such offices or too inexperienced to function effectively. This typically disrupts the smooth operation of government and kills off vital development projects crucial to the nation's economic and socio-political survival. Changes in policy concerning the distribution of oil revenue between the federal, state, and local government provides one example of policy disruption due to infrequent undemocratic governmental changes. Another example is the various agencies established by different administrations to speed up development in the Niger Delta. In every material fact, the functions of these agencies such as Oil Mineral Producing Area Development Commission (OMPADEC), Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC), Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF), the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF), and the Ministry of Niger Delta overlap each other and exist most profoundly to launder the image of government and act as conduit pipes through which the government purse is drained by corrupt officials.

### *Ideology*

Niger Delta militants accuse government and oil companies of misapplication and misappropriation of oil funds to the neglect of the communities and people. They challenge not only the prevailing revenue sharing formula but also the political structure and its mechanisms

for the allocation of power. Thus, the agitations of the communities and militants are first and foremost based in ideology. Two central issues constitute the ideological basis of the Niger Delta struggle: self-determination and resource control (Osaghae et al 2007). Self-determination involves the right of the Niger Delta people (or any distinct nationality for that matter) to live together in “its own way, determine its own political fate, preserve its own affairs and develop itself or even democratize as it may deem fit” (Okwu-Okafor 1994). It relates to the “right or freedom of a people that are subordinated, oppressed, dominated, colonized or even marginalized to assert and constitute themselves into a separate state” (Osaghae et al 2007). The right to self-determination devolves from the Nigerian constitution. In section 3 (c) the constitution confers rights to individuals to freely form associations and to take steps to preserve group integrity and personal liberty. Self-determination, in this context, implies the right of a people to associations that are spatially distinct with clear geographic, social, cultural, and political markings. Both the United Nations Charter on Human Rights and the African Charter on Human Rights also guarantee this right. The right to self-determination assures that cultural, religious, and linguistic minorities and peoples can strive for liberation from structures and institutions that subordinate, oppress, and marginalize them.

The implication of this is that Niger Delta militants consider the Niger Delta people an oppressed, dominated, stifled, and exploited group who must be liberated if not by peaceful means, then by violence. Self-determination translates to self-existence, self-management, self-development, and control over resources that inhere in the region. However, the government and other political stakeholders interpret self-determination as a clamor for separate and independent existence, and hence, must be brutally suppressed. But self-determination or autonomy does not necessarily mean separate and independent existence; rather, it is a desire for

cultural autonomy, ethnic rights, political representation and inclusion, justice, and development (Osaghae et al 2007). Irrespective of how it is defined, the right or freedom to self determine has driven numerous peoples all over the world, to mobilize, solidarize, build nationalism and to organize resistance through popular movements and institutions of violence. Also, the world over, the issue of self-determination is ideologically linked to the question of group identity. In the Niger Delta this identity is deeply etched in collective experiences of oppression, marginalization, and discrimination. And as has happened in other parts of the world, discrimination-defined difference or “otherness” have provoked fierce and violent agitations and led to the likelihood of a potentially devastating civil war in Nigeria.

The second ideological motion concerns resource control. The concept of resource control as it applies to the Niger Delta conflict has three main components: a) the power and right of a community to raise funds by taxing people, services, and materials within its territory; b) the executive right of ownership and control of resources (natural and created) within the territory; and c) the right to customs duties on goods destined for its territories and excise duties on goods manufactured in its territories (Sagay 2008). This implies a complete reversal of the revenue sharing formula from an allocative strategy to one of complete and unconditional control. Militants argue that because of the primacy of resource control to the survival of whole groups and societies, their clamor is non-negotiable. The most articulate presentation of this clamor is the “Kaiama Declaration” (Okonta and Douglas 2003). This declaration proclaimed by the Ijaw (the dominant ethnic group in the region and fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria) on December 11 1998 has several important articles. Article 1 asserted that all “land and natural resources within the Ijaw territory” belongs to the “Ijaw communities” and are the “basis of our survival.” Article 2 defended the rights of the “peoples and communities” to “ownership of and

control of our lives and resources” and Article 4 advised all oil companies operating within Ijaw territory to “withdraw from Ijawland” pending the resolution of the issues of “resource ownership and control in the Ijaw area of the Niger Delta.”

Like its disagreement with the concept of self-determination, the Nigerian state and MNCs disagree with this interpretation of resource control. As observed earlier, MNCs see the agitation as nothing more than a clamor for a share of the oil profit. Therefore, their answer is to surreptitiously court some of the more influential power brokers in the region with juicy security contracts and more direct cash payments. The government on the other hand sees the agitators particularly the militant groups as a bunch of criminals and renegades interested only in profiting from the clandestine oil trade. They see resource control agitations and the clamor for self-determination as the desire of unpatriotic forces to break up Nigeria and therefore, the agitators must be treated as rebels and violently suppressed or crushed (Osaghae 1998).

One conclusion that we can draw from these cocktail of causes is that there is a governability crisis in Nigeria that is morbidly stupefying. In one form or the other, the scholars examined above have made intimations of a morally decrepit government aided and abetted by money-hungry international corporations who themselves are backed by the full strength and force of western capitalism and its racist institutions and practices. The governability crisis begins as food and other necessities have disappeared from the shelves and food barns of Niger Delta peasants. The governability crisis is on full throttle as life-saving medicines have vanished from local hospital dispensaries, as white chalks have become unavailable to write on black boards in local schools, as roads harbor huge pot-holes that have become man-holes, and as scarce resources find their way into European and American banks and purchase million dollar homes in European and American streets. The governability crisis speaks to us from

disagreements over Nigeria's federal structure, its constitution, the nature of party politics, resource control, self-determination, and peace. Even as violence continues to run rampant in Niger Delta swamps and creeks, a tiny few who occupy command positions within government and the oil industry, continue to be oblivious to the horrors that is daily unfolding and that threatens to consume all in this battle of the fearless dispossessed and the happy delirious.

### **3.3 International Forces and the Development of the Niger Delta Conflict**

The above analysis has focused on some of the domestic or indigenous causes of the Niger Delta conflict. Without doubt, domestic forces have played and continue to play a major role in the Niger Delta conflict. However, they are not the only direct or indirect causes of the conflict. For that matter, the role domestic agents play in the conflict is tangential to the more invidious but largely obscure role international forces play – specifically, the system of global racism that is the unseen hand that drives western capitalist expansionism that is more often directly linked to the conflict.

#### *Racism and the Niger Delta Conflict*

All through modern history, racism has and continues to frame the organization of human society. Slavery, discrimination, segregation, unequal rights, ethnic cleansing, deportation, cultural defamation, and outright extermination are some of the characteristic hallmarks of racism and these are intricately linked to the global capitalist system that maximizes these for economic gain. Contrary to contemporary neo-liberal argument following James Wilson's (1978) publication of the book, the "Declining Significance of Race," the effect of racism has been shown to be enduring and significant in contemporary society (Feagin and Feagin 1978; Feagin 1991; Omi and Winant 1994; Shapiro 2004; Brown, Carnoy, Currie, Duster, Oppenheimer, Shultz, and Wellman 2003; Royster 2003; Bonilla-Silva 2001; Harvey-Wingfield and Feagin

2009). The same vicious racism that was responsible for the slave raids of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century and that produced much of the development in Europe and North America and the underdevelopment of Africa, is still festering strong and producing untoward outcomes in many parts of the world. The conflict in the remote Niger Delta region of Nigeria is one consequence of the global system of racism. Racism, first, creates the conditions for the fragmentation of Niger Delta ethnic communities, weakening local resistance to the emerging and increasingly vicious petrol-capitalism. Next, it creates the conditions for the exploitation and rape of Niger Delta oil wealth, without regard to her fragile eco-system; and finally, it permits and facilitates the complete dehumanization of Niger Delta peasants who are increasingly alienated from their community, means of subsistence, ethno-religious and cultural institutions, family, and ultimately themselves.

Modern global racism first manifested with European capitalist expansionism. Capitalists hijacked whole nation-states in Africa and Asia and enslaved free citizens of these nation-states. From Dahomey to Dakar and from Bini to the Gold Coast, slaves were forcefully exported to Europe and North America, where they were forced to work in plantations, factories, and construction without compensation while facilitating a “breakthrough to industrialism and global hegemony” for the west (Blackburn 2010). While the west publicly upheld the equality and “rights of man,” whole African populations were held in captivity and in many instances, their “humanness” was denied. The black man or “negro” was less than human – he was primitive, barbaric, and atavistic. Because he was less than human, he and his resources were superfluous. These resources, including gold, diamond, oil, and human labor were needed to build western industry and to enhance the white man’s superiority and domination over the ‘inferior’ races. The exploitation of slave labor and of the colony consequently produced development in the west and

underdevelopment in Africa (Rodney 1972). Thus, racial exploitation is at the heart of capitalism, which expresses the relationship of racial exploitation in economic terms. In the same way that the west exploited the slave labor and resources of its colonies, so is the Niger Delta exploited by the west through agents such as Shell, Chevron, and ExxonMobil backed by the political and economic force of western democracy. In place of the overt “official racism” of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century is the 21<sup>st</sup> century western imperialism. According to Offiong (1980:76):

The international system upon which Africa depends implies a ‘structure,’ that is, a structure of institutions, classes, and power arrangements. The dynamic process that takes place within that structure is called “imperialism.” “Imperialism,” then is an institutionalized system of control which systematically shapes the institutions and structures of dependent dominated countries and limits their freedom of action, if they are to avoid the systems sanctions, to system-defined alternatives.

As Iyayi (1998) argues, the idea of a structuring international system implies a center of power and of parts where the center “remote-controls” the parts. This system is arranged in order that they function automatically and naturally. According to him “it is true that there is an international capitalist system but the key question is: what are the driving forces of the system?” For me, racism is the preeminent driving force of western capitalism. The racist tendencies of the west are expressed locally through the actions and inactions of corrupt pseudo-capitalist oligarchs brandishing religious and military capital. Internationally, it is expressed through imperialism, which today subjugates not just black people (and their bodies) but also their economies, cultures, and idea systems.

While it is seductive to believe that racism plays no role in international capitalism or in contemporary trade between nations, the reality is that racism is an indisputable feature of global capitalism and of the modern capitalist state. If as Theo Goldberg (2002) has argued, racism and the state are mutually constituted, then contemporary racism approximates to a structuring structure, which takes its reality from the practices, actions, principles, and ideas of the state, supranational organs like the UN, IMF, Paris Club, and World Bank, and from multinational or



transnational corporations like Shell, Chevron, ExxonMobil, BP, Agip, Texaco, etc. The practices and actions of the modern state (or these supranational and transnational organizations), in turn, creates and reproduces racist structures, practices, and ideas within which local and international politics and economics are, in fact, imbedded. Racism and relations (economic, political, social, etc.) between states, transnational, and supranational organizations are, therefore, co-articulated since racial classifications and exclusions (and inclusions) are the primary motive force of modern international capitalism or the capitalist project of globalization. International relations (or politico-economic relations), thus, becomes the major center for human categorization and classification and for allocating opportunities and resources. As a consequence, western industrial states (including the supranational and transnational bodies through which weak states are manipulated and controlled) or their economic interests in weak states have become the main site of growing racial/imperial contestations in contemporary society.

Within the context of this argument, Nigeria was founded by Britain upon the principle of racial difference and continues to be maintained by deep racial imaginations. This means that Nigeria has developed conceptually and materially through the process of racial differentiation, exclusion, and exploitation. Through this process, Nigerians (especially in the oil rich region of the Niger Delta), are governed in explicit racial terms, in that, they are identified legally and administratively by the coalition of petrol-capital and the Nigerian state (controlled by ethnic nationalities with loyalties to western capital) as “inherently inferior” and naturally expendable. This implies that the human and ecological needs of the people of the Niger Delta will be sacrificed on the altar of oil profit. An example is in order. For decades, Niger Delta communities complained about massive oil spills and the almost irreversible devastation of the

Niger Delta eco-system by oil-induced pollution without any relief. For decades, thousands of people in the Niger Delta have died from oil-induced sicknesses and diseases without any remediation. For decades, Niger Delta peasants were uprooted from their land and means of economic subsistence and thrust into hostile urban environments without the skills, experience, and resources to survive, and without any remediation. For decades, Niger Delta communities demanded compensation for lost income, deaths, and damaged homesteads without positive response from the oil corporations or their allies in government. Yet, in only one month of oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, the American government was able to extract \$20 billion from BP (owner of the damaged platform) as possible compensation for people impacted by the spill apart from other sundry payments for direct cleanup, which amount to over \$200 million.

The disparities in the response to the situations in the US Gulf of Mexico and the Nigerian Delta region, translates to racism. Black people who historically are the objects of global discrimination inhabit the Niger Delta. The Gulf of Mexico serves areas inhabited by predominantly white populations. Not only do discriminations exist within defined national boundaries like the United States, they exist outside of state boundaries especially within the structures of shadowy transnational organizations like Shell and Chevron and in supranational organizations like the UN, World Bank, and IMF established to protect the interests of white societies. What this means is that historically, blacks and whites have unequal access to social, political, economic, and juristic protections. This unequal access is based on skin pigmentation as well as cultural differences that branch off skin color. Another term for these differences is racism. Wellman, (1993: 55) defines racism as “a structural relationship based on the subordination of one racial group by another.” Thomas (2000) in response to Wellman’s definition argues that the determining feature of racism is not “prejudice towards blacks (or other

racial minorities), but rather the superior position of whites and the institutions – ideological as well as structural – which maintain it.” Embedded in these definitions is the fact that racism involves ideas and practices that not only create but also maintains, sustains and reproduces the system of white privilege in contemporary society. Thus the Gulf of Mexico spill will be promptly addressed and recompensed while organizations that represent the economic interests of white societies can escape without any sanctions or warning for the decades of environmental despoliation that they unleash on hapless black communities such as the Niger Delta.

In light of the Gulf of Mexico oil disaster, BP was desperate to show itself a responsible social person. It sponsored million dollar adverts in the US and across the world to bolster its image. In some of these advertisements, BP promised to “pay compensation” to anyone whose business or livelihood was impacted by the spill. To show it meant business, BP voluntarily paid \$170 million to four US states (Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida) impacted by the spill excluding direct payments to local contractors and individuals engaged to mop-up spilled crude. This also excludes the \$20 billion it agreed to keep in an escrow account to address litigation. The Chief Executive Officer of BP also appeared before the US legislature to explain the crisis and to show what efforts BP was making to plug the leak, clean up the spill, and pay compensation to victims of the spill including employees who died when the oil platform collapsed. Yet, the US government have been unwilling to hold Chevron (a US company) to account for spill-related damages to the Niger Delta ecology. Similarly, European oil giant Shell has mined oil in the Niger Delta for decades without regards to the Niger Delta ecology. When spills have occurred, Shell and the other oil corporations have disputed either their existence or their magnitude. In many instances, they refuse to pay compensation preferring instead to bribe government officials and local chiefs or to sponsor interethnic hate amongst adjacent

communities in a bid to avoid payments (Saro-Wiwa 1992). In other instances, oil companies have sponsored state terror against victims of spill including the 1995 judicial murder of the Ogoni playwright and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa.

A more nuanced term useful in explaining differences in response to spills occurring in the Niger Delta and the west is environmental racism. Environmental racism is a complex web of discriminatory policies, practices, activities, and inactivity that results from racial differences. It involves racial discrimination in environmental policy making; in the enforcement of regulations and laws; in the deliberate targeting of certain communities for the establishment of polluting industries, toxic waste dumping, deliberate discharge of effluent into the environment, and indiscriminate exploration and exploitation mechanisms that leave land and water resources devastated; and in the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in certain communities. More importantly, environmental racism is racial discrimination that ensures the exclusion of members of oil producing communities from the decision making boards, commissions, and regulatory bodies that pertain to oil production (Chavis and Lee 1987). The situation of Niger Delta communities and people stand on all fours with this definition.

Environmental racism as it involves the Niger Delta does not just end at the exploitation of the delta's oil resources; it extends to the establishment of allied industries such as lead, pesticides, and petrochemical plants that negatively impact Niger Delta people but about which very little is spoken. Also, environmental racism broadens to include lack of sustainable development, job blackmail and blackout, discriminatory public policy, and strategies for resolving oil-related disputes in the Niger Delta. In the light of this, we might begin to understand the emergence of militant groups as last ditch efforts by Niger Delta communities to

salvage what is left of their "sacrifice zones"(Lerner 2010). These sacrifice zones have become "toxic doughnuts"(Chavis and Lee 1987) because they are surrounded by polluting industries or cancer creeks because of the labyrinth of toxic materials dumped indiscriminately in these areas.

In a sense, therefore, militancy in the Niger Delta is resistance to formal and informal institutions that advantage western societies and people at the same time that they perpetrate and perpetuate underdevelopment and poisoning or "genocide" of Niger Delta communities. As I have observed earlier, one of the root-causes of the environmental problem of the Niger Delta concerns the imperial ethics and values of British colonial policy as well as the glorification in the west of the entire colonization process. Rather than let natives determine local use of resources, the colonialists chose to dominate, control, tame, and cultivate the land and people for its own material comfort and profit. When the colonialists left, they ensured the perpetual control of these natives and their resources through the grooming and installation of a northern feudal oligarchy in political control. Thus, modern day conflict between militants and the state generally arises from the conflict of values surrounding British imperial statecraft.

A growing body of evidence reveals that Niger Delta people are subjected to a disproportionately large number of health and environmental risks than the general population (Higgins 2009; ICG 2007; UNDP 2006; World Bank 2007). Worse, they face higher environmental and health risks than even communities of color (who, historically, are victims of racist discriminated) face in America. Compared to white communities in the west, the health and environmental risks of Niger Delta communities is much higher. Despite this, successive governments in Nigeria have either been unwilling or unable to do anything about the problems of these communities. Instead, governmental action (or inaction) has often exacerbated these environmental threats to Niger Delta communities. The "slick alliance" between government and

oil majors has forced arrangements that place Niger Delta communities at greater risk than general populations (or even comparable populations in the west). For example, one logical outcome of porous federal environmental regulations has been the increased vulnerability of Niger Delta communities to the location of hazardous industrial facilities such as toxic waste dumps, lead smelters, incinerators, and pipelines in the Niger Delta. Moreover, porous regulations have increased water, land, and air pollution by oil companies in the normal routine of oil mining. Given the prevailing political and economic climate, pollution will continue unabated at the same time that moratoriums on oil drilling and compliance to established regulations are strictly enforced in oil rich western societies like the USA.

The practice of targeting weak African states to unleash the rabidly racist economic agenda of the west through high-powered conglomerates like Shell and Chevron does not attract very much international opprobrium. One reason for this is race fatigue (See Will 2007; Steel 2007; Reeves 2008). International organizations and societies have been unwilling to critically engage these environmental breaches partly because of the denial of the continuing significance of race by governments and international organizations. Thus, race makes “negligible human difference” in a world that has matured to the level where it is now free from the “collective chauvinisms” (Steele 2007) and political, economic, cultural, and ideological constraints of race. The other reason they will do nothing is because they benefit directly and indirectly from the environmental disasters that these companies create. Thus, while the benefits of environmental racism are internationalized, the environmental and human costs are localized. In this sense, risk increases with proximity to the source and is borne exclusively by those living nearby. Niger Delta communities that host oil mining sites and other hazardous oil-related industries receive fewer economic benefits (jobs, contracts, improved living standards, etc.) than do communities

that generate the waste or that are responsible for the expropriation of oil. The people who benefit the most are more distanced (they live in comfort in Europe and America driving huge fuel consuming SUVs) from the direct negative effects and consequently bears the least burden or no burden at all.

In essence, Niger Delta people who live in the contaminated creeks and swamps of the Niger Delta are victims of a "double whammy"(Bullard 1994). Not only are they exposed to elevated risks; they also lack access to medical and health facilities. Increasing sicknesses due to pollution and lack of access to healthcare are catastrophes that will not be tolerated in the west if they were to occur in predominantly white communities. For example, the liberal media is awash with scientific evidence of the long-term effect of the Gulf of Mexico oil spill and other spills that have occurred in the west on human and animal populations and the ecology. Justin Gillis and Leslie Kaufman (2010) writing for the New York Times x-rayed the long term effects of spills that occurred in the Exxon Valdez, France, and the southern gulf coast in Mexico. They observed that though spills are different in quantity and effect, there is a growing scientific awareness of the persistent damage that spills can do. For example, following the 1969 oil spill in the Buzzards Bay, fiddler crabs at the nearby Wild Harbor today still act drunk by "moving erratically and reacting slowly to predators." They argue that the "odd behavior is consistent with a growing body of research showing how oil spills of many types have remarkably persistent effects, often at levels low enough to escape routine notice" (Gillis and Kaufman 2010). Yet, not much pressure is exerted to study how spills have impacted lives in rural villages in the Niger Delta.

Clearly, therefore, Niger Delta peasants are an endangered human species. They are endangered because the forces of global racism and petro-capital using dated logic define Niger

Delta people as completely expendable and its resources superfluous. This racial logic, which held blacks in America in bondage for over 200 years have been roundly defeated by science-backed legislations and the global forces for good. Forced to change its form and contexts, it has found a home in the global financial institutions including the World Bank, Paris Club and the IMF and in transnational businesses including Shell and Chevron through which it engages in destructive preemptive warfare with indigenous peoples, cultures, and environments.

Within this context, therefore, it can be argued that changes within the Nigerian polity (including the violence in the Niger Delta) are not authored from within. The west through petrol-capital actively instigates, stimulates, and superintends over these changes. For example, a 2010 Wikileaks release showed that Shell was more active in the politics of the Nigerian state than the government or Shell was willing to admit. The release showed Ann Pickard, then Shell's Vice-president for sub-Saharan Africa in a meeting with US ambassador Robin Renee Sanders, boasting about its ability to influence every single government policy in Nigeria because of its well-oiled contacts within the government itself. She boasted that Shell had seconded employees to every relevant ministry and as such knew "everything that was being done in those ministries" (Smith 2010). From examples such as this, we can argue that actions from within, such as the violence in the Niger Delta, are defensive collective actions or reactions to the onslaughts of race-backed petrol-capitalism. These are actions meant to defend not only the economic identity of Niger Delta peoples but also their cultural, spiritual, and social identities. The Niger Delta identity is deeply woven into the militant identity and these contrasts sharply with the white identity that is masked by petrol dollar. These identities are place bound where relations between races are relations between places (Pulido 2000; Lipsitz 2011). They are called into existence and maintained by the fact that the devastated ecology of the Niger Delta and its oil wells exist as



nodes in a network of economic, political, and cultural practices that skew opportunities and life chances along deeply etched racial lines. Because of the global practices that inspire and reinforce the racialization of space and the spatialization of race, whiteness through petrol profit is legitimated, perceived as natural and immutable. Blackness, on the other hand, is silhouetted within dominant forms of exploitation, socio-political exclusion, and unfairness.

Lipsitz (2011) argues that racialized space shapes nearly every aspect of contemporary life. The global racial imagination that relegates people of different races to different spaces produces grossly unequal outcomes. In the west, it is responsible for more affordable housing, healthcare, education, transportation, and better infrastructure. In the Niger Delta, it produces economic devastation and socio-political marginalization that exposes Niger Delta communities and people to severe environmental hazards, social nuisances, impaired health, and diminished economic opportunities. As Lipsitz (2011:6) argues, the “lived experience of race takes place in actual places while the lived experience of space draws its determinate logic from overt and covert understandings of race” (Lipsitz 2011).

In sum, the increasing economic, political, social, and cultural disparities between peasant communities in the Niger Delta and western agglomerations cannot be overstated. These disparities arise from the racial discursive framing of Niger Delta peasants as "other" and of their resources as "superfluous." As a consequence, they are marginalized politically, emasculated economically, and stigmatized socially as "troublesome" and/or "militant." The categorizations and compartmentalization of Niger Delta peoples and communities foster and legitimize the genocidal impulses of the racist west masked as economic necessities. Consequently, resistance to oil production and the ideological legitimations of whiteness is, in fact, redefined as resistance to western economic progress and must be crushed. For example, between 2005 and 2010,

America provided Nigeria with military assistance to quell militant insurgency. Not only were Nigerian military officers trained abroad on modern techniques of counter-insurgency, sophisticated military hardware including fighter jets and war ships were provided at no cost to the Nigerian military. It was fully understood, that these equipment would be fully utilized to whip the renegade and recalcitrant militants into line. The support of the US bolstered the flagging morale of Nigerian soldiers and led to the carnage in Ayakoroma and other Niger Delta villages and towns, where hundreds of people were killed by rampaging federal forces.

However, this racist structure of exploitation and oppression is not without its antithesis. At the same time that the full racial viciousness of petrol-capitalism is unleashed on the Niger Delta, people from these communities have forged alliances of resistance and employed strategies to extricate themselves from the vice grip of Europe and America. Thus, all of the long-term benefits to whiteness that accrue from petrol-capitalism are potentially damaged by the same spatial relations that supposedly benefits whites. Native (or militant) resistance to the constraints and confinements of race-based petrol-capitalism and its socio-economic pressures potentially produces new ways of envisioning that liberates everyone. These new ways of envisioning re-imagines race, purging it of its viciousness and oppressiveness. In doing so, it re-represents the Niger Delta militant as a global force for good.

### *Capitalism and the Niger Delta Conflict*

The Niger Delta conflict is in large measure a consequence of economic exploitation (See Offiong 1980; Ikein 1990; Olorode 1998; Iyayi 2000; Okonta 2000; Okonta and Douglas 2003; Ukeje 2001; Watts 2009). The exploiters are the oil companies in “slick alliance” with the Nigerian state (Saro-Wiwa 1992). This alliance has produced oil-state enclave economies that shut out local populations (Watts et al 2004). In essence, the exploited are the millions of natives

who have lost agricultural and ancestral lands, vast fishing territories and reserves, means of subsistence and revenue, and their self-esteem and self-worth. The oil/state alliance is a specific product of petrol-capitalism - an increasingly vicious form of global capitalism that is anchored on oil profits. While it yields billions of dollars in profits yearly, its residues are irreversibly devastated ecologies and unremitting misery for millions of local peoples.

Petrol-capitalism is an increasingly influential and vicious arm of global capitalism. Like the capitalist system itself, petrol-capitalism is occasioned by human agents. Under capitalism, human agents are individual capitalists who establish, control, and maintain institutions that advance and protect the interests of the capitalist class over the interests of other classes in society (Iyayi 2008). Beginning from the early days of capitalist penetration of other systems of production, individual capitalists supported always by the awesome power of the state, have been the bulwarks of capitalist progress. With regards to the penetration of Africa, there are numerous examples to show the alliance between individual capitalists and the state. One example is the triangular trade in slaves, which Rodney (1972) argues led to the underdevelopment of Africa and the development of Europe, the United States of America, and Canada. That trade was established and conducted by private companies and individuals including East India Company, Baker and Dawson, Richard and John Barclay, etc backed by the force power of the state. During the colonial period, there was an expansion of private interests to include a large number of joint stock companies. In Nigeria, the Royal Niger Company and later the United Africa Company was the primary corporate agent (supported by the British Crown) in capitalist penetration and expansion (Iyayi 2008).

Sklair (2001: 4) argues that in the neo-colonial or post-colonial period, “the dominant forces are the TNCs, the characteristic institutional form of transnational practices, the

transnational capitalist class in the political sphere and in the culture-ideology sphere, the culture ideology of consumerism.” Racism exists within the culture-ideology sphere and serves the specific function of devaluing the humanity, culture, and institutions of African societies. It helps to weaken local resistance to individual capitalists backed by the full force of the advanced capitalist state, ultimately resulting in the exploitative destruction of their economies and societies. As Iyayi (2008) argues, although the capitalist is supported by the state, the structure of the state through which the capitalist is enabled to plunder unchecked is in fact the creation of the capitalist class itself for the benefit of the capitalists themselves. In that sense, it is not surprising that capitalist state structures in underdeveloped societies are occupied by professional politicians and bureaucrats who share the “worldviews, orientations, attitudes, preferences and practices” of international capitalists (Iyayi 2008).

In Nigeria, the job of capitalist accumulation and exploitation is undertaken by transnational or multinational corporations. The most important of these transnational corporations function within the arena of oil mining. Thus, there is a strong connection between capitalist accumulation and petrol-profit. In this respect, Shell, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Texaco, Agip, etc are transnational corporations serving the rational interests of global capitalism. I use the term “transnational corporation” interchangeably with the term “multinational corporation.” A TNC refers to “forces, processes, and institutions that cross borders but do not derive their power and authority from the state” (Sklair 2001:2). The UN Economic and Social Council describes TNCs as “all enterprises, which control assets – factories, mines, sales offices and the like – in two or more countries” (UNCTC 1978: 158). Jenkins (1987: 1-2) adopts a broad definition of TNC to include “firms that control production in at least one foreign country.” As broad as this definition appears, Iyayi (2008) argues that it excludes global financial institutions

from consideration as TNCs even though both finance and production capital work as two sides of a coin to support and enlarge the global capitalist system.

I agree with Iyayi and see strong connections between global finance power houses like the IMF, Paris Club and the World Bank and transnational oil corporations like Shell, Chevron, and ExxonMobil, whose operations in Nigeria's Niger Delta region yields billions in profits for shareholders geographically dispersed from the site of oil production. As a result, petrol-capitalism has resulted in the peripherization of the Niger Delta and the concomitant deprivation and marginalization of its peasants. We can explicate the development of the periphery in terms of internal and external exchange relationships. According to Bunker (1985:20):

Recent theoretical literature on national development has compounded the distortions inherent in this bias to production models. Its primary focus has been a fruitless debate about whether the causes of underdevelopment occur in a global system of exchange dominated by industrial nations or within specific regional systems of production.

I use the term peripherization here to mean the increasing political, infrastructural, and economic dislocation of rural oil-producing communities in the Niger Delta. This approach (like Bunker's) feeds off the core/periphery, world systems and dependency debates in the social sciences, that enables us analyze spatially-structured and spatially-perceived dependencies as a specific form of social injustice. For example, Eteng (1997:21) argues that:

What currently prevails in the Nigerian Southern oil enclave is a specific variant of internal colonialism.... The specific, highly exploitative and grossly inequitable endowment/ownership - exchange entitlements relations between the Nigerian state and the oil-bearing communities in particular ... explains why the enormous oil wealth generated is scarcely reflected in the living standard and life chances of the peasant inhabitants of the oil-bearing enclave.

Thus, the underdevelopment and/or peripherization of the Niger Delta region and the resulting violence is induced by (1) the unequal exchange in the value of oil resources in the international market and (2) the contradictions and resulting conflict inherent in the production-exchange relations between the oil/state alliance on one hand and the oil bearing communities on the other

hand. Eteng (1997:113) argues this point well when he observes that:

The fundamental contradiction is indeed most pronounced in the oil-bearing communities of the Niger Delta minority enclave from where the country's oil wealth is generated. This fact is well known and highly acknowledged by the appropriating Nigerian state in power, the expropriating multinational oil companies and the expropriated oil bearing communities.... The privileged groups who directly benefit from the wealth include: the multinational oil companies, Nigerian managers of state power, and members of the country's ruling class for the majority ethnic groups and their cohorts from various social classes and communal groups.

In the course of fifty years, petrol-capitalism has evolved a specific economic logic anchored primarily on the capture and control of state and cultural power that in turn permits, preserves, and extends its aggressive economic agenda. This occurs in spite of resistance to both its logics and actual dominance. The establishment of petrol-capitalism over and against the resistance of Niger Delta peasants stands in a relation of “circular causality” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, and Farage 1994) with the development of the Nigerian security systems to force compliance and quiescence from the suffering masses. The oil TNCs in the Niger Delta operate through the logics of petrol-capitalism. Korten (1996: 131) discusses several key elements of this ideology:

X The world's money, technology, and markets should be controlled and managed by gigantic global corporations; X Corporations should be free to act solely on the basis of profitability without regard to national or local consequences; X There should be no loyalties to place and community; X People are motivated primarily by greed; X The relentless pursuit of greed and acquisition leads to socially optimal outcomes.

The logics of petrol-capitalism contains within it, the legitimization of internal war waged by the agents of the state/MNOC alliance against the resistance of subjects, who through their suffering have discovered themselves as victims of an unjust political and economic system. Using these logics, several degrees of repression were instituted to facilitate oil extraction and to protect the unjust system of oil profits allocation. This strategy facilitates the implementation of an inequitable revenue allocation formula, conflictual oil company/community relations, intensive inter- and intra-communal conflicts, acute ecological degradation, ineffective environmental regulations, promulgation of exploitative and repressive legislation that legitimates exploitative access to oil resources, and violent state suppression of legitimate

dissent. Iyayi (2008) observes that the willingness with which TNCs or MNCs exploit undemocratic and corrupt processes in underdeveloped societies arises from the entrenched petrol-capital culture. Underneath this culture, is a racism-based framing that expressly defines underdeveloped societies and peoples as expendable and through this, oil profit is elevated to a superhuman form, and reified. Ashton-Jones (1998: 130) observes that the culture of petrol-capitalism is predicated on five assumptions:

- a) That profit maximization is the only basis upon which a company can run, so that any expenditure beyond what is required to get out the oil is resisted; b) That a deal can be made with governments only, regardless of the government's legality or morality; That once an arrangement has been made with a government, a mining company can do what it likes, in fact, to act as if it is a government agency; c) That the "market," has a right to have the resources it wants, at the lowest price, and regardless of the costs to local people who are obliged to play host to mining companies; and d) That "we", the mining companies, know best and are acting responsibly.

As Ashton-Jones (1998: 31) argues, neither the government nor the TNCs with which they associate are willing to accept any divergence from petrol-capital "culture", which is "reinforced with a mixture of cynical public relations and intimidation." He concludes that the "adverse impacts of mining upon the lives of host communities arise from this immoral culture than from anything else." It follows, therefore, that the question of the legitimacy of oil production and distribution could not be raised without provoking extreme repression, and this raises the more important question: the legitimacy of the fictive body called the Nigerian state that would side with international capital against its own people. In other words, militant insurgency in the Niger Delta may be understood not as disobedience to national and local ordinances but as a morally legitimate defense of the rights of Niger Delta people to protect their material existence. It is a legitimate defense of their means of livelihood, their health, their rights to education, and their rights to develop the infrastructures capable of delivering peace and progress to the peoples and communities. The militant's challenge of the state's control of the capital of physical force may be interposed as a reminder to the long series of peaceful protests

intermixed with sporadic violence that only succeeded in worsening the condition of the Niger Delta peasant. The current armed conflict in the region, therefore, might be interpreted as action intended not only to redress past injustices or to stop further injustice, but also to demonstrate the capacity of a chain of small groups, often poor and ill-equipped, to activate and reactivate violence when the state abdicates its responsibility to protect natives from the excesses of international capital.

Michael Peel (2010) touched on this when he observed that Nigeria is a “brittle motor of twenty-first century capitalism.” According to him, the supply of crude and by implication the violence in the Niger Delta is anchored on the technological developments and tools oil wealth has helped to create. The sophisticated technological devices that historically have set rigid boundaries between the west (or oil majors) and locals are increasingly becoming available to non-oil actors (including locals) in the Niger Delta. And this has removed the veil from racialized space (Lipsitz, 2011) which in all material facts is contrived to aid economic exploitation. More and more, Niger Delta peasants who live adjacent to the oil fields are noticing differences between their circumstances and those of the people who exploit their resources. These differences are huge and cannot be explained away to differences in culture, ethnicity, socio-political capital, or religion. The people are alluding these differences to the venality of corruption and profiteering (by-products of capitalism) and are becoming more determined to demand and seize recompense. Peel (2010:xvi) suggests that Nigeria is a lesson on the “arrogance of a fossil-fuel obsessed world.” In their arrogance, they fail to see how the “unfettered global cult of crude hurts not just the countries that produce it but as relentlessly as in any Greek tragedy, the nations that consume it, too.” According to him, the volatility of oil prices caused by even small disruptions in the Niger Delta oil fields is proof of the reverse effects of



mindless oil exploitation (Peel 2010).

Between 2004 and 2008, the world oil price increased very steeply. Corresponding to these increases, was increasing socio-political marginalization of oil producing communities and the economic emasculation of indigenes of these communities. Paradoxically, at this same period, Nigeria was assuming greater importance and influence in the energy security policies of the United States and Britain who are anxious to unravel oil deposits in Africa in the face of hostilities from the Arab Gulf. Over the last several decades, Nigeria has emerged a central player in US oil exports accounting for about 10 percent of US total imports. Peel observes that the US National Intelligence Council estimates that African countries led by Nigeria and Angola have the capacity to supply 25 percent of US total oil imports by 2015.

The craving for Nigerian oil, which is particularly prized because of its low sulfur content, goes beyond the west and this reflects contemporary shifts in the global economic balance of power (Peel 2010). China, which had been shut out of the continent historically held in the jugulars by western capitalism, has become active in the region since it became capitalist. Through mouth watering promises of infrastructural development, China is capturing exploration contracts in the region especially in Equatorial Guinea, Angola, and Ghana where oil in commercial quantity has just been discovered. Similarly, Russia in September 2008 signed an agreement with Nigeria for a joint venture with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). Within a fortnight after that announcement, the European Union offered Nigeria financial support for a €15 billion pipeline that would directly link Nigerian gas to European markets. All of this is guaranteed to benefit the west and a tiny click in Nigeria while the majority of residents who bear the scars of oil production are left with only their scars. Violence is inevitable in the circumstance.

For example, the UNDP notes that Nigeria is the world's 13<sup>th</sup> largest oil producer, and the 6<sup>th</sup> largest in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). From 1970 to 1999, oil constituted between 21 and 48 percent of GDP and generated about \$231 billion for the Nigerian economy. Between 2000 and 2004, oil accounted for 79.5% of total government revenue and about 97% of foreign exchange (UNDP, 2006). Yet, increases in oil wealth have not translated into increases in the standard of living for Nigerians. Instead, increases in the poverty and inequality rates coincide with the discovery of oil and with increases in oil production and oil earnings. According to Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2003), in 1965 when oil revenue was about \$33 per capita, GDP per capita was \$245. But in 2000 when oil revenue had increased to \$325 per capita, GDP per capita remained at the 1965 value of \$245. Higgins (2009) argues that evidence such as this leads to the conclusion that Nigeria had suffered from the "resource curse." Waste, corruption, fiscal irresponsibility, political instability, poor policy formulation and implementation, and above all racism and a hybrid capitalist system – petrol-capitalism - have conspired to bring the "resource curse" upon those who call the delta home and the nation at large.

### **3.4 The Niger Delta Conflict**

In his book "Nigeria: The Challenge of Biafra" written after the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970), Arthur A. Nwankwo (1972) noted that:

It is true that the basic problems that caused the Nigerian crisis remained unresolved ... and there seems to be no consideration for the health of the federation in the pursuit of individual or group interests - from the smuggling rackets to the huge payoffs in bribery and corruption. But it is also true that the traumatic bitterness of the war is rich with lessons for toleration and understandings. These lessons are our only guarantee against instability for they will serve as a buffer to cushion us through the rough times ahead. The mention of rough times ahead may have set some political noses twitching. But if it is realized that the contradictions in Nigeria are yet to be resolved, we will agree that Nigeria has anything but quiet to look to.

He was right. Yet, as Alexis de Tocqueville observes "never was any such event, stemming from factors far back in the past, so inevitable yet so completely unforeseen." While the Niger Delta

conflict may not have taken analysts by surprise, the new manifestations of the violence particularly the spaces within which they are occurring, is to say the least, unfathomable. For example, since the end of the Biafran war, indicator after indicator have shown that the deep fissures that produced the war are lurking in shadowy spaces in the Nigerian clime, restless to produce another round of blood bath, only this time, with repercussions for the world's economic security and African regional stability. However, while the Biafran war was waged between clearly defined social units and armies, the current war is waged between a state army with identifiable landmarks, territory, and assets and a faceless, amorphous group of fighters with no clearly marked territory and assets, but with a lot of violent rage and the means to do incalculable damage. It is this new war frontier with its own internal and external logics that is posing new challenges to peacebuilding advocates across the world.

The struggle over control of the Niger Delta resources has not always been violent. Niger Delta communities from the very beginning were interested in negotiating and dialoguing the contentious politics of oil production. Osaghae et al (2007:10) reports that the struggle over resources was pursued by two set of actors: the elders/elites and the youths. They describe the elites as “businessmen, retired civil servants, traditional leaders, and political leaders in the Niger Delta.” Their influence results from their roles as intermediaries between the people of the region and the state/corporations extracting oil from the region. They generally adopt a peaceful, non-violent approach that maximizes negotiation and dialogue to resolve grievances. These elites pursue their demands through two types of movements: socio-political movements and ethno-cultural movements. Both of these movements abhor violence and use their political and cultural influences to press for changes in resource allocation and the provision of basic infrastructures including roads, schools, and health centers in the Niger Delta.

Niger Delta youths have always featured in the politics of oil production in the region. However, their involvement took a violent turn in reaction to the extreme repression they suffered during the Abacha military regime. Following the annulment of the June 12 1993 presidential elections and the parlous state of the Nigerian economy that was characterized by unemployment, poverty, and discrimination (all outcomes of the IMF/World Bank inspired policy of structural adjustment fastidiously implemented by the Gen. Babangida administration from 1985-1993), Niger Delta youths began to challenge the Nigerian state, oil companies, and elites in the region. The youths became increasingly suspicious of their elders and elites who they accused of being weak, fearful, greedy and generally ineffective in obtaining concessions from government and the oil companies on behalf of the people. They therefore resolved to seize the bull by the horn by mobilizing and engaging the state and the oil companies (Ikelegbe 2005).

Emboldened by their December 1998 convention in Kaiama, Bayelsa state, the youths began to make serious demands on the oil companies and the Nigerian state. For example, following the Kaiama declaration, the youths gave the MNCs a two-week ultimatum to pay compensation for the ecological damages caused by oil production or face militant action. They also asked the government to reverse itself on the revenue allocation formula or face violent resistance from the youths (Osaghae et al 2007). At the expiration of the two weeks deadline, the youths under the nickname “egbesu boys” staged a peaceful demonstration to the seat of government in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state but were brutalized by agents of the state. To avenge the unprovoked killing of their members, the youth reconvened in the evening and attacked military checkpoints and police stations, seizing weapons and ammunition. The action of these youths spread quickly and was replicated by youths in Odi and other communities such that in only a couple of weeks, violent resistance had become the creed in the Niger Delta forcing many oil

companies to halt production and evacuate staff. Operation Climate Change (a series of activities designed to raise environmental awareness all over Ijaw land) had begun.

In response to the spreading insurgency, the federal government deployed two war ships and about 15 thousand troops comprising mainly northern soldiers to the region, particularly Bayelsa state, which had become the hotbed of insurgency. On the morning of December 30, 1998, about two thousand youths dressed in black marched through the streets of Yenagoa, singing and dancing. Soldiers armed with machine guns and rifles opened fire on them killing three protesters - Amy Igbila (19yrs), Engineer Frank (28 yrs), and Goodluck Wong (29yrs) - and arresting thirty others (Okonta and Douglas 2003). The youths retreated but staged another march to demand the release of those arrested. Again, this new set of demonstrators was repelled by the fire power of the state and three additional demonstrators including Nwanchuku Okeri and Ghadafi Ezeifile were killed. A state of emergency (the first of its kind) was imposed by the military throughout Bayelsa state and all forms of congregation even for church or worship were banned. Citizens were incessantly harassed and brutalized at military check-points and many reports of rape and extra-judicial killings were recorded.

The killings and maiming continued in the new year and whole Ijaw villages were leveled by the invading soldiers. Kaiama, Yenagoa, Odi, and Oloibiri were besieged resulting in the death of hundreds of people and the displacement of thousands more. Also, two Ijaw communities (Opia and Ikenya) in Delta state were invaded by hundreds of soldiers. Of the approximately 1000 people living in the two villages, sixty-two are still missing and several scores of dead bodies were recovered. The villages were burnt to the ground killing livestock and destroying fishing equipment and religious places. Nonetheless, "Operation Climate Change" continued with the formation of die-hard militant groups including the Niger Delta Peoples

Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), Coalition for Militant Action in the Niger Delta (COMA), and the Martyrs Brigade (MB) (Okonta and Douglas 2003; Hanson 2007).

These organizations along with others comprise thousands of well armed youths trained in covert military operations and determined to engage the forces of the state in prolonged warfare. Two of these groups - NDPVF and MEND - deserve some more detailed discussion. The NDPVF was formed in 2003 as the militant wing of the Ijaw Youth Council. Its leader is Alhaji Mujahid Asari Dokubo, erstwhile controversial president of the Ijaw Youth Council. According to Omojola (2009), the NDPVF was formed in reaction to the underdevelopment of the Niger Delta, the exclusion of Niger Delta peasants from the benefits of oil production, the ecological devastation of the Niger Delta area as a result of oil production, and the wide scale socio-political and economic marginalization of people of the Niger Delta. Thus, its primary goal is the mobilization and organization of the youth against oil conglomerates and the state, which is in alliance with the oil multinationals.

The conflict between the NDPVF and the state has its roots in broader political scheming and arrangements. Following the 2003 nationwide elections, a turf war between the NDPVF leader Asari Dokubo and the leader of the Niger Delta Vigilante, Tom Ateke, over support for candidates to elective offices in Rivers state, escalated due to Dokubo's perception that the state was aligned with Ateke. Miffed by this, Dokubo decided to engage agents of the state and oil corporation in an all out war. He served quit notices to the oil companies active in the Niger Delta and raised an army he claimed was 10,000 men strong to "reclaim the resources of the Niger Delta." Amongst other demands, Dokubo and the NDPVF sought "resource control and self-determination" "by every means necessary," including kidnapping of oil workers, seizure of

oil facilities, looting of crude oil, and physical engagement with security forces. It would appear that Dokubo's opposition to the state is a complete turnaround from the very cozy relationship that he had with the managers of the state prior to the conclusion of the 2003 elections. In fact, both Ateke's NDV and Dokubo's NDPVF along with many of the other militant groups operating in the Niger Delta got their start from the financial (and arms) support they received from politicians in the oil-producing states. Thus, their insurgency was fuelled by the localization of corruption, the rise of powerful machine politicians, and the liberalization of violence prior to the 2003 national elections. State and local politicians engaged and deployed ethnic militias and warlords as political thugs to intimidate voters, snatch ballots, and generally forcefully manipulate the results of the general elections which were marred by large scale violence. Also, these violent political campaigns were financed with proceeds from looted crude, wherein warlords were deliberately inserted into the oil theft expedition organized through an elaborate state-centered syndicate involving top military, political, corporate, and local leaders (Watts 2008).

In contrast to the NDV and NDPVF, which arose from the deliberate manipulations of political gladiators, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) originated in response to a different but interrelated set of challenges. It arose specifically from the fallout of Dokubo's violent engagement with the state as well as political developments in Bayelsa state. In 2005, Dokubo was arrested by the Obasanjo government in an effort to stop the escalating violence in the Niger Delta area. His arrest created a vacuum in the blossoming militant movement which was worsened by a split among the leadership of the Federated Niger Delta Ijaw Community. Also, in that year, the governor of Bayelsa State Chief D.S.P Alamayesiogha was arrested in a federal government inspired sting in London, impeached, tried, convicted, and

imprisoned on corruption charges. At that time, Alamayesegha was the highest ranking Ijaw public official and popular among the Ijaws who gave him the title of “governor-general” of Ijawland. His disgrace and incarceration was, therefore, seen as an affront on Ijawland and a calculated attempt to continue the political emasculation of Ijaw speaking peoples.

Thus, MEND from the onset, sought to wage both an ideological and a tactical war with the state. It mobilized support from the Ijaws by consistent reference to the decades-long quest by Ijaws for political and social relevance. It tapped into the ecological despoliation of Ijaw land and the concomitant impoverishment of peasant Ijaw farmers. It idealized the failed Isaac Boro 12 day revolution calling on Ijaws to stand firm in defense of their “God-given resources.” MEND parades a very sophisticated organizational structure similar to the more successful rebel organizations in other parts of the world. This is because it is led by “more enlightened and sophisticated men than most of the groups in the past” as its leaders are educated and have studied militant movements in other parts of the world (Obasi 2007). Its great strength is that its structure is difficult to fathom because of its very nebulous nature. This is why MEND is seen as an “idea” more than an organization (Hanson 2007). Owen (2007) compares MENDs organizational and operational model to a franchise operation that must adapt to local conditions. According to him “Nigeria is a fluid and difficult place to operate, so you need to choose the organizational structure that allows you to operate best.” MENDs structure permits the group greater flexibility and confounds efforts to incapacitate them.

Central to the extractive logic of petrol-capital is the willingness and preparedness of the state and its MNOC allies to wage conventional war against non-state actors including environmental rights groups, student organizations, and militant movements. This determination to brutally suppress groups that directly or indirectly threaten Nigeria's oil production capacity



resulted in the extra-judicial murder of the Ogoni activist and playwright Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others by the Gen. Sani Abacha military junta. This resolve, as we have seen, was also demonstrated when Odi (the second largest city in Bayelsa state) and other Niger Delta communities were invaded by federal forces beginning in November 1999. However, militants have shown equal resolve to violently challenge the prevailing extractive logics and the local and international coalitions that sustains them. Since Nigeria is almost entirely dependent on this industry, prospects of a prolonged warfare in the region are especially troubling. The present DDR intervention aims to peacefully resolve the conflict and end the violence.

### **3.5 Peacebuilding**

The breadth and reach of conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives has increased in the twenty-first century. These increases, themselves, reflect increases in armed conflict in society. Since the end of the cold war, over 90 percent of contemporary armed conflict are believed to occur within states, replacing conflict between states that had predominated prior to the end of the cold war (De Goor et al 1996; Rothstein 1999; Triulzi et al 2003; Marshall and Gurr 2003; Erikson and Wallenstein 2004). Rothstein (1999), for example, associates the spike in within state armed conflict with the end of the Cold War. He argues that the end of the war had contradictory effects as it pushed some states towards conflict and others towards peace. There appears to be agreement, not about the post Cold War effect on contemporary conflicts, but that there has been an enormous increase in within state warfare since the end of the cold war. According to Marshall and Gurr (2005) and Gawerc (2006), since 1990, more than one-third of the world's countries have experienced serious intra-state warfare and nearly two-thirds of these conflicted states were in sustained armed conflict situation for seven or more years. Marshall and Gurr (2005) and Annan (1996) argue that one unmistakable trend about contemporary conflict

dynamics is that intra-state wars are resistant to traditional peacebuilding approaches and are difficult to resolve in any form.

Thus, contemporary conflicts, especially their causes and processes, have a certain "newness." These "new wars" (Kaldor 1999) are deep-rooted (Burton 1987), protracted, (Azar 1990), and intractable. Deep-rooted conflicts result from the deliberate non-satisfaction of certain non-negotiable human needs such as security, identity, recognition, and participation. He argues that identity groups will use any means necessary to satisfy their needs, which often are framed as basic survival needs. In the long run, the armed clamor for the satisfaction of these needs tend to intensify instead of being suppressed, contained, or resolved, when force, coercion, or negotiated settlements are deployed. Like Burton, Azar (1990) argues that contemporary conflicts are protracted because they are the "prolonged and often violent struggle by communal groups for such basic needs as security, recognition and acceptance, fair access to political institutions and economic participation." He argues that intra-state conflicts are typically between communal groups and the state, especially in states where a dominant ethnic or religious group controls the "machinery of the state" and uses it to dominate, oppress, and suppress other less powerful groups. Gidron et al (2002) essentially agree with Burton and Azar. They argue that contemporary conflicts are protracted, continual, violent, perceived as irreconcilable, zero-sum, central to the lives of the identity groups involved, and total because they involve questions of group survival.

Because these conflicts are rooted in local communities, they have often been characterized as "ethnic conflicts." Lederach (1997), however rejects this categorization. He argues that there is nothing ethnic about these conflicts preferring the term "identity conflicts" instead. Identity conflicts highlight the needs and interests of communal groups such as needs for

security, political access, economic participation, and social recognition. Unless the needs of groups are adequately addressed, conflicts will remain protracted, even in the face of peace processes including peace agreements, peacekeeping, and peacemaking initiatives.

Lederach (1997) observes that within the last two decades corresponding to the end of the Cold War, over 80 peace accords have been signed. This implies that peace processes have proliferated such that Bell (2003) calls the 1990's the "decade of the peace agreement." Yet, as Gawerc (2006) argues, most of the peace processes have failed and only a few have led to durable settlements. This means that the vast majority of intra-state conflict are intractable or at least, are resistant to resolution. This suggests that (1) the struggle for sustainable peace is inevitably a struggle for political power, and (2) the design and implementation of official negotiations to end intra-state conflict have contained inherent shortcomings and contradictions (Rasmussen, 2000). One of the more significant shortcomings of contemporary peace processes is their failure to "address the bitterness including the memories and images, and the sources that generate it" (Gawerc 2006).

Peacebuilding scholars and advocates are divided about the sources of much contemporary conflicts. While some trace armed conflicts to structural conditions including state failure, economic cleavages, and political disenfranchisement, others blame armed conflict on psychosocial/psychocultural factors including ancient hatreds, extremism/fanaticism, and greed. The direction of blame also have implications for policies, strategies, and mechanisms to end conflicts. For example, structuralists tend to focus on political issues including justice and rights. In contrast, psychoculturalists tend to emphasize relationships, communication, and individual and group responsibility and encourage work on eliminating ignorance, misperceptions, misrepresentations, fears, and hostility between groups (Gawerc 2006; Fitzduff 2001). The above

dichotomization of peacebuilding approaches suggests that the various approaches are mutually exclusive and at times antinomic. Thus, the presence of one set of causes implies the absence of the other sets. This also suggests that the implementation of one set of strategies necessarily warrants the absence of the others. This idea of the exclusiveness and incompatibility of peacebuilding approaches has been repudiated by Lederach and other contemporary scholars including Galtung (1996), McCandless (2001), and Miall (2006). They argue that both approaches are complementary and useful not only for gaining deeper understanding of conflict, but also for designing effective interventions. As Lederach (1997) argues, there is need to develop a wide range of activities and approaches that recognize the need for both systemic and relationship change. It is only when this is done, that society can hope to address what Gawerc (2006) calls the "bitterness" that generates conflict or what Zartman (1989) calls the "legacy of bitterness" that hampers conflict resolution (Zartman 1989).

### **3.6 Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)**

While many contemporary approaches including multilateral and bilateral agencies continue to prioritize democracy and governance as key to long-term stability, many shorter term mechanisms for conflict prevention and peacebuilding are assuming growing importance (Muggah, 2009). Selective amnesties, smart sanctions, and interventions such as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) are increasingly being used to keep post-conflict societies from slipping back into conflict and to stimulate economic growth and development (Doyle and Sambanis 2002). Paradoxically, as investments in such conflict prevention and peacebuilding initiatives is growing, there is increasing doubts about whether they achieve what is attributed to them. For example, critics claim that DDR programs are too often narrowly conceived, inflexible, technocratic, bureaucratic, and detached from the political transition or

broader recovery and reconstruction strategies (Muggah 2009). Because of these concerns, scholars seek more evidence that DDR can achieve what is expected and often is ascribed to it.

DDR comprises a cluster of activities designed to contain arms, dismantle armed groups and prevent the reoccurrence of war or violent conflict (Muggah 2009). Collier (1994), Berdela (1996), Stedman (1997), and Muggah (2009) argue that DDR is more often undertaken by a constellation of international agencies and national governments. From a political economy perspective, DDR encapsulates the strategic and bureaucratic priorities of the security and development sectors of a state. Because of this, the Nigerian Amnesty program stimulates the discourse on the policy priorities of the Nigerian government and particularly its political class or governing elites. According to Duffield (2007), DDR is at the heart of neo-liberal forms of power and governmentability. This means that DDR does not emerge spontaneously from below; rather, it is part of what Muggah (2009:2) describes as a “broader ‘Weberian’ project of securing the legitimate control of force” from combatants on behalf of the state.

Contemporary DDR approaches typically consist of a series of carefully designed and phased activities aimed at creating a suitable environment that would encourage stability and development. Advocates of DDR believe that the three components of the program (disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration) interlock and are mutually reinforcing activities. Disarmament has been defined as the collection of small arms, ammunition, explosives, and light and heavy weapons from combatants and at times from civilians (UN 1999; Nillson 2005). The focus of disarmament is the reduction of the number of weapons (especially illegal weapons) in order to create a safer society. Because the relinquishment of weapons have often been traumatic for combatants, the disarmament process is first and foremost a confidence-building exercise (Hithcock 2004). DDR advocates argue that disarmament is a

critically important component and emphasize the generation of visible and tangible evidence of success in terms of arms and munitions collected. However, they recognize that this component alone is incapable of providing the desired outcomes and must be complemented with parallel activities such as demobilization, reintegration, economic reconstruction, confidence and security enhancing activities, and the promotion of democracy and the rule of law (Muggah 2009; Spear 2006). Although disarmament when undertaken with concrete verification mechanisms and when arms are destroyed has the potential for building confidence in the peace process between erstwhile warring parties as was the case in Northern Ireland, it is more beneficial for ex-combatants (due to improved socio-economic and political conditions) to abandon their desire to resort to arms in order to solve grievances.

Demobilization on its own like disarmament can potentially generate unintentional security dilemmas (Collier 1994). Demobilization is seen as the process of disconnecting combatants from their armed groups or units or significantly reducing the number of combatants serving in armed units (Berdal 1996; Hithcock 2004; Nillson 2005). The goal of demobilization is to give back to the state, its monopoly of violence by disbanding non-state armed groups and paramilitary forces. This activity or phase is critical to the process of reintegration, which is defined as the political, economic, and social integration of ex-combatants, their families, and primary support network into civil society (Nillson, 2005). This definition includes several components including 1) political integration wherein ex-combatants, their families, and support structure become part of the decision making process of their community; 2) Economic integration in which ex-combatants, their families, and support system are enabled to develop their livelihoods; and 3) Social integration wherein local communities accept ex-combatants, their families, and primary support system as members of the community.

Governments emerging from war frequently demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants into existing security structures and or civilian populations. Muggah (2009) argues that the challenges accompanying reintegration into either category are immense. Depending on the context, the process is often heavily politicized and the absorptive capacities of areas for civilian reintegration are often greatly limited (Azam et al 1994). Also, there is the possibility that ex-combatants that remained partially organized within their existing command structures could potentially play the role of spoilers as happened in Sierra Leone in 2000 (World Bank 2002). Along this line, Knight and Ozerdam (2004) observes that in some cases, ex-combatants unintentionally reinforced latent command structures especially when precautions to prevent this from happening were not adopted in advance. In contrast, if ex-combatants were too hastily demobilized especially when the process failed to adequately dismantle command and control structures as happened in Angola, they could trigger insecurity in the communities of return (Muggah 2009; Spear 2006).

Conventional DDR envisions a continuum that extends from a narrow minimalist (establishing security) to a broad maximalist (incorporating development) perspective (Jennings 2008). The minimalist approach according to Muggah (2009:23) is “focused on expedience, where the program aspires less to creating a lasting impact on the lives of ex-combatants and more to time-limited gains.” These approaches focus on removing weapons, cantoning ex-combatants and generally fulfilling the terms of peace agreements. While the strategic goals of the minimalist approach includes a reduction of the likelihood of war reoccurrence, the micro objectives focus on de-linking the command and control of armed groups. In contrast, the maximalist approach “implies a more ambitious, transformative reintegrative agenda (Muggah 2009).” The focus is on interventions that have more ambitious focus and scope. Their objectives

include the rehabilitation of ex-combatants and the reinforcing of public institutions and their legitimacy by promoting markets, property rights, and socio-economic and political infrastructures. These objectives are partly achieved by redressing distortions in state spending and promoting policies and activities that stimulate economic growth and enhance human capacities and endowments.

Despite the great enthusiasm about its utility in conflict prevention or post-conflict intervention, a body of critical literature that questions and challenges core DDR assumptions is emerging (Jennings 2008; Pouligny 2004). One of the main concerns is that DDR glosses over the complexity of conflict and artificially grafts DDR programs onto volatile conflict and post-conflict societies. Case studies (Humphreys and Weinstein; Pugel 2009) for example, demonstrates the genuine risks that accompany the imposition of DDR interventions from the top especially if they are divorced from the political, social, and economic context in which violence or conflict is imbedded. Muggah (2009:3) observes that DDR is “too often resorted to in a knee-jerk fashion and launched in such a way that it is isolated from the broader clutch of processes associated with governance, state consolidation and economic recovery.”

Apart from this, critics also quarrel with the conceptual dimensions of certain aspects of DDR especially the aspect that concerns the reintegration of former combatants. The concern is that generic approaches to reintegration are inadequate for dealing with the heterogeneous and differentiated motivations of armed groups. Some critics worry that combatant-centric approaches to reintegration misfire completely and that investment should be directed instead to more inclusive or area-based programs focusing on employment, infrastructural development, and economic growth (Pouligny 2004; Jennings 2008; Willibald 2006). These critics specifically target the rational choice models and monetary incentives (such as payments to combatants)



dominating the field. Finally, critics and practitioners worry that DDR lacks clear benchmarks or metrics to determine success. Muggah (2009) argues that while this is also true of other development interventions initiated by multilateral and bilateral contributors in complex environments, the “fact that DDR deals specifically with weapons and armed groups suggests an extra layer of caution is warranted.”

### **3.7 Women Militants and DDR**

Women militants or combatants, like their male counterparts, have essential roles to play in the Niger Delta amnesty program. Yet, women generally are frequently excluded from the planning and implementation of DDR programs or in peacebuilding processes in conflicted societies. The Niger Delta Post-Amnesty Committee in June 2010, released figures of militants enrolled in the amnesty program. Of the 20,192 ex-militants registered to participate in the program, there are only 133 females representing about 0.6 percent of the population of registered ex-militants. As has happened in many other conflicted societies where DDR has been implemented, female militants make up a very small number of the forces to be demobilized and reintegrated. Thus, there is the possibility that they will be de-prioritized because they are not considered as posing the same level of threat as male ex-militants. Demobilizing female combatants in the Niger Delta especially where vital institutions are lacking or have been impacted by the conflict and which also have a history of excluding women who in most cases are the key providers in the family, is fraught with enormous challenges for the future of peace (or violence) in the Niger Delta.

For example, even if the amnesty program is committed to achieving gender equality in the peacebuilding period, there may be a lack of capacity to deal with issues that pertain directly to women including a lack of funds specifically earmarked to support women ex-militants as a

special group with peculiar challenges and needs. Because the amnesty program may lack this gender-sensitive focus, it may inadequately address the needs of women in the disarmament and demobilization phase, or to effectively support their rehabilitation and reintegration, and to adequately target them for economic and political empowerment at the economic reconstruction phase. The inattention to the details and specifics of female involvement in organized violence may severely undermine the ability of the Niger Delta Amnesty Program to build sustainable peace in the region.

The role women play in peace negotiations and in post-conflict reconstruction has been well documented in the peacebuilding literature (Ortega 2009). However, the focus has been on their roles as victims, peace enablers, and peacemakers; not as combatants and possible obstacles to the peace process. As Ortega (2009) points out, this may be a consequence of the portrayal of women as nurturers, caregivers, and positive social actors who abhor violence and support peace processes. These stereotypically gendered notions about ideal female roles compared to their male counterparts have severe implications for how women ex-combatants are treated by processes and programs that aim to build peace in conflicted societies and ultimately the outcomes of peacebuilding programs. Thus, acknowledging the range of female ex-combatants' experiences and recognizing their potential for complicity and agency in organized violence is an important step toward deconstructing prevalent stereotypes of gender-appropriate behavior in conflict contexts (Ortega 2009).

Still, it is doubtful that the Niger Delta amnesty program incorporates special procedures and considerations for women combatants based on their special needs. According to Bernard et al (2003), these considerations are based on their gender, age, and condition including their circumstances as girl mothers and pregnant women combatants. There is also the concern that

the amnesty process may not incorporate a significant proportion of eligible women combatants. The planning documents do not appear to discriminate between men and women or to focus on critical female needs that often are ignored in DDR programs and processes. They do not appear to consider the special needs of women who, due to the stigma attached to being identified as combatants, are deterred from participating in the DDR process (Bernard et al 2003).

As Bernard et al (2003) argues, unless the special needs of women are addressed, many of the female ex-combatants will fall through the cracks and re-integrate onto the streets, degenerate into prostitution or crime, or return as mercenaries or paid combatants in another war – a more deadly campaign that may be difficult to halt once it begins. We cannot overstate these needs which vary in intensity and severity based on their experiences. For example, some of the women have committed great atrocities that may haunt them for a long time. Some of these women have abused drugs. Many have little or no education and have enjoyed the power they wielded through the barrel of the gun. Some have been sexually abused both by fellow combatants and by government forces. Some are mothers and many are wives or have become wives. Because many of these women may be inaccessible to the amnesty committee due to the gendered nature of cultural interpretations of male and female roles and behavior, their actual condition, number, and specific needs may remain unknown. Recognizing these needs may help prevent a return to armed struggle in the Niger Delta.

This study, therefore, is intended to provide the much needed evidence for DDR success or failure that has been lacking in the field. It will provide evidence of how and why combatants are mobilized and what ultimately happens when they are disarmed and demobilized. It will answer questions about whether reintegration is an effective strategy for preventing conflict or a return to conflict after peace has been established. It will provide evidence on how DDR

interventions can be made more contextually appropriate, accountable, and effective and promote genuine safety and security. Appropriate metrics of success that takes the totality of indicators, impacts, and outcomes into cognizance are greatly needed and this work is dedicated to satisfying that need.

## **Chapter 4:**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

I seek to locate my analysis of the Niger Delta violence and the amnesty intervention in relation to two distinct bodies of theoretical work. The first operates under the rubric of conflict formation and contains within it four theoretical postulations that draw attention to the formation of the violence in the Niger Delta. The second operates under the sign of conflict transformation and extends the concerns of the conflict formation school to include mechanisms for building peace in the Niger Delta. Thus, using both approaches, I argue that the amnesty program is wedged in the middle of a major conceptual rift: change versus stability. In order for change to produce peace, it must vibrantly engage the structural fissures that produced the Niger Delta conflict in the first place.

#### **4.1 Conflict Formation Theory**

I examine four distinct ideas related to the formation of the Niger Delta conflict. I first examine the issue of environmental security. Since the 1990's, interest in the environment as a source of political conflict and as the cold war security problematic (Watts et al, 2004) has risen sharply. Interest in these issues peaked after the publication of Tad Homer-Dixon's (1999) "Environment, Scarcity and Violence," Robert Kaplan's (2000) "The Coming Anarchy," and Michael Klare's (2001) "Resource Wars." These works and many others which focus on the environment raise questions concerning environmental degradation, rehabilitation, and conservation. For example, Kaplan in "The Coming Anarchy" argued that "eco-demographic pressures" have created numerous emergencies within African states including poverty and malnourishment, and these challenges have forced many African societies into acts of violence.

In essence, the violence in the Niger Delta results from environmental changes including oil-induced pollution that have immense negative effects on the local economy. By this analysis, Niger Delta militants use violence not only to force environmental rehabilitation and conservation, but also as a means of economic subsistence.

The second strand of conflict formation theory focuses on the tension between resources, politics, and civil conflict. Khan (1994), Karl (1997), Coronil (1997), Collier, (2000), Watts et al (2004), and Robinson (2006) examine polities dominated by oil revenue and the mechanisms through which rent-seeking produces what Watts et al (2004) call “petrol regimes.” Watts et al (2004:4) for example, observes that oil rent in Nigeria have historically sustained a “parasitic ruling elite” and enabled the state to fraudulently purchase political consent from exploited minorities while maintaining the “delicate northern hegemony within a competitive multi-ethnic polity.” Okilo (1980), Ikporokpu (1996), and Watts et al (2004) argue that consent is obtained through a derivation principle that distributes oil rents and royalties to states and this is complicated by massive institutional corruption.

Similarly, Collier (2000) uses resource-dependency to analyze and explain rebellion in Africa. According to Collier, oil is a lootable resource that engenders intense antagonisms amongst competing socio-political forces. The predatory nature of these diverse forces within and outside of government produces armed conflict and civil wars. Thus, people rebel not because of the existence of grievance but because of the abundance of opportunities available to do well through war. Colliers economics of war thesis has found support from Keen (2005) and Reno (2000). Keen argues that the objective of warfare is not to win but to create conditions and opportunities for the plundering of vital resources without the requirement of accountability. In this sense, internal warfare does not approximate to the breakdown of law and order or of

rationality; instead, it creates a new type of order and rationality. Keen argues that civil war stimulates “another system of profit, power and even protection, granting actors the opportunity to loot, and exploit civilians” (Keen 2005:51). Reno (2000) also attaches little significance to grievance. He argues that corruption, the privatization of the state, and the personalization of power weakens state institutions and leads to state collapse with warlords superintending over vast fractious territories that have lootable natural resources. Injustice and social grievance, therefore, exist only as ideological tools utilized by greedy persons to access lootable resources.

The third strand of conflict formation theory addresses ethnicity, ethnic mobilization, and ethnic conflict (Ijomah 1998; Mandani 2000; Sagay 2008; Watts et al 2004). These works help us understand Nigeria’s pre-colonial and post-colonial political formations and its nascent federalism. Sagay (2008), observes that before colonialism there was no Nigeria. Nigeria is a British creation and consists of over 400 fiercely independent and often acrimonious nationalities. These societies would fight over territory, food, culture, religion, trade, and opportunity. Ijomah (1998) describes these nationalities as “inconsistent cognitive elements” which were forced together to pursue British economic interests. He accused the British of not “creating clear behavioral assertions” to foster nationhood. Mandani (2000) shows how cultural indigeneity became the basis of ethnicity and the specific ways in which ethnicity is invented, reinvented, and mobilized within the arena of oil politics, often provoking violence. Watts et al (2004) examine local forms of community and ethnic mobilization that are vital aspects of the social relations of oil extraction. How these relations are forged, negotiated, and reconfigured including land use and reform, customary laws, territoriality, contact with oil companies and forms of identification (ethnicity, gender, age, chieftaincy, clanship) around traditional authority and locally specific forms of capitalist development have important implications for the violence.

The fourth strand of conflict formation theory associate oil neither with incumbent politics nor predation proneness. Instead, it focuses on the link between violent intra-state conflicts and state/corporate enclave politics. Watts et al (2004: 5) note the striking “lack of local level dynamics ... and the total invisibility of both transnational oil companies (which typically work in joint ventures with the state) and with the intersection of local politics and petrol-capitalism.” Instead of pursuing oil extraction as a source of predation or state military power, Watts et al (2004) focuses on how petrol-capitalism produces particular kinds of enclave economies and governable spaces that are characterized by instability and armed violence.

It is easily seen, then, that theories of conflict formation are immensely useful for explaining the causes of the Niger Delta conflict and the mobilization of insurgency. However, they have limited application in explaining the peacebuilding process or the transformation of destructive conflict to constructive conflict. They also have limited applicability in regards to the larger conceptual quarrel between change and stability and their connection to the implementation of the Amnesty Program. Lederach’s conflict transformation theory addresses peacebuilding and the processes through which violent conflict is transformed to a peaceful situation amenable to all parties to a conflict.

## **4.2 Conflict Transformation Theory**

Conflict transformation theory is relatively new in the field of peacebuilding. However, the core of the theory draws on many of the familiar concepts of conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict formation. Because of its ideological linkage to these, conflict transformation theory is not entirely seen as a new approach but as a re-conceptualization of the field in order to make it more relevant to contemporary conflict situations (Miall 2004). This re-conceptualization is imperative owing to changes in the nature of contemporary conflicts. For



example, most contemporary conflicts occur within national boundaries impelled asymmetrically by crecive economic and political fissures including inequities of power and status. Also, as Smith (2004) observes, many contemporary conflicts are protracted, marked by sporadic periods of violence and peace. In this case, conflict occurs in waves - rising precipitously until some accommodation is reached and then falling off dramatically (almost to the point that there is a marked absence of conflict) and then rising again (Koopmans 2004). Protracted conflict not only upsets the social equilibrium but ultimately distorts the society, creating complex emergencies.

Conflict transformation embodies three distinct theoretical motions: conflict management (Bloomfield and Reilley 1998), conflict resolution (Deutsch and Coleman 2000), and conflict transformation (Lederach 1999). Conflict management theory has been defined by Bloomfield and Reilly (1998:18) as the:

positive and constructive handling of difference and divergence. Rather than advocating methods for removing conflict, [conflict management] addresses the more realistic question of managing conflict: how to deal with it in a constructive way, how to bring opposing sides together in a cooperative process, how to design a practical, achievable, cooperative system for the constructive management of differences.

For conflict management theorists, violent conflicts result from differences in values and interests embedded within the structures of society. Because these differences are entrenched within macro- and micro-social structures (historical experiences, institutional relationships, resource appropriation and distribution, existing power coalitions, etc), they cannot be eradicated. The best society can do is to manage the conflict and prevent it from escalating in such a way that it potentially disrupts the smooth running of society. Occasionally as Miall (2004) points out, it may be possible to arrive at a historic compromise wherein violence is temporarily abandoned and peace vigorously pursued. The goal of conflict management, therefore, is to achieve political settlements leveraging the resources of certain key actors powerful enough to exert pressure on the conflicting parties to settle or to guide the inevitable

conflict into appropriate channels.

Conflict resolution theory, unlike conflict management theory, focuses on intervention by skilled but powerless third parties (operating outside of the political system) that enables conflicting parties understand, explore, analyze, question, reframe, and synthesize their positions and interests. Conflict resolution theorists denounce the systemic approach of conflict management theorists as ineffectual and incapable of resolving conflicts because they ignore the communal and identity depths from which conflicts spring. They argue that people involved in identity-induced violent conflicts are often unwilling to negotiate compromise; instead, the roots of the conflict must be explored in order to evolve creative resolutions that the conflicting parties may have missed in their commitment to their entrenched positions. Therefore, conflict resolution essentially involves helping the parties of conflict transition from zero-sum destructive patterns of conflict to positive-sum outcomes (Deutsch and Coleman 2000).

Conflict transformation extends conflict management and conflict resolution theories beyond the mere reframing of positions and the identification of positive outcomes. Lederach (2003) defined conflict transformation as envisioning and responding to “the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures, and respond to real-life problems in human relationships.” In this context, transformation transcends the mere resolution of an episode of conflict and involves an examination of the epicenter of conflict or the relational patterns from which episodes emerge. Although the language of resolution provided the initial framing structure for conflict transformation, conflict transformation has moved decidedly away from conflict resolution in response to emergent challenges. According to Lederach (2003:29) “the language of resolution implies finding a solution to a problem.” Implied in this

understanding is a certain “definitiveness” and “finality” that suggests that the conflict or conflicts have been amicably resolved. In this sense, the focus of resolution is the “presenting problems” or the “substance and content of the problem.” The content-centeredness implied above explains the sense of “finality” that resolution theorists and practitioners bring to particular conflict situations and the predominance of negotiation techniques within the conflict resolution literature (Lederach 2003). In a sense, therefore, conflict resolution is not oriented toward change; rather, it is concerned with how to “end something that is not desired” (Lederach 2003:29).

In contrast, the basis of Lederach’s conflict transformation is change. Here, the concern is the process by which conflict assumes different shapes across time or how conflict moves from one form to the other. He observes that “by its nature, when we add “trans” to “form” we must contemplate both the presenting situation and a new one.” In essence, unlike conflict resolution, which asks the question “how do we end something that is not desirable,” conflict transformation asks “how do we end something that is not desirable and build something that we desire” (Lederach 2003: 29-30). The implication here is that unlike conflict resolution that focuses exclusively on the content of a problem, conflict transformation incorporates a concern for content into its interest in the “context of relationship patterns.”

To make the differences between resolution and transformation clearer, Lederach distinguished between the processes of both approaches. Whereas resolution builds process into the relationship of the conflicting parties at the exact point where the “symptoms of the crisis and disruption” occur, conflict transformation sees the conflict as an “opportunity to engage a broader context, to explore and understand the system of relationships and patterns that gave birth to the crisis” (Lederach 2003:30). Resolution is considered problem-centered or

crisis-driven because it focuses on the “symptoms of the crisis or disruption” and not the underlying cause of the problem. It is animated by the impulse to resolve or deescalate conflict and hence can achieve only modest short-term, non-permanent fixes. In contrast, conflict transformation is crisis-responsive and is imbedded in a constructive change system that uses a “variety of roles, functions, and processes” to open up conflict to permanent fixes that are rooted in structures, processes, culture, relationships, and persons.

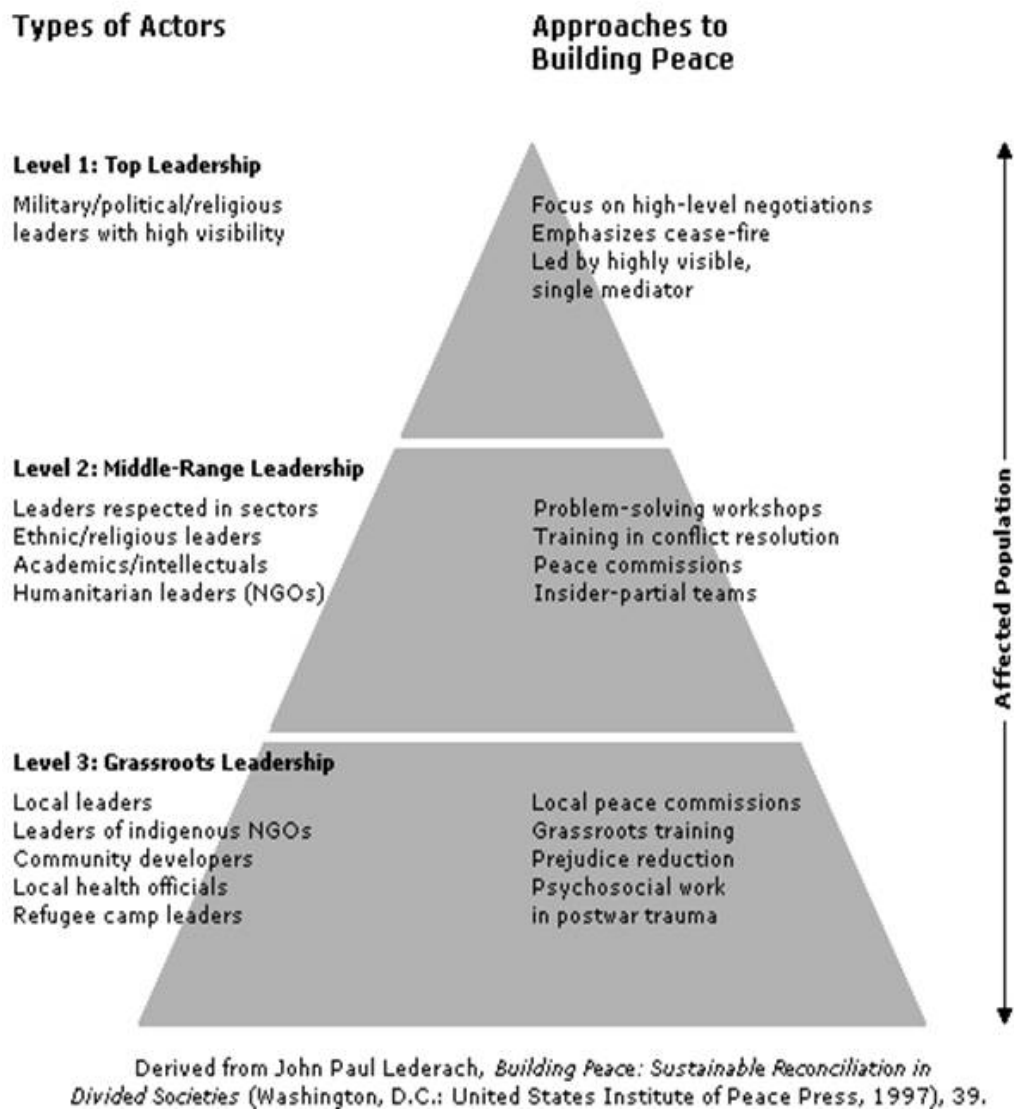
Thus, for Lederach, transformation responds both to episodes of conflict (visible or overt expressions of conflict) and the epicenter of conflict (web of relational patterns including the history of lived episodes from which new episodes and issues emerges). Transformation offers an expanded view or what Lederach (2003; 2005) calls the “big picture of conflict” by situating issues and crisis within a framework of relationships and social context. Its lenses are specially configured to see both “solutions and ongoing change processes” (Lederach 2003:32). In transformation, the opportunity for constructive change (anchored on a responsive and adaptive platform) results directly from the episode of conflict and the “episode of conflict becomes an opportunity to address the epicenter of conflict” (Lederach 2003:32).

In making this point, Lederach suggests that peacebuilding is both a process and an outcome. The idea of peacebuilding or conflict transformation as process was initiated by Laue and Cormick (1978) to delineate an array of conflict intervention roles (including activists, advocates, mediators, and enforcers). Peacebuilding as process, therefore, consists of roles and functions instead of an activity pertaining to a mediator or team of mediators. This approach, in more recent times, has been expanded by Mitchell (1992) who developed a much broader typology of roles and functions of external peacemakers including explorers, conveners, decouplers, unifiers, enskillers, envisioners, guarantors, and facilitators. Similarly, Kriesberg

(1991) suggests a series of intermediary activities to be performed by different people at different times that signifies the peace process. Also, Keashly and Fisher (1990) observe that intermediary work are strategies that are matched to different stages of escalation and de-escalation of a conflict. Thus, different strategies are needed at different stages of conflict development. Lederach (1997:67) supports this line of thinking. His idea of peacebuilding does not rely on “a single individual or team to sustain and broaden the process of constructive conflict transformation in divided societies” like Nigeria. Instead, peacebuilding involves and engages “a variety of people working at different levels and focusing on various aspects of the conflict.” Irrespective of whether it focuses on “roles,” “functions,” activities,” or “strategies,” conflict transformation sees conflict as a “dynamic process” and peacebuilding as a “multiplicity of interdependent elements and actions that contribute to the constructive transformation of conflict” (Lederach 1997: 67).

As outcome, conflict transformation implies a qualitative change from a condition of violence to a condition of peace with little or no opportunities for reversal. It is a change system that transforms: (a) the conflict itself; (b) some aspects of the socio-historical and political system in which the conflict occurs; (c) the persons involved in the conflict; and (d) the relationships between adversaries. It is transformation at these multiple levels that ultimately produces peace. This conclusion should not obstruct the investigation of the schism between change and stability. While stability may be the outcome of change, stability is often resistant to change, hence conflict. Stability, which is generally regarded in contemporary discourse as the logical outcome of every peace program or as an end itself, is not coterminous with peace. Stability in the Niger Delta context may imply the reproduction of oppressive socio-political structures, inequality, lack of legitimate economic access, pollution, grinding poverty, illegal oil

bunkering, and class and ethnic disparities in human development - all of which are either sources or aggravating factors to the protracted armed conflict. Thus, imbedded in the conflict transformation model are tensions of structural conduciveness, strain, new beliefs, precipitants, mobilization, and social control (Foran 2005).



**Figure 1: Lederach's pyramid of leadership**

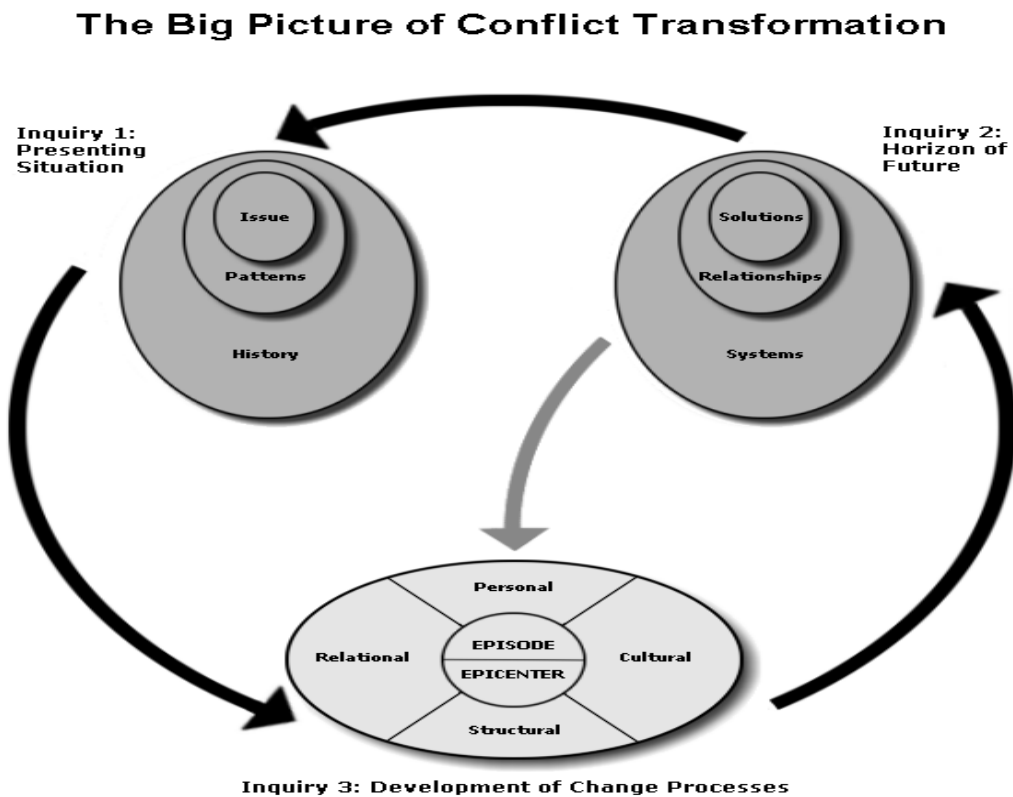
Lederach's structure consists of a pyramid with elite leaders (policy and decision-makers) at the top, socio-religious leaders, academics and media executives at the middle, and grassroots community leaders at the lower level. Lederach believes that a comprehensive peacebuilding

initiative must address complementary changes at all three levels. The conflict intervention model suggested here is shaped primarily by the ideologies and theories of those at the top of the pyramid - the elites. Those at the middle must validate and approve the ideas and theories propounded by the elites to instigate and entrench peace. It is the responsibility of the leaders at the grassroots as well as the ordinary people that they lead to implement the changes proposed at the top. The peace process suggested in this model is negotiated and activated through activities (including documents, meetings, conferences, workshops, consultations, agreements, contracts) involving an entire population irrespective of their positions within societies graded structure.

In essence, his conflict transformation theory is attuned to the broader dialectics of peacebuilding wherein transformation plugs into the conflict dynamic ultimately producing a type of peace (or conflict) amenable to all parties. Using this logic, the Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR program could interact with the conflict in a number of constellations leading to the transformation of the conflict over time, across space, and in many different directions. It could cause changes to the political structure of society (reorganize the federal structure, strengthen democratic institutions, civilianize the political system, strengthen the electoral system), transform the economic space (develop socio-cultural infrastructures, invigorate agriculture, stimulate employment, reduce poverty), bring about demographic shifts (stop the rural-urban drift and encourage urban-rural migration), redress the ecological damage (reduce or eliminate spills and pollution), and cause personality modifications (increase cooperation between militants and society, encourage citizen capacity training and vocational education). Or, the Amnesty Program could reinvigorate the same tensions and pressures responsible for the conflict, effectively maintaining the status quo as well as the conflict.

In figure 2, I visualize the Niger Delta conflict and the amnesty intervention through

Lederach's "big picture of conflict transformation," which consists of three main elements: the presenting situation, the horizon of the future, and the development of change processes. Lederach discusses each as a point of inquiry in the development of effective responses to conflict. The three distinct components corresponds to the totality of the transformation of conflict from its etiology to its escalation and ultimately to its resolution.



**Figure 2: Lederach's big picture of conflict transformation**

### **Inquiry 1: The Presenting Situation**

The first level of inquiry presents a set of embedded spheres, which are shown in the diagram as ellipses. Lederach (2003: 34) used spheres as metaphors to stimulate thought around "spaces of exploration, meaning, and action." The metaphor of spheres, therefore, represents evolving space. In the Niger Delta context, the sphere of armed conflict including the spiraling



waves of kidnapping, pipeline vandalizations, oil bunkering, and destruction of valuable oil assets is labeled “issues.” This sphere is itself embedded in the sphere of ancient hatreds, colonialism, resource deprivation, pollution, socio-political marginalization, imperialism and capitalist exploitation. This sphere is labeled “history” showing that the Niger Delta conflict is rooted in the historical context of exploitation, injustice, global racism, corruption, and pollution. Put differently, the violence is based on patterns of exploitative relationships and structures that dates back through history.

According to Lederach, central to unraveling the presenting issues (or armed conflict) is the tension between the past and the present. The patterns of past exploitative and unjust relations provides the veneer for the present ethnic agitation and armed conflict. Therefore, the existing armed conflict provides the opportunity to recognize and appreciate the past and the set of factors that individually and collectively have produced the amnesty or DDR intervention. Although the violence and its consequences can bring forth this consciousness, they do not have the ability by themselves to positively alter or change that history. The potential for constructive change begins with our ability to “recognize, understand, and redress” the past and proceeds with our “willingness to create new ways of interacting” and to “build relationships and structures” that are geared towards the future (Lederach 2003: 34).

Lederach would argue that the violence in the Niger Delta (actual experience of conflict) along with its consequences (deaths, social displacement, declining oil profit, etc) and the energy released over these issues, defines the “episodic” dimension of the conflict. He would argue that moving from the violence (and its consequences) towards the spheres of relational and historical patterns (colonialism/imperialism, corruption, pollution, resource control, political exclusion, etc) brings us to the “epicenter” of the conflict, which is always capable of creating new episodes

of conflict that are based either on similar or on completely different issues. The goal of transformation is to understand both the episode and the epicenter of conflict. How well the Niger Delta amnesty program anticipates and responds to these ambitions may determine the programs outcomes or effectiveness.

## **Inquiry 2: The Horizon of the Future**

Lederach used the metaphor of horizon to articulate the ambition for a future of non-violence. According to him, a “horizon can be seen but not touched. It can provide orientation, but it requires constant journeying each day. The future we can visualize but not control” (2003: 36). In regards to the Niger Delta conflict, we can represent the future as a set of spheres. Lederach (2003: 36) used spheres to “suggest an open and dynamically evolving future.” Embedded within this sphere are smaller spheres: immediate solutions (the ceasefire agreement, disarmament and demobilization, payment of stipends and allowances to militants, increased oil production, etc); relationships (cooperation between militants and government, new lines of communication between the oil industry and host communities, mediation by the amnesty committee, etc.) and; structures (establishment of committees to deal with the conflict such as the Presidential Committee on the Modalities for the Involvement of Host Communities in the Ownership of Petroleum Assets in Nigeria, Disarmament, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration Sub-committee, Oil and Gas Asset Protection sub-committee, Environmental Clean-up Remediation Sub-committee, Infrastructural Development Sub-committee, etc.). According to Lederach (2003: 37) inquiry into the future engages questions such as “what do we hope to build” and “how can we address all levels - immediate solutions as well as underlying patterns of relationships and structures?”

Lederach argues that a combination of the two spheres of inquiry (the presenting situation

and the horizon of the future) produces a linear model of change - a output/outcome condition involving the movement from the present to the desired future. Instead of this linear conceptualization, Lederach advocates a dialectic involving change, dynamics, processes, relationships, and people. Viewed as a dialectic, each part of the trinity creates energy that feeds off the other parts. This is why the image Lederach draws is that of an interconnected circle defined and energized by pointed arrows. The violence in the region (presenting situation) creates an impetus towards non-violent change. Thus, the violence is a specific kind of destructive energy that sets off other chains of energy. This is depicted by the forward moving arrows. The horizon of the future responds to this destructive energy by showing the possibilities of what could be salvaged, modified, or constructed. Lederach argues that the horizon “represents a social energy that informs and creates orientation.” It is reflexive - capable of looking back towards the past, comprehending the present, and setting clear priorities for the future. It is for this reason that the arrow points towards the presenting situation (a combination of past and present) and forward toward the array of change processes that may result from the amnesty intervention. Because the totality of arrows yields a complete circle, Lederach (2003: 37) describes his big picture as “both a circular and a linear process” or a “process-structure.” Put differently, Lederach’s model is both linear (especially in terms of its progression from stage to stage or past, present, and future) and dialectical (involving a mesh of interactions, interactants, relationships, structures, and processes).

### **Inquiry 3: The Development of Change Processes**

Lederach (2003: 37) discusses the design and support of change processes as a sphere with embedded components. This metaphor encourages thinking about the response to conflict as the “development of processes of change that attend to the web of interconnected needs,

relationships and patterns on all four levels: personal, relational, cultural, and structural.” Thus, response to conflict is not an isolated event, activity, or condition; rather, it is a change process involving “multiple independent initiatives” that are different but not incompatible with one another. Transformation requires the integration of multiple change sources and processes; not “a single operational solution.” These change processes must address both episodic challenges and the epicenter of the conflict. They must address the immediate problems as well as create concrete platforms for long-term relational and cultural change.

For Lederach, therefore, conflict transformation is a complete change system comprising three elements. The presenting situation and horizon of the future occupy opposite extremes of a continuum. At the middle of these two change systems (each element can be contemplated as a complete system) is the development of change processes, which functions as the link between the presenting situation and the future. According to Lederach (2003: 38) the movement from the present to the desired future is not a straight line. Instead, change is midwifed by a “dynamic set of initiatives that set in motion change processes and promote long-term change strategies” at the same time that it provides “responses to specific, immediate needs.” However, Lederach (1995) is adamant that the transformation process must be mid-wifed by forces located within the conflicted society rather than by outside mediators. According to him:

Conflict transformation must actively envision, include, respect, and promote the human and cultural resources from within a given setting. This involves a new set of lenses through which we do not ‘primarily see the setting and the people in it as the problem’ and the outsider, as the ‘answer.’ Rather, we understand the long-term goal of transformation as validating and building on people and resources within the setting.

In other words, Lederach advocates for a close interaction between parties to the conflict and civil society in which the entire context of the conflict is understood and problems addressed. He argues that they must develop the capacity to:

Situate oneself in a changing environment with a sense of direction and purpose and at the same time develop the ability to see and move with the unexpected ... With the peripheral vision

change processes have a flexible strength, never find dead ends that stop their movement, and relish complexity precisely because complexity never stops offering new things that may create ways forward, around, or behind whatever jumps in the way" (Lederach, 2005:119).

The transformation of the conflict in the Niger Delta must anticipate, solicit, and engage the active contribution and participation of all parties to the conflict including militant, oil conglomerates, governments (federal, state, and local), communities, traditional institutions, peace advocates and rights groups, and the Niger Delta peasants. Unless all of these interests are incorporated into the mechanism for conflict transformation, all that is hoped for may not only remain elusive but upset the fragile balance already created in a way that does incalculable damage to the indivisibility of the Nigerian federation.

In conclusion, this study will use the principle components of conflict formation and conflict transformation to assess the impact of the amnesty program on the Niger Delta violence. I will use these models as the theoretical foundations for resolving my research questions and to build context into my analysis. They are certainly useful for contemplating the formation of the conflict and the transformative process beginning with the implementation of the amnesty program and ultimately, its outcomes.

## Chapter 5

### METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

*If you turn on our taps, oil will flow like water.  
Yet, there is not a drop of water to drink in this place.  
Not one drop.  
(Niger Delta peasant).*

#### 5.0 Research Design

The overarching hypothesis of this study is that a convergence of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and reconstruction by themselves cannot end the Niger Delta violence. In order for these to succeed, they must be imbedded within local structures that are attuned to the contexts (relationships, institutions, and persons - corporate and individual) that are active in the conflict. It is the task of this research to identify and explicate how DDR concatenates these structures and contexts to build peace in the Niger Delta. This project utilizes a mixed-method approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative methods during different phases of the research process (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003; Creswell 2002). The simultaneous use of quantitative and qualitative methods is one way to address the deep complexities involved in the implementation of this DDR program. Neither method is sufficient by itself to capture the context, trends, and dynamics of the Niger Delta violence as well as the DDR intervention. Combining both methods draws on the strengths of each method and permits a more complete analysis.

Quantitative research involves the use of structured questions on a large number of respondents to generate statistical information about a population of interest. Strictly speaking, quantitative research calls for measurement to be objective, quantitative, and statistically reliable and valid. Researchers who use quantitative research employ experimental and quantitative

measures to test hypothetical generalizations (Hoepfl 1997) and to measure and analyze causal relationships between variables (Denzin and Lincoln 1998). It enables the researcher engage with the problem or concept of interest and generates hypotheses to be tested. According to Golafshani (2003), quantitative research is generally predicated on a positivistic or scientific paradigm that (1) emphasizes facts and causes of behavior, (2) uses numbers or counts to quantify and summarize information, (3) uses a mathematical process to analyze the numerical data, and (4) uses statistical terminologies to present and express the results. In essence, the quantitative methodology assumes that social facts have an objective reality and this reality can be identified and measured. As Crocker and Algina (1986) and Golafshani (2003) argue, the notion of measuring simply means to understand social reality. The observer can "understand" by performing an operation called measurement on the physical world. Measurement has been defined by Stevens (1946) as the assignment of numerals to objects or events according to rules. This implies, therefore, that measurement in quantitative research is objective, quantitative, and statistically relevant. Weiss (1994) argues that the ultimate aim of quantitative research is to report how many people are in particular categories or what the relationship is between being in one category and another. This does not mean that a study is quantitative simply because it collects numbers as information, but because their results can be presented as a table of numbers.

In contrast, qualitative research is “an inquiry process of understanding” where the researcher develops a “complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting” (Creswell 1998:15). Qualitative inquiry uses a naturalistic approach that aims to understand phenomena in context-specific settings (Patton 2001; Golafshani 2003). It explores attitudes, behavior and experiences and attempts to collect, analyze, and interpret data by observing what people do or say. Since it is attitudes, behavior and experiences that matter, qualitative research usually makes use of fewer people

than quantitative research, but the contact with these people tends to last longer and the information obtained from and about them tends to be more detailed. Unlike quantitative researchers who seek causal determination, prediction, and generalization of findings, qualitative researchers seek illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations (Hoepfl 1997; Golafshani 2003). This means that qualitative researches tend to be exploratory and open-ended and sacrifice uniformity of questioning to achieve fuller development of information (Weiss 1994:3) that ultimately leads the researcher to an "understanding of the problem on multiple contextual factors" (Miller 2000).

It is obvious from the above that the utility of either method of inquiry must be premised on the research objectives. This implies that researchers must be attuned to the synergy between research problems and research methods, where the research problems determine or drive the method(s). In fact, scholars have long advocated the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in social science inquiry (Patton 1990; Reichardt and Cook 1979). The argument for integration is hinged on a pragmatic paradigm that benefits from both numbers and words (Glesne and Peshkin 1992; Cresswell 2003; Maxcy 2003). My research design will be a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods. While the qualitative data will generate a theory that I will test in the quantitative phase and enable me explore contextual elements of the research in greater depth, the quantitative data and results will provide a general picture of the research problem (whether or how the intervention reduces the potential for conflict in the region) and enable me make inferences about my study population. For this reason, priority in this design is given to the quantitative method. The quantitative and qualitative methods are integrated at the beginning of the qualitative phase (during the selection of participants for in-depth interviews) and at the end (during the discussion of the outcomes of the



whole study).

## 5.1 Study Location

In order to capture their variability, the survey participants will be drawn from three (Bayelsa, Delta, and Rivers) out of the eight littoral states of the Niger Delta. Bayelsa state was carved out of Rivers state in 1996. It has a population of 1,998,349 (2005 Census), total land area of 10,773 sq. km<sup>2</sup>, and a population density of 265 persons per sq. km. The state has one of the largest crude oil and natural gas deposits in Nigeria, although the majority of Bayelsans live in excruciating poverty due to the peculiar terrain and neglect by government and petroleum prospecting companies. It has become the hot bed of militant activities in part fuelled by an increase in Ijaw ethnic nationalism and state repression. One of its villages, (Odi) was invaded and completely razed to the ground by federal forces in 1999. This state accounts for roughly 35 percent of the 20,192 ex-militants registered in the Amnesty Program.

Delta state was carved out of the former Bendel state in 1991. It has a population of 6,710,214 (2005 Census), total land area of 16,842 sq. km<sup>2</sup> and a population density of about 207 persons per sq. km. It has a very diverse ethnic composition (the major ethnic groups are Urhobo, Igbo, Izon, Isoko, Kwale, and Itsekiri). Several of the ethnic groups in this state have a history of intense inter-ethnic rivalry that often escalates into full scale wars. Much of these struggles (i.e. Ijaws vs Itsekiris) have been for positioning in order to gain patronages from the oil companies operating in the state. The state has the third largest crude oil and natural gas deposits behind Rivers and Bayelsa states. About 10% of the 20,192 registered ex-militants operate in this state.

Rivers state was created in 1967. It has a population of 5,689,097 (2005 Census) and total land area of 11,077 sq. km<sup>2</sup>. Its population density is one of the highest in the world, roughly 284

persons per sq. km against the national average of 96 persons per sq. km. The ethnic composition in the state is also diverse with the main ethnic groups being Kalabari, Ikwerre, Okrika, Ibani, Ekpeye, Gokana, Eleme, Ndoni, Abua, Ogoni, and Odual. The Ogonis are famed for resisting oil exploration and for witnessing some of the worst state repressions culminating in the judicial murder of the activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight others in 1995. The state is the top oil producer accounting for about 35% of Nigeria's crude oil production and play host to about 35% of the Niger Delta ex-militants participating in the Amnesty Program.

## **5.2 Research Questions**

The questions and themes that will guide this study are:

1. What are the causes of the Niger Delta conflict?
2. What are the programmatic and non-programmatic determinants of successful Amnesty or DDR program?
3. Overall, is the amnesty program capable of producing peace in the long-term?

With the first question, I aim to determine the causes of the Niger Delta conflict. There are widely disparate accounts of the causes of the conflict ranging from poverty and unemployment to pollution and resource control. In between these extremes are middle range theories, which attempt to explain the etiology of the conflict. The divergence of these theories, however, contributes little to an effective understanding of the Niger Delta conflict, and by implication, its resolution. I hypothesize that one reason the conflict has proven intractable is that some of the more important causes of the conflict have not been explored. Based on prior research and theory, I will probe the effects of greed (Collier 2002), triangulation (Bowen 1978; Beuhler and Welsh 2009; Amato and Afifi 2006), pollution (Ikein 1990; Okonta 1998; Iyayi 2000; Watts 2009), and resource control (Okonta and Douglas 2003; Watts 2009) on the conflict.

I expect to find that combined, these factors account for the conflict in the Niger Delta

The second question examines how participation in the Amnesty Program produces more successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration outcomes for ex-combatants. The question examines three related activities and how these activities help to reduce the conflict in the region. In the first instance, I will investigate to see whether respondents in the treatment category (treatment is indicated by their participation in all aspects of the DDR program including arms submission, receipt of reinsertion benefits, and participation in a plethora of career and citizens training) are more likely to disarm compared to respondents in the control category. One hypothesis is that the violence is strongly correlated with the amount of arms and ammunition available to aggrieved youths in the Niger Delta. Thus, militants who participate in the Amnesty Program would have submitted their arms and ammunition as precondition for participating in the program. I expect to find that militants who participate in the program are less likely than non-participants to report that they will acquire more weapons to pursue their objectives.

In the second instance, I will investigate to see whether participation in the DDR program reduces the bond existing among ex-combatants compared to combatants who did not enter the DDR program. Since violence and membership of deviant sub-cultures are linked (Wolfgang and Ferracuti 1967; Maxson and Klein 1990; Spergel 1995), successful completion of treatment should reduce the bonding amongst ex-militants. As a result, I expect to find that militants who participate in the DDR program will demonstrate weaker bonds to other militants than militants not participating in the process.

In the third instance, I investigate the relation between participation in the Amnesty program and ex-combatant's social, political, and economic reintegration. As several studies

indicate (Humphreys and Weinstein 2009; Berdal 1996; United Nations 2000), reintegration is a major piece of DDR intervention and has great bearing on armed conflict. Respondents in the treatment category would have been exposed to several or all stages of reintegration treatment including trauma counseling, skills acquisition training, citizen training, psychology testing, the payment of reinsertion benefits, medical treatments, and community reinsertion. As a result, I expect that ex-militants participating in the Amnesty program will indicate greater reliance on democratic resolution of grievances than on violence compared to combatants not participating in the Amnesty program. I also expect that that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program will be more likely to reintegrate into the workforce and to be accepted back into their communities than combatants not participating in the Amnesty program. As their social, political, and economic commitments to conventional society increases, their desire to willfully and violently assert their economic and sociopolitical rights will reduce significantly.

Finally, I aim to determine whether non-program factors such as combatants' exposure to oil-induced environmental pollution, their sources of funds and weapons, and the comfort level they enjoyed within their groups compared to what exist outside of such groups, affect DDR outcomes. This would help to isolate the programmatic determinants of DDR outcomes from non-programmatic determinants, and show what aspects of the outcomes are attributable to program or non-program factors controlling for all other variables.

With the third research question, I aim to determine whether the amnesty program by design and implementation is capable of producing long lasting peace in the region. This is against the backdrop that past governments had introduced policies and programs to address the conflict that met with varying degrees of failure. I hypothesize that ex-combatants who enter the Amnesty program are more likely to report that that the program will succeed in the long-term,

to attribute program benefits to the communities, and to indicate less dependence on violence to achieve their objectives than combatants who did not enter the program. I expect to find significant differences between both categories to the extent ex-combatants in the treatment category will indicate lesser reliance on violence than respondents in the control category. I also expect to find that respondents in the treatment category compared to those in the control category will indicate that the program benefits the communities more than other stakeholders and to indicate that the program is a long-term success, controlling for all other variables.

### **5.3 Research Variables**

The five research questions in the quantitative phase predetermine a set of variables for this study. Participation in the Amnesty Program is the dependent variable and will be measured on a 2-point scale of “participating” and “not participating.” The independent variables derive from conditions related to the implementation of the amnesty program such as disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. I treat these as independent (predictor) variables because they cause, influence, or affect the outcomes. These factors were identified through the analysis of the related literature and theories. The factors corresponding to the research questions include:

- Cause related: pollution; resource control; infrastructural deficits; corruption; greed; racism; economic exploitation; proliferation of weapons; poverty and unemployment.
- Reintegration related factors: employment; democratic principles and values; and community acceptance of returning ex-militants.
- Disarmament related factors: amount of arms and ammunition submitted and decommissioned and the likelihood of future acquisition of weapons.
- Demobilization related factors: dismantling of bonds existing amongst militants and disruption of resource stream and support to ex-militants by spoilers existing outside program.

- Non-program determinants: source of funds, source of weapons, effect of pollution on community, and preference for life within armed group than outside of it.

- Overall assessment of DDR success: short-term success versus long term success.

Based on these factors 21 predictor variables were identified: “pollution”, “control”, “corruption,” “infrastructure,” “exploitation,” “greed,” “racism,” “proliferation,” “poverty,” “employed,” “disarmed,” “violence,” “demobilized,” “democratic,” “accepted,” “longterm,” “benefit,” “oiled,” “armed,” “extensive,” and “ingroup.”

In addition to these variables, I will incorporate controls in order to eliminate the possibility that the outcomes are a result of factors we have not examined such as demographic characteristics like gender, age, education, employment, residence (rural or urban) socio-economic status (SES), ethnicity, and religion. These may also function as moderator variables in which case they affect the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent and a dependent variable and account for the “interaction effect between an independent variable and some factor that specifies the appropriate condition for its operation” (Baron and Kenny 1986:1174).

#### **5.4 Research Frame**

For the purpose of the qualitative phase of the study, the purposeful sample, which implies intentionally selecting individuals to study in order to understand the central phenomenon (McMillan and Schumacher 1994; Miles and Huberman 1994), will be used. The idea is to purposefully select informants, who will best answer the research questions and who are “information-rich” (Patton 1990:169). Respondents will be selected for in-depth interviewing from members of the Niger Delta community including militants. All of the selected respondents would be contacted personally in their homes or by telephone and prescreened to ensure that they

meet the requirements of the study. In addition to these primary source interviews, secondary source interviews utilizing secondary materials such as newspaper and journal interviews with information-rich members of the Niger Delta community will be accessed and analyzed.

For the quantitative phase of the research, half of the participants for this study will be recruited from a register maintained by the Amnesty Committee containing the names of all ex-militants participating in the program. From this register, I will draw a sample of about 190 ex-militants (63 from each state), using systematic random sampling. The remaining sample of about 190 non-participating militants will be drawn by means of snowball sampling leveraging my extensive contacts in the Niger Delta. The study requirements for the quantitative phase includes: (1) self-identification as a militant member of a known/identifiable militant group; (2) in the case of the participating militants, must be registered as a participant in the program; (3) respondents must be over eighteen years; and (4) militants must display some knowledge about the goals of his organization and must belong to a group that operates within the geographical confines of the Niger Delta. Participants would be required to fill out a 60 minute standardized questionnaire. Questions will be open-ended and close-ended. A token of \$10 will be given to each participant to encourage their participation in the study. Data collection, recording, and analysis will occur from July 2010 to April 2011.

Because the study will make use of the grounded theory method and triangulation, there will be great synergy between the first and second phases of the research. For example, the theory developed in the qualitative phase will be tested in the quantitative phase. The results will enable me develop multiple perspectives to “represent the complexity” (Creswell 2002:194) of the Niger Delta conflict and the DDR intervention.

## **5.5 Phase I (Qualitative Data Collection)**

The first, qualitative phase of the study will use grounded theory method (Glaser and Straus 1967; Straus and Corbin 1998; LaRossa 2005) to collect and analyze data. As a formal methodology, grounded theory was first presented by Glaser in a 1965 article titled “The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Research.” However, it was not until the publication in 1967 of the book “The Discovery of Grounded Theory” (Glaser and Straus 1967) that the grounded theory method (GTM) became popular among qualitative researchers. That work was written in part as a protest against what LaRossa (2005:838) describes as the “supremacy of theory testing” in the mid 1960s and what the authors viewed as a rather passive acceptance that all the ‘great’ theories had been discovered and that the role of research lay in testing these theories through quantitative ‘scientific’ procedures (Glasser and Strauss 1967; Glasser 1978, 1992; Charmaz 1983; Goulding 1999). Since the goal of the GTM was to generate ‘new’ theory from data in a process involving both inductive and deductive thinking, Glaser and Strauss hoped that the method would help close “the embarrassing gap between theory and research” and enhance the social scientists “capacity for generating theory” (Glaser and Strauss 1967: vii-viii).

In essence, grounded theory is a form of comparative explanation building which is context-based and process oriented. Unlike other methods, theorists working within the grounded theory framework do not wait until all the data is collected before analysis begins; instead, there is a continuous interplay between data collection and theoretical analysis (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Glaser 1978; Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1994). In GTM, meanings emerge from the phenomena studied instead of being preconceived by the researcher prior to the research endeavor. In other words, the inductive method of grounded theory relies more on identifying



emerging variables from data and less on imposing à priori conceptual frames thereby encouraging researchers to systematically map observations from the phenomena they study. This mapping encourages the researcher to immerse himself/herself in the data (Glaser and Strauss 1967) by becoming part of (not outside of) the research process.

### *Sampling Strategy*

This study will employ a purposive sampling technique recommended by Patton (1990) that seeks "information-rich cases" that can be studied in great depth. Patton (1990: 169-183) describes 16 types of purposive sampling including extreme or deviant case sampling, typical case sampling, maximum variation sampling, snowball or chain sampling, confirming or disconfirming case sampling, politically important case sampling, convenience sampling, and others. I will adopt the maximum variation sampling technique, which Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe as the most useful strategy for the qualitative approach. According to Patton (1990: 12) this technique:

aims at capturing and describing the central themes or principal outcomes that cut across a great deal of participant or program variation. For small samples, a great deal of heterogeneity can be a problem because individual cases are so different from each other. The maximum variation sampling strategy turns that apparent weakness into strength by applying the following logic: any common pattern that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects or impacts of a program.

Mindful of this, I will collect information from knowledgeable informants about the Niger Delta conflict and the Amnesty intervention. Knowledgeable informants in this case refers to people who because of the unique positions they occupy or their location with the Niger Delta social structure are "information-rich" about the Niger Delta conflict and the amnesty program. The use of maximum variation sampling will enable me obtain detailed information of each case as well as identify shared patterns that cut across cases (see Hoepfl 1997). Also, in terms of sample size, I will continue to select cases for interview until I reach theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss

1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998; LaRossa 2005). LaRossa (2005:841) argues that a theoretically saturated concept is a “well grounded concept.” I will keep conducting interviews and expanding concepts until I get to a point where the data reveals no new information.

The decision to stop sampling will take cognizance of existing guidelines. According to Guba (1978), the decision to stop sampling must be based on the following criteria: 1) exhaustion of resources; 2) emergence of regularities; and 3) overextension, or going too far beyond the boundaries of the research. My decision to stop sampling will take into account my research goals and the possibility of achieving depth through triangulation of data sources. I expect that the first three or four interviews will narrow the focus of my research and guide attention to issues that have direct bearing on the conflict and the Amnesty intervention.

#### *Data Collection Technique*

For this study, the principal data collection technique will be in-depth interviews used in conjunction with secondary sources (Bogdan and Biklen 1982). The secondary sources will be interviews with principal Niger Delta stakeholders conducted by journalists. I will conduct the in-depth interviews with the aid of semi-structured interview schedules (a list of general topics or questions that I intend to explore during the interviews). The use of interview schedule will not only ensure that the questions are standardized but that basically the same information is obtained from each respondent. Because there will be no predetermined responses, I will have the ability to probe and explore responses in order to achieve fuller understanding of the issues. The interviews will be conducted at the preferred locations of respondents.

The interviews will be audio-recorded using a smart pen and electronic journal. This will eliminate some of the shortcomings Lincoln and Guba (1985) associate with tape-recording interviews including the intrusiveness of recording devices and the possibility of technical

failure. Yet, as Patton (1990: 348) argues, the tape recorder is "indispensable" in interviews such as I am contemplating. In addition, the Livescribe smart pen with lined-journal has many advantages over traditional tape recorders especially because it allows the interviewer take notes without disrupting the interviews. The notes and voice recordings are automatically stored in a password encoded online data bank that is accessible from anywhere, thus eliminating the need to accommodate and secure cassette tapes. Also, it simplifies the data transmission process because the voice recordings and notes can be accessed from a computer and the researcher can rewind and fast-forward with relative ease to sections of interest without having to play back entire tapes. Thus, use of this method will enable me record voice and take notes at the same time without disrupting the flow of the interview.

### *Analytic Strategy*

In the qualitative analysis, data collection and analysis proceed simultaneously (LaRossa 2005). Bogdan and Biklen (1982: 145) define qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others." This definition will guide my inductive analysis. Inductive data analysis implies that the critical themes will emerge out of the data (Patton 1990). As Hoepfl (1997: 55) suggests, analysis will require some creativity on my part, since the challenge is to "place the raw data into logical, meaningful categories; to examine them in a holistic fashion; and to find a way to communicate this information to other."

I will analyze my in-depth interview data, field notes and secondary interview data using the methodology of grounded theory (Straus and Corbin 1998; LaRossa 2005). This method consists of a five-stage process: (1) preliminary exploration of the data by line-reading through

the transcripts; (2) coding the data by segmenting and labeling the text in a three step process beginning with open coding and creating concepts from indicators and writing memos; (3) developing variables by aggregating similar concepts together until theoretical saturation is reached; (4) connecting and interrelating variables around a central or core variable; and (5) constructing a narrative (Creswell 2002).

My analysis will begin with the identification of the themes emerging from my raw and secondary data through a process Straus and Corbin (1990 1998) and LaRossa (2005) describes as "open coding." During open coding, I will identify and tentatively name the conceptual categories into which I will group my observations. The goal as Hoepfl (1997) argues is to create descriptive, multidimensional categories, which will form the preliminary framework for my analysis. Thus, words, phrases, activities, and events which appear similar will be grouped into the same category. As the analysis proceeds, I will gradually modify or replace these categories. As the raw data are broken down into manageable units, I will develop an "audit trail" (Hoepfl 1997) or a scheme to associate these data units with speakers and specific contexts. Although the particular identifiers developed may or may not be used in my reports, the speakers will be referred to in a manner that provides a sense of context (Hoepfl 1997).

In the next stage, I will perform what Straus and Corbin (1990) referred to as "axial coding." Here, I will re-examine the categories identified during open coding to determine how they are linked. I will compare and combine these discreet categories in an innovative new way that will enable me appreciate what Hoepfl (1997) calls the "big picture." The purpose of axial coding, according to Hoepfl (1997) is not only to describe but to acquire new understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Thus, the chain of events leading to the amnesty program, descriptive details of the implementation of the various aspects of the program, and the

ramifications of the program will be identified and explored.

Finally, I will perform "selective coding" to identify a "core variable" which Straus and Corbin (1998: 146) define as the "central phenomenon around which all other categories [variables] are related." The core variable is chosen from among the saturated variables as the linchpin for the overall narrative. It is the variable with the most analytic power and that more effectively and efficiently narrates the story of the research. LaRossa (2005: 850) suggests that the story should be "lucid, understandable, and hopefully compelling ... and reasonably accurate." I expect that my report will be a rich, tightly woven story that "closely approximates the reality it represents" (Straus and Corbin 1990: 57).

Although the stages of analysis I have outlined suggests linearity, in practice they may occur simultaneously. For example, during axial coding, I may determine that the initial categories are inadequate or should be revised leading to a re-examination of the raw data. Also, based on the dynamics of the analysis, I may collect additional data at any point if I uncover gaps in the data or if there is potentially a new storyline to develop. One advantage of GTM is that initial data analysis will guide subsequent data collection. I expect to develop a theory from this process that will be tested in the quantitative phase of the research.

Finally, I will use a method of triangulation known as the dialectic mixed method to compare and integrate the quantitative and qualitative datasets according to methods recommended by Cresswell (2005). According to Golafshani (2003) triangulation is typically a strategy or test for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. Mathison (1988: 13) argues that triangulation raises an "important issue in naturalistic and qualitative approaches to evaluation" in that it controls bias and establishes valid propositions especially because "traditional scientific techniques are incompatible with this alternate

epistemology." Therefore, triangulation "strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of data, including both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (Patton 2001:247). This holistic analysis will capture variations in outcomes for individuals, groups, and communities and especially detail how specific internal and external factors affect respondent's perception of program success.

### *Establishing Credibility and Transferability*

According to Hoepfl (1997) qualitative researchers assume the "presence of multiple realities and attempt to represent these multiple realities adequately." Credibility tests how well the researcher represents the reality. Patton (1990) argues that credibility depends not on the size of the sample but on the richness of the information gathered and the analytical ability of the researcher. The credibility of this research will depend on the various sources that I tap into and specifically on the triangulation of data and methods. Also, I will make segments of my raw data available for others to analyze in addition to performing what Lincoln and Guba (1985: 313) call "member checks" - asking respondents to corroborate findings.

If my research has credibility, it should be transferable. According to Hoepfl (1997: 59) the transferability of a "working hypothesis to other situations depends on the degree of similarity between the original situation and the situation to which it is transferred." Although I may not specify the transferability of my findings, I expect that my research will provide sufficient information that will enable others determine whether and how the findings are applicable to other situations.

## **5.6 Phase II (Quantitative Data Collection)**

The second, quantitative phase of the study will test the theory generated in the first qualitative phase. It will also identify factors related to disarmament, demobilization,

reintegration, and economic reconstruction that account for the success or failure of the amnesty program (measured by militants' self-reported predisposition to the use of violence). I will use the cross-sectional survey design, which implies that data will be collected at one point in time (McMillan 2000). The primary technique for collecting the quantitative data will be a questionnaire containing items of different formats: close-ended questions (multiple choice questions asking respondents to select either one option or all that apply, dichotomous answers like "Yes" and "No", self-assessment items, measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale, etc.) and open-ended questions. "Don't know" or "not applicable" response categories will be avoided in order to discourage their frequent use by respondents. The questionnaire consists of about sixty questions, which are organized into eight sections or scales. Following "best practice" the section on the personal coordinates of the respondents will come at the end of the questionnaire and the wording of this section will indicate clearly that the questions should be answered on a voluntary basis.

The first section of the survey asks questions related to the violence and participants' experiences in it. It includes the selection questions related to the status and identity of subjects as militants in one of several groups operating in the region. It will focus on factors contributing to the respondents' decision to join a militant organization, the size of militant organizations, their support networks, and how they negotiate identity. These questions are open ended. The second section examines the causes of the conflict and the militant's experience of deprivation. The third section focuses on the key actors or participants in the conflict, their motivations and networks, their tactical deployment of insurgency and counter-insurgency, and their international allies. The fourth section will measure participants' comfort level with the disarmament and demobilization strategy and will provide additional data about the impact of the government's

effort to disarm and demobilize the militants. Specifically, it will gain insight into the amount of arms possessed by militants in order to match the amount returned as well as militants bonding to other militants and the community. The fifth section will focus on issues in reintegration including the types of training militants receive preparatory to reentry into civil society, their ability to gain acceptance from conventional society, and their perception of the effectiveness of reintegration. The sixth section will measure the impact of institutional factors aimed at enabling the economic growth of the region, the performance of certain actors in the implementation of the program, and the overall implementation of the program. The seventh section asks for self-evaluation of how likely the respondents are to use or not to use violence in the light of the amnesty program. Finally, the last section provides demographic information including the respondents' age, ethnicity, health, education, family structure, employment status, gender, residency, social economic status, and religion. This scale will provide controls for the research. Some questions in the survey have an open-ended "other (specify)" option to provide one correct answer for every subject in the study.

The survey questionnaire will be administered face-to-face. One of the advantages of face-to-face surveys is that the researcher can make certain that all items in the questionnaire are responded to at the same time that s/he can provide clarifications to questions or concepts that respondents are confused about. This can potentially reduce or eliminate the problem of non-response bias (both item and unit non-response), which Klandemans and Smith (2002) discuss as critical to the reliability and validity of research findings. An informed consent form will be included in the questionnaires as an opening page of the survey. Participants will mark a space provided, saying "I agree to complete this survey", thus expressing their willingness to participate in the study and complete the survey.



### *Analytic Strategy*

The quantitative analysis will present an SPSS multivariate logistic regression estimating a linear trend from the observations for each person and then modeling the intercepts and, particularly, the slopes in a regression on individual and community level characteristics. I will perform a hierarchical multiple regressions framed in terms of the effect of adding predictor variables to a base equation. The base equation will regress participation in the Amnesty program (dependent variable) on socio-demographic characteristics as well as measures of an individual's exposure to the conflict and community characteristics. Afterwards, I will include variables that specifically measure disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and evaluate the amount of the incremental explained variance by subtracting the squared multiple correlation in the base equation from the squared multiple correlation in the expanded equations. The difference in the squared multiple correlations will be the amount of incremental explained variance due to the additional predictors.

The study will compare outcomes for the experimental and control groups across the three states, holding constant confounding factors that might explain the outcome. If the results show no differences across both categories of militants, the government's DDR program would not be justified implying that the intervention is incapable of redressing the violence. In another sense, instead of implying that the DDR program is ineffectual, a finding of no difference between both groups may in fact indicate that my method is misspecified and that I have included (or excluded) variables that ought to be excluded (or included) in the study. A new study may explore this possibility. However, because I use more than one method, I am confident that the variance reflected is that of the trait and not the method.

## 5.7 Study Limitations

The strength and limitations of mixed methods designs have received immense attention from scholars (Creswell 2002; Creswell, Goodchild and Turner 1996; Green and Caracelli 1997; Moghaddam, Walker, and Harre 2003). I have discussed some of the strengths of my design; I will now discuss some of the limitations. First of all, my research design like any mixed methods design requires lengthy time to complete. Considering that this is a dissertation research, this study will suffer from limited time availability. In essence, for a study of this magnitude, more time (much more than my 10 month schedule) would certainly have impacted data collection and improved the results. However, because my design makes effective use of the time available and simplifies the tasks to be accomplished, I am confident that this constraint will not adversely affect the quality of results.

Related to the constraint of time is the limitation imposed by resource availability. More resources will be needed to effectively carry out the various phases of the research than would have been required if the study was designed as a single method study. I expect that this challenge will be mitigated by my success in obtaining collaborative funding from the Social Science Research Council and the United States Institute for Peace. I have submitted proposals to these organizations and expect a favorable outcome. Besides, the cost of conducting research in Nigeria is much lower than what it costs to conduct comparable researches in developed countries. I expect that the outcome of the study will more than compensate for the resources expended on it.

Also, the dependent variable for this study is the respondent's self-reported predisposition to use violence to protest perceived injustice. Perception is the active, selective and interpretative process of appreciating the world around us. This process, however, is heavily subjective. For

example, one problem with measuring perception is the volatility of what one is measuring. In essence, the perception of respondents can be drastically changed by events occurring in the Niger Delta (such as delay in the payment of monthly stipends, changes in the composition of the supervisory agency, sickness, statements or proclamations from public officials, news items, etc). For example, if we ask respondents whether they believe the amnesty program is successful immediately after the prompt payment of their allowances, we may get a result that will be markedly different than if we asked the same question immediately after a delay in payment of allowances have been announced.

The challenges involved with measuring perception do not mean that perceptions should not be measured. It only means that we need more information and a more dynamic research design to put perception in a more manageable context. My study design does this by effectively grounding the perception metrics. It incorporates multiple metrics that gives each other context. By using multiple methods of data collection and asking different questions related to the violence and the intervention and participants experiences (contextualizing the phenomenon of interest), I am confident that I am able to determine whether the perceptions are accurate or inaccurate.

Finally, like any quantitative survey, this study must grapple with the likelihood of non-response and the overall effect of this problem on my study results. In data collection, there are two types of non-response: item non-response (occurs when certain questions in a survey are not answered) and unit non-response (when a randomly sampled individual refuses to participate or cannot be contacted to participate). The bias occurs when respondents differ fundamentally from non-respondents or when questions differ among the respondent and non-respondent items or units.

The first step for me in dealing with this problem is to create a properly designed survey. My introduction will be personable and professional and the survey itself will feature interesting survey content, short survey length, and clear and concise wording that is attuned to respondent's burden and likely interest in the survey. Also, I will send advance letters of introduction, provide practical and appealing incentives to respondents (\$10 per interview), increase the contact attempts and call backs, and the surveys will be administered face-to-face. I believe these measures will drastically reduce if not totally eliminate the problem of item non-response. Where these still exist, I will discard partial observations and assign weights to each complete observation so that the weighted samples better represents the average characteristics of the population.

For unit non-response, no test or correction for bias can be done without obtaining additional data that includes information about the targeted respondents that failed to respond to the survey. If the number of unit non-response is low, they may have no impact on the study outcome. In that case I may not replace them. But if the number is large enough to bias the study result, I will replace the non-respondents from the list of all registered participants maintained by the Amnesty Committee. The list will be pre-screened to remove names in the first wave of the survey and afterwards, samples will draw from the remaining names to compensate for the unit non-responses. I will also seek to survey the non-respondents to understand their reasons for not responding to the surveys and also to determine whether they differ in certain respects (demography, etc.) from respondents.

## **5.8 Data Management, Screening, and Security**

I expect that the findings of this study will be unbiased and of very high quality. To meet this expectation, the study data must be very reliable and complete. This is important because a

poorly designed study with inadequately managed data may doom even the best conceptualized study. Thus, it is essential that I develop and implement procedures to minimize data loss, identify concerns soon after data are collected, and detect and correct errors. Possible sources of error include inaccurate equipment; poorly designed forms; illegible, inaccurate, or incomplete data recording; errors or omissions in data transfer; inadequate training; intentional fraud; undocumented changes; programming errors; and misuse of statistical software (Kruse and Mehr 2008).

I will develop clear rules about the handling of data. For example, personnel will be assigned to specific data management tasks and rules will be established about how these tasks will be performed. All computerized data will be stored on a secure encoded network that would limit access only to authorized persons with passwords. Interview data (voice and notes) will be uploaded securely to a password protected internet data bank, using the Livescribe “smart pen” and docking station. Paper forms (surveys, field notes, and documents) will be stored in locked cabinets when not in use. To ensure confidentiality, each respondent will be assigned a study identification number that will replace personal identifiers and be included on all forms, documents, and field notes related to that respondent. After data cleaning is complete, every personal marker or identifier will be completely erased from the database. All files on our computer networks will be backed up regularly and copies saved in offsite locations for safety in case of a major system failure, fire, or accident.

Beginning with the collection of data, I will use standard data management procedures to minimize missing and erroneous data. I will design data forms that have multiple choices with check boxes and codes whenever possible to avoid problems with illegible handwritings. Also, because the surveys will be administered face-to-face, interviewers will be trained to specifically

review questions and responses with respondents on the spot in order to minimize incomplete responses or illegible responses. In addition, the forms will have appropriate number of digits and clearly labeled measurement units for continuous variables. All forms will be pre-tested by me and the research assistants and data elements determined to be inappropriate (such as too time consuming) will be dropped. Each survey will include the study title, informed-consent form, space for the subject's identification number, and date. Forms will be visually inspected for completeness and legibility before they are submitted for data entry. Errors found at this stage will be corrected. Corrected forms will carry an explanatory note with the initials of the person making the changes and the date the changes were effected.

Initial screening will be conducted for our sample population and entered in the database. I will check for internal consistency by ensuring that only respondents who met the study criteria were processed. The screening of the data will be conducted at the univariate and multivariate levels (Kline, 1998; Tabachnick and Fidell 2000). Data screening will help identify potential multicollinearity in the data, because multivariate tests are sensitive to extremely high correlations among predictor variables. I will exclude outlying cases from my analysis because a case that actually is in one category of outcome may show a high probability for being in another category and produce a poor model fit (Tabachnick and Fidell 2000). Data screening will include the descriptive statistics for all the variables such as information about the missing data, linearity, normality, and multicollinearity. Also, an interviewer grid and a code book will be prepared to facilitate data entering and processing. Answers to closed questions will be coded numerically and the grid (in excel) will be set up in such a way to enable easy import of data in SPSS. Answers to open questions will be summarized in five lines, although more detailed information recorded during the interviews will be written up in an interview protocol.

Finally, I will use the database to develop a list of individuals that will be invited to participate in the in-depth interviews as well as create a list of events, activities, locations, and persons for observation. I will use weekly meetings with my research team to distribute these lists, ask for feedback, and discuss problems and challenges arising from the research. I expect that these weekly meetings will evolve solutions to problems that emanate from the conduct of the study and improve the data management process.

## **5.9 Research Permission and Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues will be addressed at each phase in the study. In compliance with the regulations of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), permission for conducting the research will be obtained. The Request for "Review Form" will be filed, providing information about the principal investigator, the project title and type, source of funding, type of review requested, and number and type of subjects. Application for research permission will contain the description of the project and its significance, methods and procedures, participants, and research status. This project will be accorded an expedited-middle status, since the interviews with the participants will be audio taped, though the study will be conducted in a normal social setting, and the subject population is over eighteen. However, its topic Due to the sensitive nature of the issues great care will be taken to ensure that the research participants are not harmed in any manner by the researcher.

An informed consent form will be developed and the form will state clearly that the participants are guaranteed certain rights, agree to be involved in the study, and acknowledge that their rights are protected. A statement relating to informed consent will be part of the questionnaires and reflect compliance by participation. The anonymity of participants will be protected by numerically coding each returned questionnaire and keeping the responses

confidential. While conducting the individual interviews, selected respondents will be assigned fictitious names that will be used in describing them and for reporting the results. All study data, including the survey files, interview tapes, and transcripts, will be kept in locked metal file cabinets in the researcher's office and destroyed after a reasonable period of time. Participants will be told summary data will be disseminated to the professional community, but in no way will it be possible to trace responses to individuals.

### **5.10 The Role of the Researcher**

The researcher's involvement with data collection in the two phases of this study is different. In the first, quantitative phase, the researcher will administer the survey and collect the data using the standardized procedures, including the systematic random sampling, naturally existing groups, and reliability and validity checks of the instrument. The data analysis will be performed using rigorous statistical analysis techniques and the results will be interpreted based on the established values for the statistical significance of the functions.

In the second, qualitative phase, the researcher will assume a more participatory role due to the "sustained and extensive experience with participants" (Creswell 2003: 184) and personal involvement with the research topic. The researcher is a graduate student in the Department of Sociology, Georgia State University. He is also from the Niger Delta area and has sustained meaningful contacts with militants, community leaders, government officials and human and environmental rights activists operating in the region. Most of this connection with important stakeholders in the Niger Delta is a result of the researchers leading role as a students' activist and later community organizer. He is President of the Ewu Youth Congress (a socio-cultural organization campaigning for minority rights in the Niger Delta), Executive Director of the Citizen's Action For Safe Elections (an activist group committed to the ideals of participatory



democracy) and Executive Director of the Crime Watch International Incorporated (a not for profit organization active in the fight against crime in Nigeria). These experiences and contact will provide the researcher the needed access to research sites and subjects and will help him contextualize the research objectives.

All of these experiences introduce the possibility for subjective interpretations of the phenomenon being studied and the potential for bias (Locke, Spirduso and Silverman 2000). However, because the researcher is not involved in militancy in any form and does not serve in any capacity in the governments' amnesty program, the researcher is sufficiently distant to approach the study objectively. This in no way suggests that the researcher does not bring a bias to the study. In fact, this is inferred from the choice of issues for study and in the selection of research sites and respondents. However, the triangulation of data sources, member checking, and thick and rich descriptions of the cases will permit the conclusions to be accurate. In fact, the convergence of quantitative and qualitative methods in this study will demonstrate that the results are valid and "not a methodological artifact" (Bouchard 1976).

Also, because of the nature of the research and the volatile nature of the Niger Delta (with frequent outbreaks of violence between government forces and militant groups, kidnapping for ransom, armed robberies, etc.), safety is a major concern to me. To avoid being caught in any cross-fires, I will obtain permission to conduct the research at the various locations from the state governments, the Amnesty Committee, and the JTF on one hand and militant groups on the other. My contacts in government and my strong connections with militant groups will facilitate access and mitigate any serious safety concerns. Moreover, my deep knowledge of the Niger Delta, local language skills, knowledge of the customs and traditions and flashpoints, and extensive network of friends and associates will reduce the safety risks of the research.

## Chapter 6:

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### 6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I describe the initial results of my survey and in-depth interviews. The survey was conducted with a representative sample of 346 former and current combatants in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta region. The in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 knowledgeable informants in the Niger Delta and these were combined with 10 secondary interviews conducted by journalists with individuals regarded as key players in the conflict and the DDR intervention. These additional interview transcripts were obtained from newspapers and journals across Nigeria. The overarching goal of the research is to compare outcomes for two categories of militants: those that entered the DDR program and those that did not. I present information on their demographic profile, the reason(s) that they entered the conflict, their experiences of the conflict, and their perception of the DDR program. This helps to situate respondents within the context of their conditions in the Niger Delta. This strategy affords me the ability to assess the performance of the DDR program and to demonstrate whether the program can deliver peace in the long run.

Data was collected using quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methodology featured questionnaire survey of 346 adult males and females or "respondents." These respondents were categorized according to whether they entered the Niger Delta Amnesty Program or not. 224 respondents entered the Amnesty program, while 122 respondents did not enter the program. The combined total of 346 respondents forms the basis of my quantitative analysis. In addition to that, I conducted in-depth interviews with 10 key informants. I consider each of the 10 respondents knowledgeable about the dynamics of the Niger Delta conflict as well

as the Amnesty Program for several reasons. First, they are all members of various Niger Delta communities and have lived and worked in the Niger Delta region. Second, each of the 10 respondents is opinionated about the conflict and the Amnesty intervention based on their location within the conflict infrastructure. The results of these in-depth interviews are paired with secondary interview data involving 10 key figures in the Niger Delta conflict. Each of the 10 respondents has well documented relationship with the conflict and the Amnesty Program. For example, I analyze an interview conducted with Basil Omiyi the former Group Managing Director of Shell Nigeria at a Pan-African investment round-table in New York. In that interview, Basil Omiyi framed Shell's (a major player in Nigeria's oil industry) role in the conflict. I also analyze interview transcripts involving Kingsley Kuku, the Special Adviser to the Nigerian president on the Amnesty Program and the Chief Executive Officer of the Niger Delta Amnesty Committee.

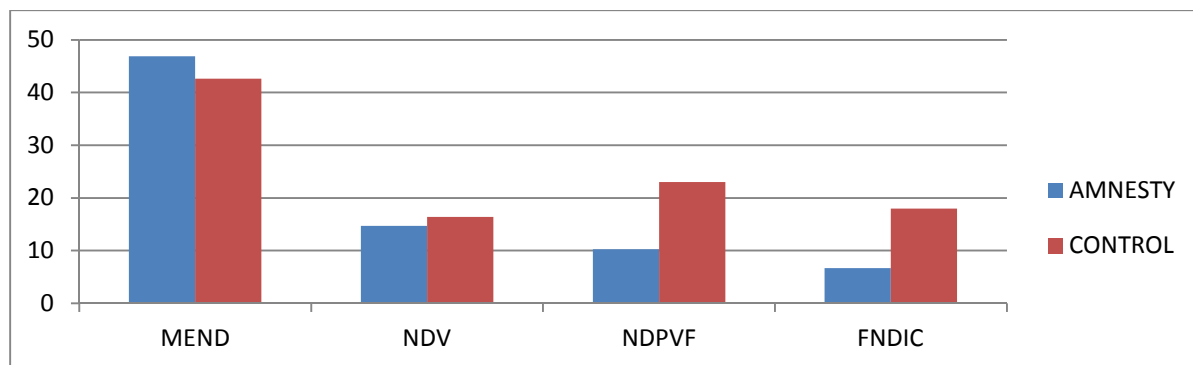
## **6.1 Profiles of fighters and former fighters**

In order to understand both the nature of the Niger Delta conflict and the DDR intervention, it is important that we examine the profiles of the fighters and former fighters. Although I collected a lot of information on both categories of fighters (or militants as they are more commonly known in Nigeria), only information pertinent to my research questions are discussed. The main research questions are: 1) what are the causes of the Niger Delta conflict? 2) What are the programmatic and non-programmatic determinants of successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, and 3) is the Amnesty program capable of entrenching long-term peace in the Niger Delta? To answer these questions, I first present the general demographic profile of my sample of fighters and former fighters. These profiles are discussed with the sense of locating respondents within their conflict milieus. After this is done, the

remaining chapters examine specific components of the Amnesty or DDR program and their effects on the violence.

### *Factional Representation*

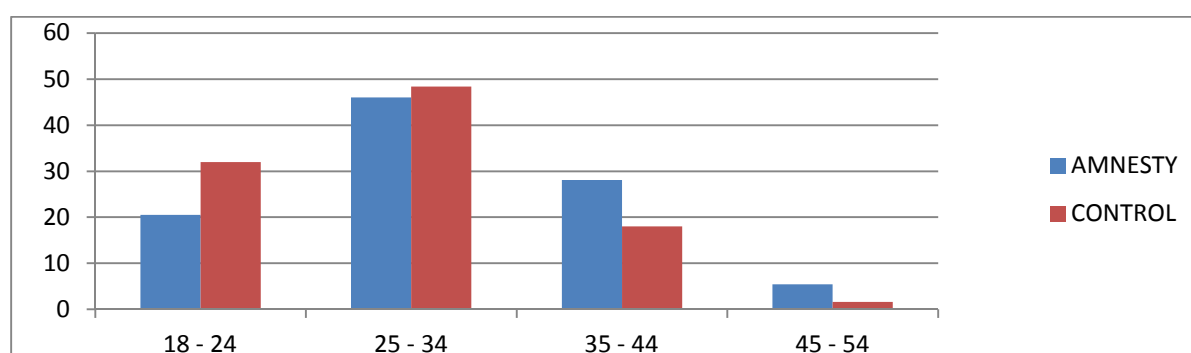
Many armed factions were involved in the Niger Delta armed conflict. These factions varied in terms of size, areas of operation, objectives, strategy, and targets. These differences have posed serious challenges for this study. Perhaps the most daunting challenge is the fact that militancy is comingled with criminality. There are a large number of criminal groups in the Niger Delta with no connection to the struggle of the Niger Delta people for better conditions in the Niger Delta. Many of these groups took advantage of the expanding political opportunities to insert themselves into the Amnesty program. Sifting through the mazelike labyrinth of genuine and fake fighters posed an enormous challenge. Another tough challenge involved the multiple connections of individuals to armed groups. Many of the respondents claimed allegiance to more than one fighting group making it difficult to place respondents within the contexts of particular groups. To solve this problem, however, I placed respondents in the last group they participated in or to which they now belong. Table 1 represents the breakdown of respondents by factions. I will use this distribution in all of my subsequent analysis. For the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on four of the most important armed groups: MEND, NDV, NDPVF, and FNDIC.



**Figure 3: Distribution by armed factions**

### *Basic Demographics*

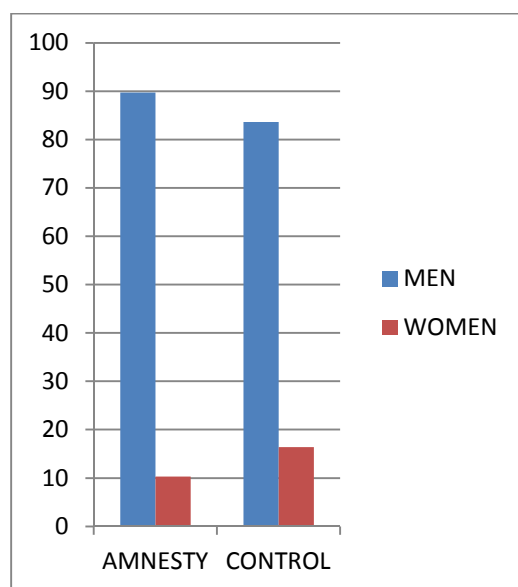
I present a profile of respondents that reflect their demographics before the conflict, during the conflict, and since the DDR program. Figure 4 shows that respondents in both categories appear to be evenly matched in terms of age. About 46% of fighters who entered the DDR program fell between the age brackets of 25-34. About 48% of fighters who have remained outside of the program also fall within that age bracket. However, fighters who did not enter the DDR program appear to be younger than fighters who entered the program as 32% compared to 20.5% in the 18-24 years age bracket did not enter the DDR program.



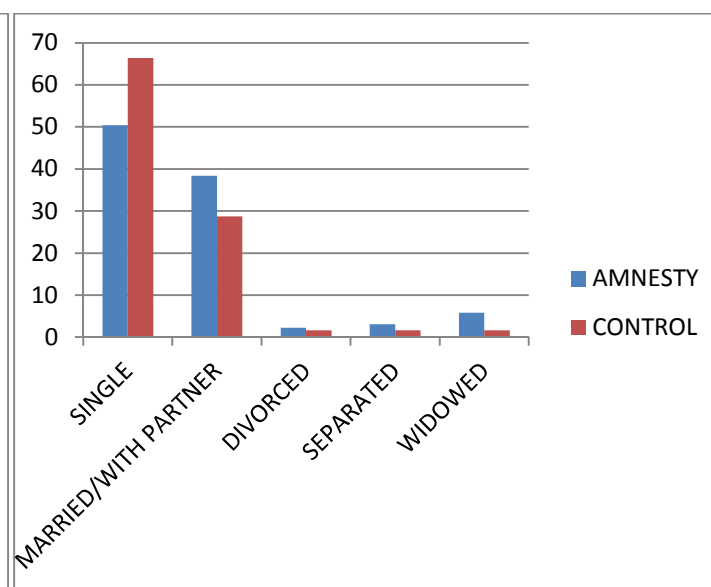
**Figure 4: Distribution by age**

In terms of gender, there are overwhelmingly more men than women in the sample. This is not surprising since the DDR program registered only 133 women out of a total registered population of 20,192 former fighters. The number of female militants registered does not appear to truly reflect the total number of women active in the conflict as combatants, enablers, or spoilers. One of the main hindrances to the participation of women in the Amnesty Program is cultural stereotypes of male and female roles. These stereotypes results mainly from the prevailing system of patriarchy in which women's rights are condensed into those of men. Figure 5 illustrates the gender dimension of the conflict. Also, 66% of fighters who did not enter the DDR and 50% of fighters who entered the program are single. It would appear that single people had greater motivation than married folks to engage in prolonged armed conflict wherein they

are not burdened by family constraints. This is reinforced by the fact that only about 33% of fighters who entered DDR compared to 28% of fighters who did not enter DDR have kids.



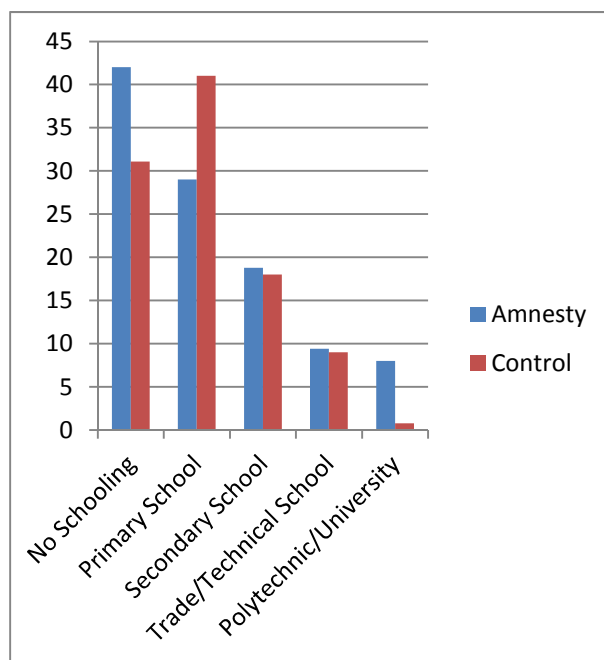
**Figure 5: Distribution by Gender**



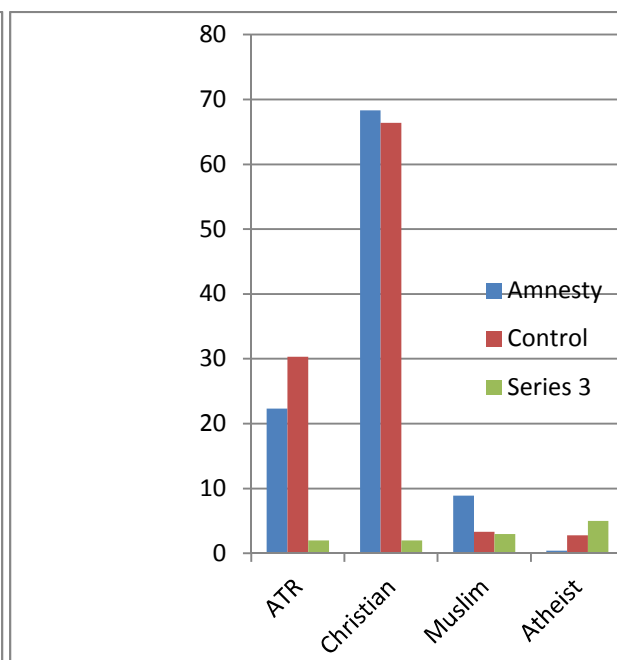
**Figure 6: Distribution by Marital Status**

There is no marked difference in the educational levels of both categories of respondents although fighters who did not enter DDR appeared to have had more years of schooling than fighters who entered DDR. What is clear, however, is what appears to be a very large number of uneducated fighters in both categories sampled. For example, 42% of fighters who entered the DDR program and 31% of fighters who did not, reported no formal schooling. 41% of respondents in the control group have had some primary school education as against 29% of respondents in the treatment group. Both categories of respondents were statistically tied in terms of secondary school, trade/technical school, and polytechnic/university level education. There were also similarities between both categories of respondents in terms of their religious affiliation. 68% of fighters who entered DDR and 66% of fighters who did not are Christians. A significant percentage of respondents (23% in the treatment category and 30% in the control category) claimed African Traditional Religious forms. This is surprising especially when we

consider that Nigeria is split almost equally between Islam and Christianity. The 2007 National Census reported that Islam accounted for roughly 50% of Nigeria's population and Christianity accounted for about 40%.



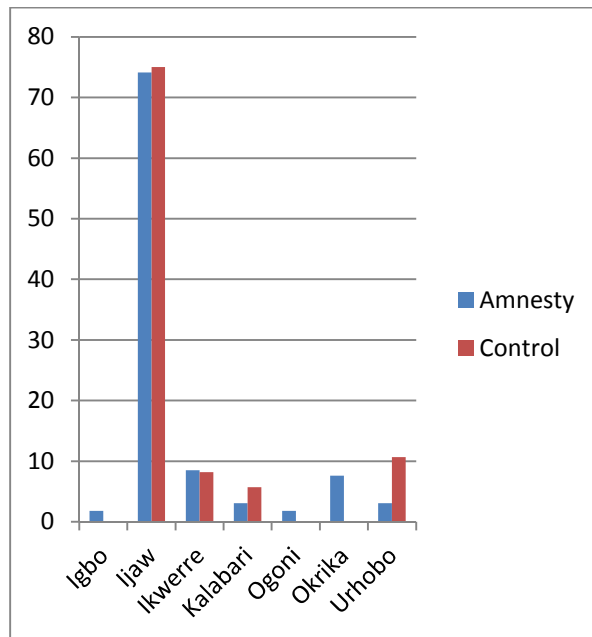
**Figure 7: Distribution by Education**



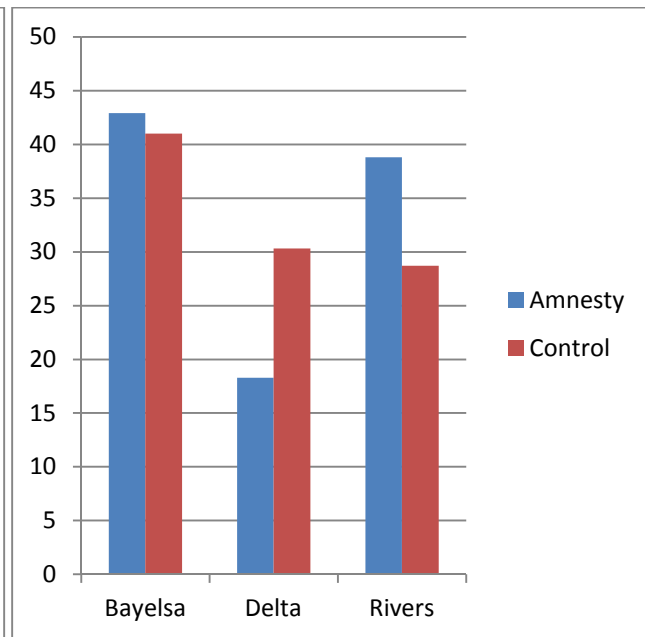
**Figure 8: Distribution by Religion**

The ethnic composition of respondents is identical for both groups studied. 74% of respondents who entered DDR and 75% of respondents who did not are Ijaw. The Ijaw ethnic group is believed to be the fourth largest ethnic group in Nigeria behind Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo. They are spread out in the coastal states of the Niger Delta including Ondo and Lagos in the west. Following spirited agitations for their own state, Bayelsa state was carved out of Rivers and Delta states in 1991 and is homogenous to the Ijaws. Bayelsa state is not only the hotbed of Ijaw ethnic nationalism; it is also the cradle of militancy in the Niger Delta. Overall, about 43% of respondents who entered DDR and 50% of respondents who did not are from Bayelsa state. Rivers state accounts for about 39% of respondents who entered DDR and about 29% of respondents who did not. This again speaks to the level of militant activism in Bayelsa

state, a state with less than a quarter the population of Rivers or Delta state, and a treacherous ecology that is partly blamed for the alarming lack of development in the state.



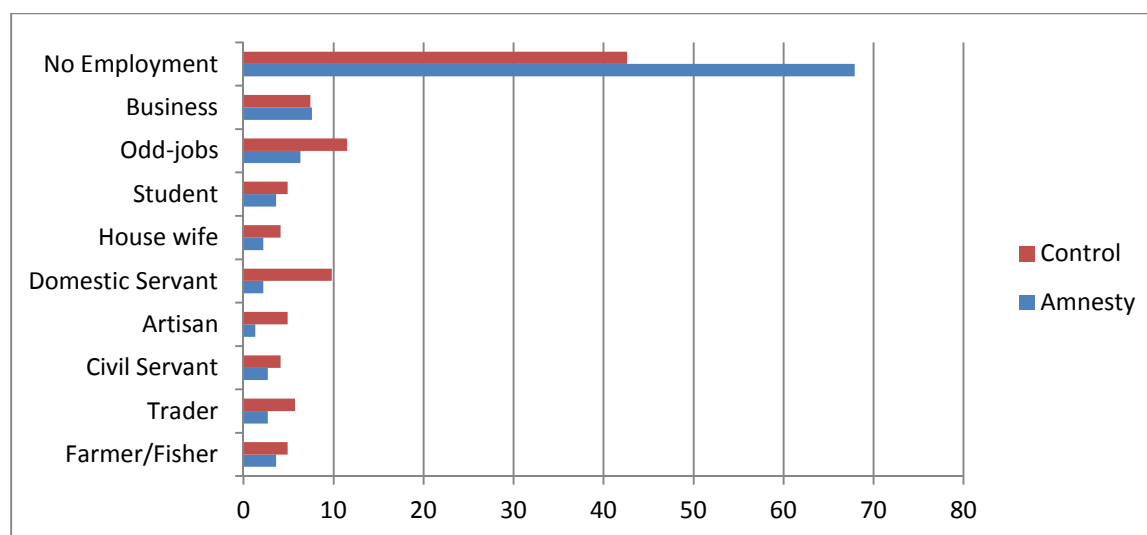
**Figure 9: Distribution by Ethnicity**



**Figure 10: Distribution by State of Residence**

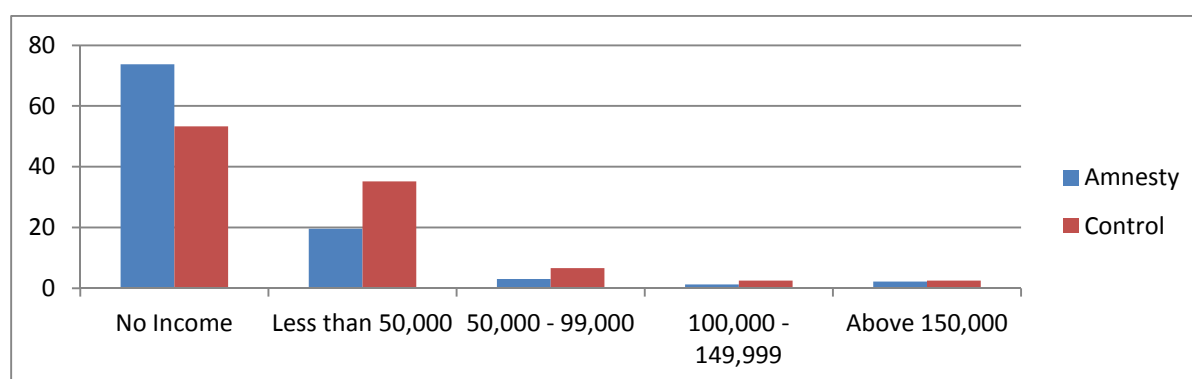
Many theories have been advanced that attempt to link the Niger Delta conflict to economic fissures including poverty and unemployment. It has been shown that Nigeria has some of the highest poverty and unemployment rates in the world (UNDP 2006). The situation appears to be particularly dire for Niger Delta people because of the associated environmental problems resulting from oil production. This fact appears to be substantiated by my results. About 68% of respondents who entered DDR and 42% of respondents who did not reported that they were unemployed in the year before they entered the conflict. Another 6% of respondents who entered DDR and 11% of respondents, who did not, reported that they did odd-jobs in that same period. 2% of respondents who entered DDR and 4% of those who did not reported that they were full-time housewives and earned no income.





**Figure 11: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation**

Similarly, 73% of respondents who entered DDR and 53% of respondents who did not reported that they had no income in the year before they entered the conflict. Also striking is the fact that 19% of militants who entered DDR and 35% of respondents who did not reported that they made less than 50,000 Naira (USD 300) monthly in the year before they entered the conflict. Figure 12 illustrates.



**Figure 12: Distribution of Respondents by Income in Year before Conflict**

## 6.2 The Pre-conflict Dynamics of Fighters

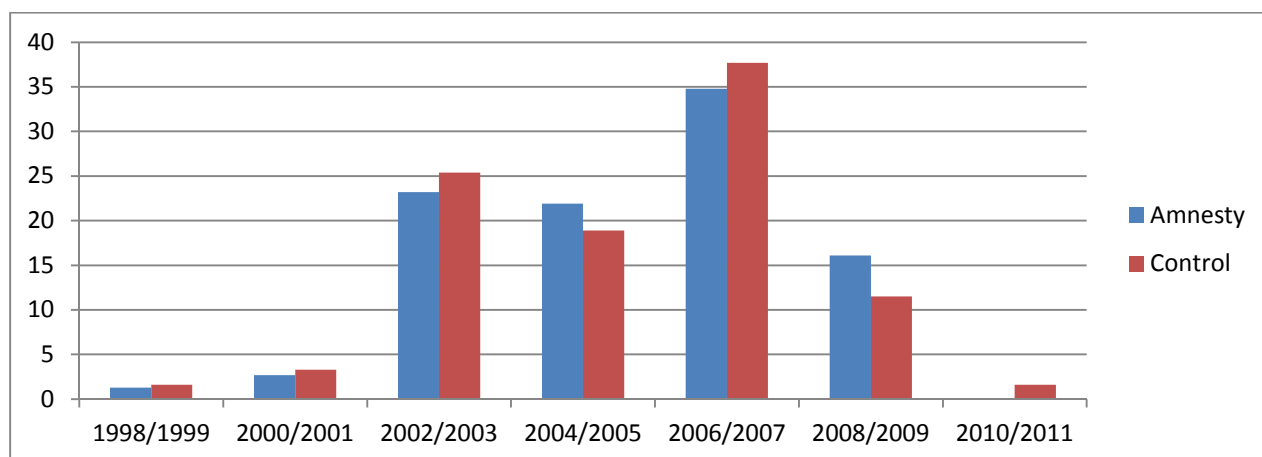
The Niger Delta conflict has been blamed on a number of forces ranging from political fissures to environmental challenges. One way to appreciate the performance of the DDR program is to examine the contributions of these pre-conflict conditions (what Tilly 1978 calls

dual sovereignty) to the conflict. That way, we can assess whether or not this DDR has engaged those forces. I probe the origins of the conflict and the socio-political milieu within which armed conflict took place and flourished. I address these issues under five headings - origins, recruitment and incentives, sources of funds and weapons, organizational roles and decision-making, and identity construction.

### *Origins of the Conflict*

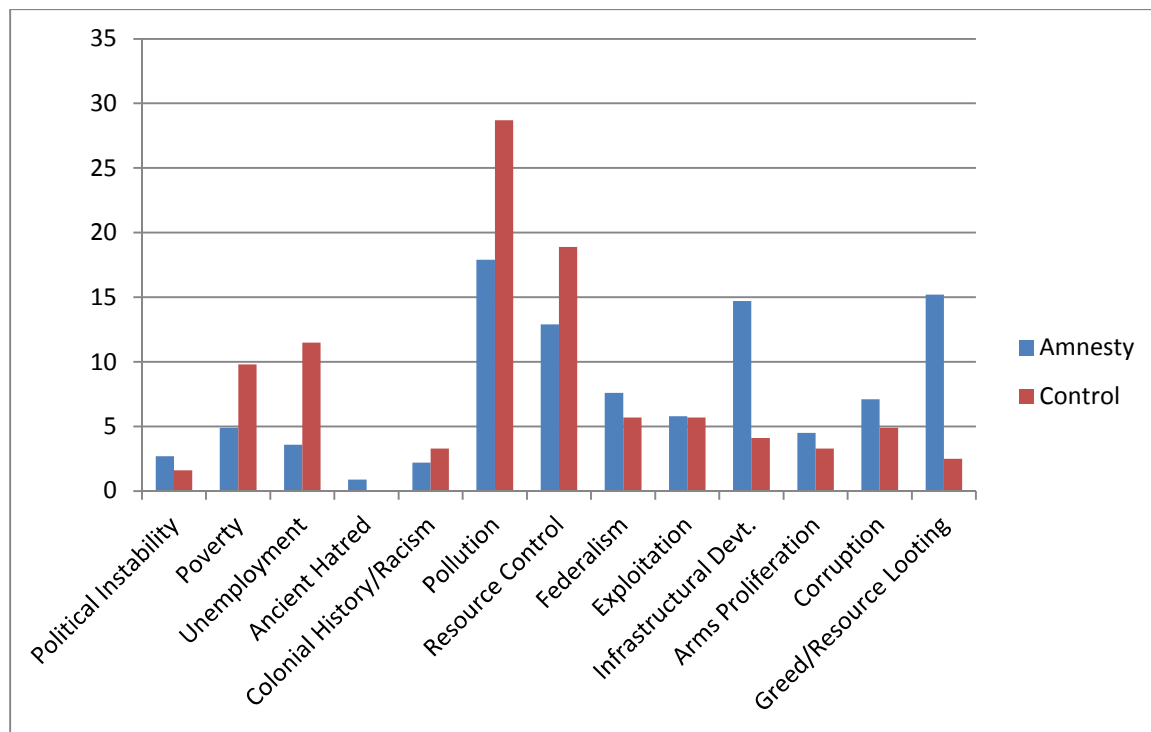
The conflict in the Niger Delta has raged for over two decades. While, for the most part, the conflict was waged on the turf of ideology and non-conflict, the introduction of armed hostilities started in the early 2000s. The metamorphosis of non-violent agitation into violent agitation mirrors expanding opportunities in the arena of politics. Armed agitation roughly corresponds to the inauguration of Nigeria's 4th republic, which signaled the end of yet another military rule and control by civilians. The three republics before this one were overthrown by military regimes. The fourth republic began after elections in 1999 where a retired military officer and former military Head of State, Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo became the president and promised sweeping political, social, and economic reforms. The elections that brought him to power were organized by his old constituency, the military. Compared to subsequent elections, that election was relatively peaceful although it was characterized by large-scale irregularities and witnessed boycotts by many of the most prominent politicians in Nigeria at the time. Many of these politicians boycotted the elections because they did not trust the military to hand over to civilians. The last two military governments orchestrated very costly transitions that critics called "transitions to nowhere." General Babangida, for example, presided over a transition program that spanned about five years and gulped about \$5 billion. When elections were eventually held in 1993, which were widely hailed as the freest and fairest ever in Nigeria, Gen. Babangida

annulled the results. Similarly, Gen. Abacha presided over a transition in which all five registered political parties adopted him as their candidate for the elections. With this volatile political environment, many established politicians doubted that the transition will take place and stayed away from the process. Those who did made instant gains such that the next round of elections in 2003 became severely emotionally, psychologically, and physically charged. This dynamic is expressed in the fighters' responses to the question "when did you join a militant organization?" Whereas only 1.3% of fighters who entered DDR and 1.6% of fighters who did not joined a militant faction in 1998/1999, 23% of fighters who entered DDR and 25% of fighters who did not joined an armed faction in 2002/2003. Enlistment into armed groups dropped slightly in 2004/2005 but increased to 35% for militants who entered DDR and 38% for militants who did not enter DDR in the 2006/2007 election circle. Enlistment into armed groups again dropped in the 2008/2009 time period to 16% of fighters in the treatment category and 11% of fighters in the control category. One unique thing about the periods 2002/2003 and 2006/2007 is that they were election circles. It is possible, as has been argued by commentators, that youths joined armed groups in these periods to facilitate the election of preferred candidates or at the promptings of candidates and political parties.



**Figure 13: Distribution by Year of Enlistment in Armed Group**

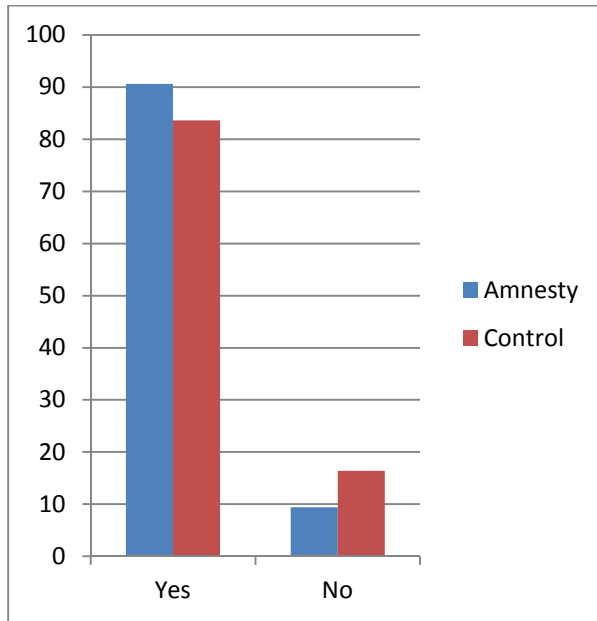
Much has been written about the causes of the conflict. I probed my respondents to find out what they believe were the causes of the conflict. The question asked is “in your opinion, what is the main cause of the Niger Delta conflict?” As figure 14 indicates, 18% of respondents in the treatment group compared to 29% of respondents in the control group blame pollution for the conflict. Similarly, 13 of respondents in the treatment group compared to 19% of respondents in the control group believe that resource control dispute is the main cause of the Niger Delta conflict. However, only 4% of respondents in the control group compared to 15% of respondents in the treatment group believe that infrastructural deficit in the Niger Delta is to blame for the conflict. Similarly, 15% of the treatment group and 2% of the control group blame greed or resource looting for the conflict. However, both categories of respondents (6% each) have similar views that the conflict results from capitalist exploitation of the resources of the Niger Delta.



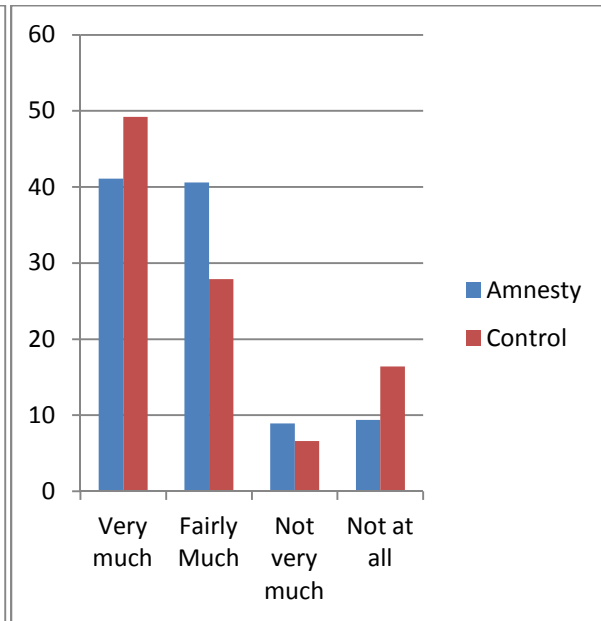
**Figure 14: Distribution by Causes of Niger Delta Conflict**

In order to probe the causes further, especially to understand how combatants in both categories became directly involved in the conflict, I asked respondents whether they ever got involved in conflicts or disagreements involving politicians, community leaders, traditional rulers, and oil company staff on issues that they did not feel concerned them. 90% of respondents in the treatment category and 83% of respondents in the control category answered in the affirmative. A follow-up question asked “how often were you involved in such conflicts or disagreements?” 41% of respondents in the treatment category and 49% of respondents in the control category were “very much” involved in such conflicts. Another 40% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 27% of respondents in the control category were “fairly much” involved in such conflicts or disagreements. Only 9.4% of respondents in the treatment category and 16.4% in the control category chose “not at all involved.” Asked who involved them in the conflict, 41% of respondents in the treatment category and 38% of respondents in the control category said politicians. 18.8% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 22% of respondents in the control category say community leaders inserted them into such conflicts. Officials of oil companies and the leadership of militant groups were named by 12% and 9% of respondents in the treatment category and 5% and 9% in that order, by respondents in the control category. Finally, I asked respondents “which of the following emotions did you feel as a result of your involvement in other people’s conflicts or disagreements?” 54% of respondents in the control category compared to 25% of respondents in the treatment category indicated that they felt anxious. 17% of the respondents in the treatment category compared to only 4% of respondents in the control category felt sad. 28% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 9% of respondents in the control category became angry, while only 13%

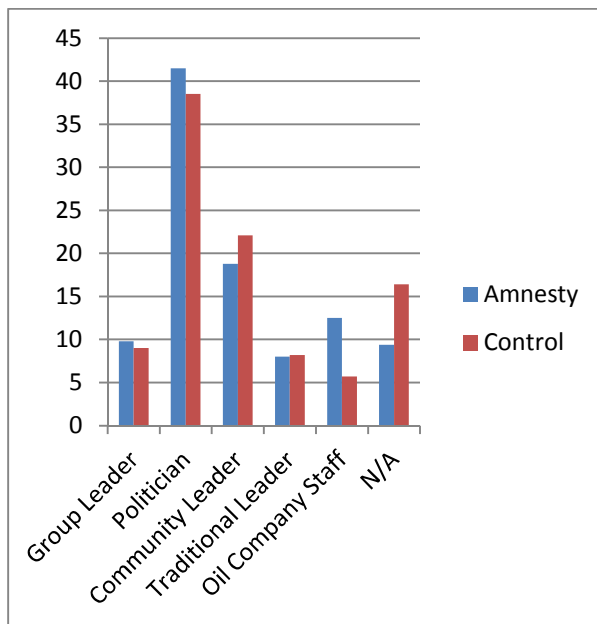
of respondents in the treatment category and 11% of respondents in the control category “felt nothing.” Figures 15 – 18 illustrates these findings.



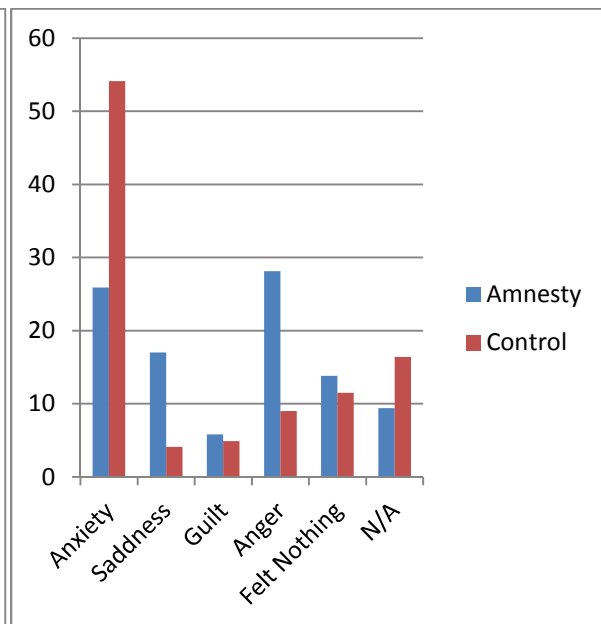
**Figure15: Distribution by Triangulation**



**Figure 16: Distribution by Frequency of Triangulation**



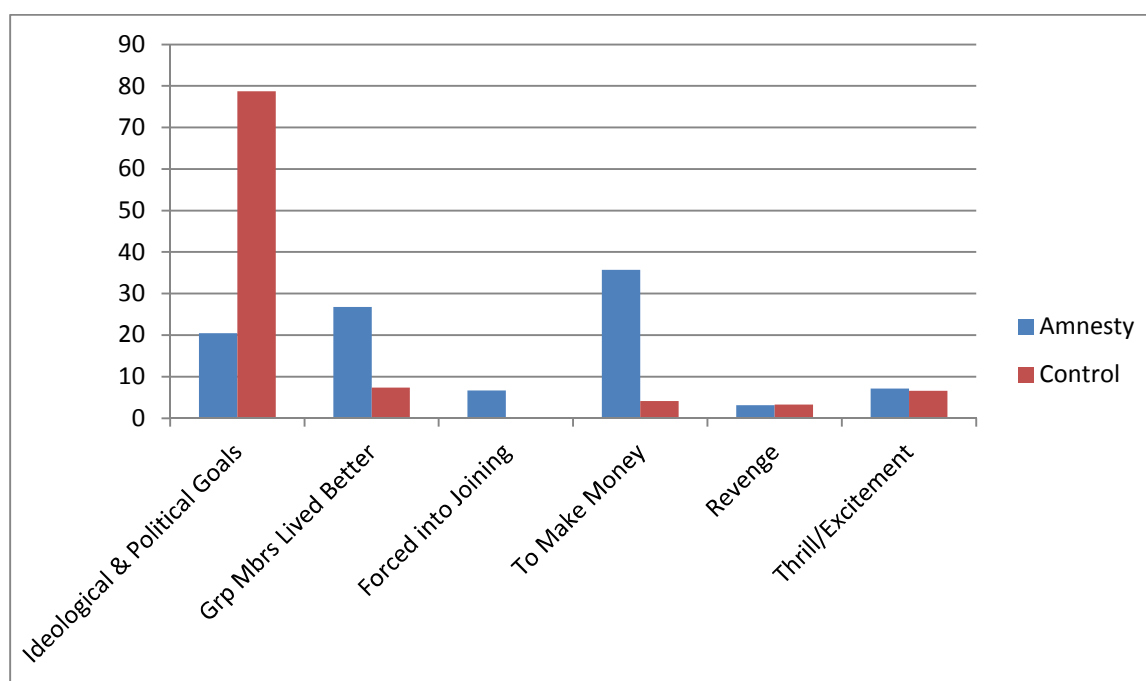
**Figure 17: Distribution by Mode of triangulation**



**Figure 18: Distribution by Attitude towards Triangulation**

### Recruitment

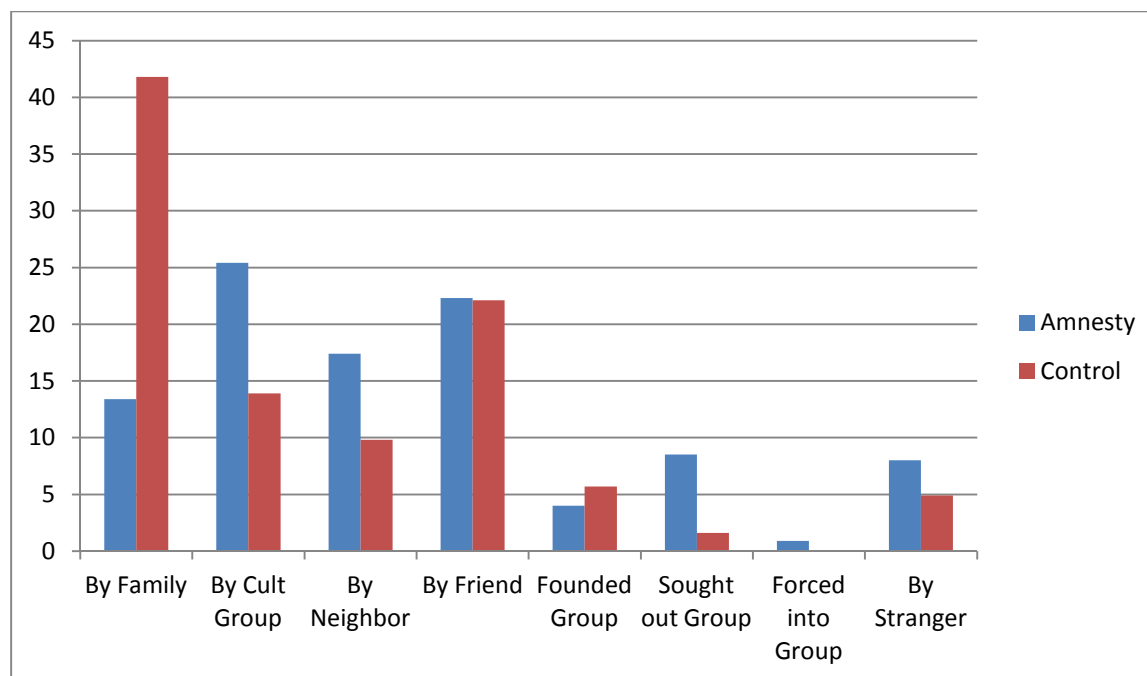
There were stark differences between both groups in their reports about the reason they joined armed groups. While only 20% of fighters in the DDR program reported support for the ideological and political goals of the group as the reason they enlisted in a fighting group, 78% of fighters outside of the program reported support for their groups ideological and political goals as reason they enlisted. While 36% of fighters who entered the program reported the need to make money as motivation for joining the group, only 4% of fighters outside the program believed money was the prime motivation.



**Figure 19: Distribution by Reason for Enlisting in Armed Group**

In terms of the mode of recruitment, 42% of fighters who did not enter the program were recruited by family compared to 13% of fighters who entered the program. Conversely, 25% of fighters in the program were recruited through their cults compared to 14% of fighters outside of the program. This shows that cultism (a problem that has plagued the nation's tertiary institutions for some time now) has great influence on the conflict. In fact, as we see from responses to the

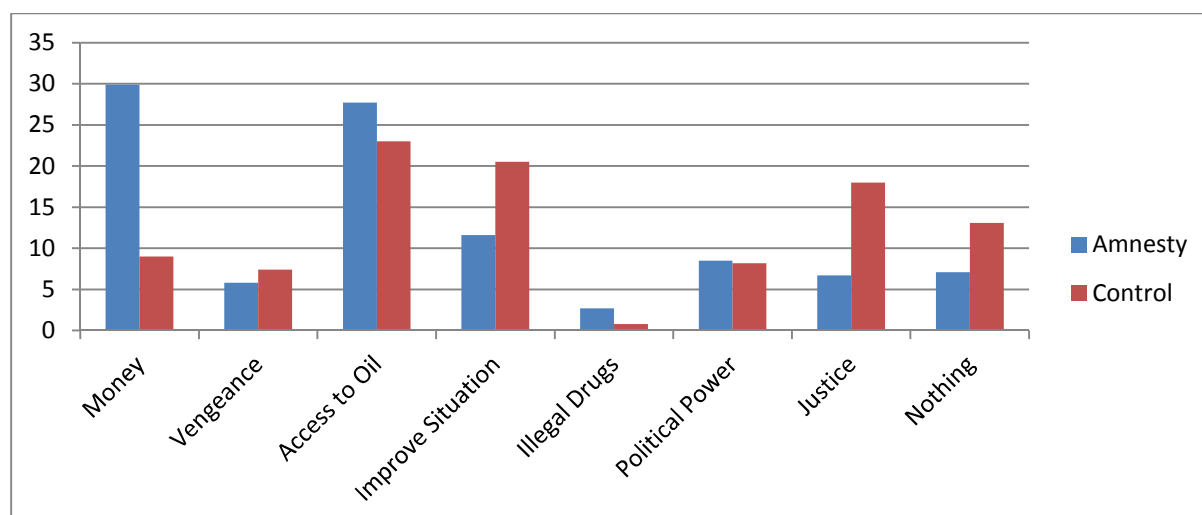
question “how did you prove to your group that you could be trusted,” 50% of respondents who entered DDR and 56% of respondents, who did not, joined a cult to prove credibility. Also 19% of respondents in the treatment category and 15% of respondents in the control group reported that they swore to oaths to prove their loyalty. Most cults in Nigeria require members to swear to oaths as proof of loyalty.



**Figure 20: Distribution by Mode of Recruitment**

Respondents also gave indications of the rewards promised for participating in their group’s activities. 30% of respondents who entered DDR reported that they were promised money to join the group compared to only 9% of the control group. Another major promise for participation was access to oil or the lucrative illegal bunkering trade. 27% of respondents in the treatment group compared to 23% of respondents in the control group reported that they were promised access to the lucrative clandestine crude oil trade. Conversely, only 11% of the treatment group and 20% of the control group were promised opportunities to improve the condition of the Niger Delta.

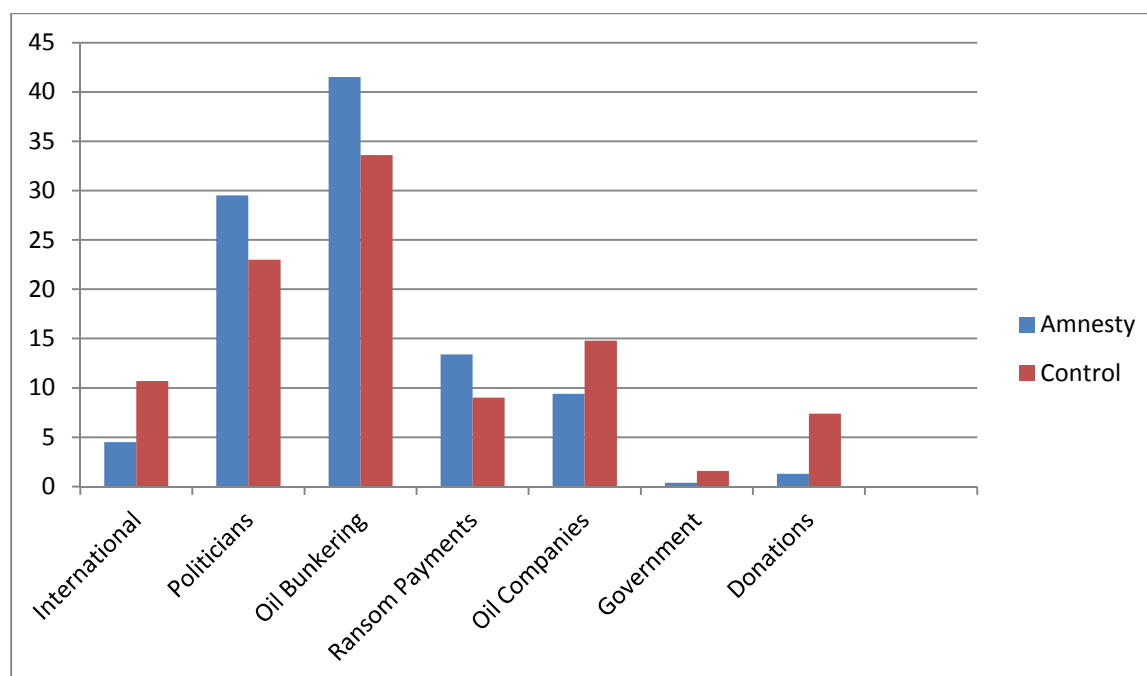




**Figure 21: Distribution of Respondents by Incentives for Entering Conflict**

### *Sources of Funds and Weapons*

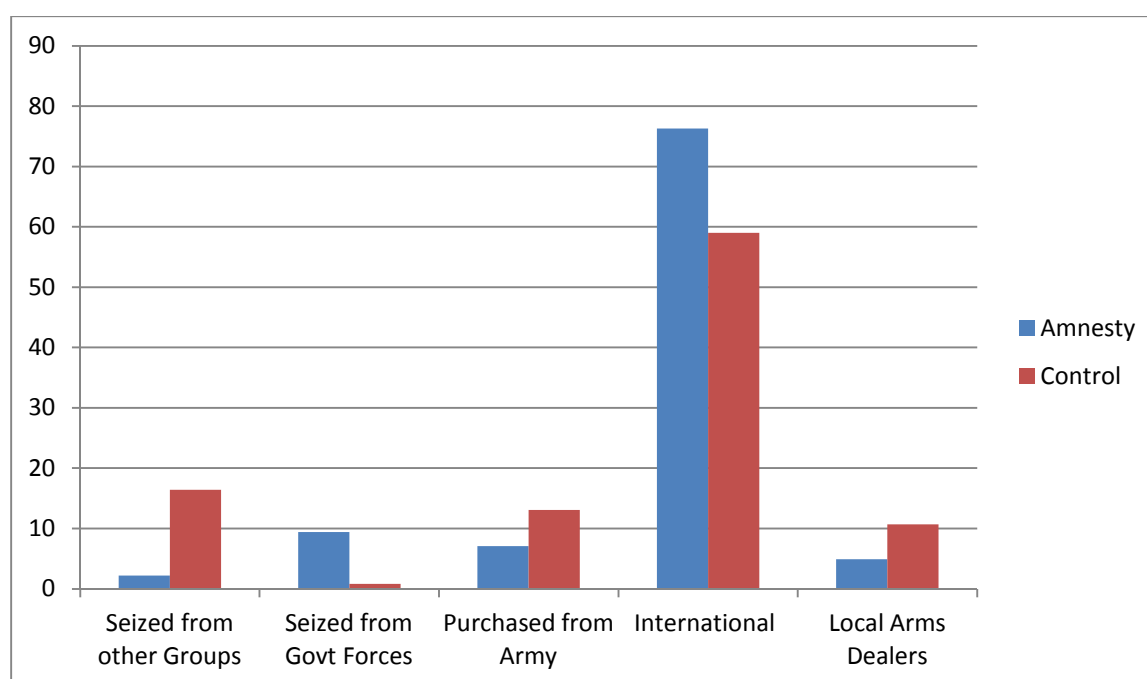
One major issue that was implicated in the literature as fueling the Niger Delta violence is the revenue streams flowing to key players in the conflict. In that sense, the funds available to fighters is a possible determinant of the length and intensity of conflict. I posed this question of funding source(s) to respondents. There is slight difference in the sources of funds available to fighters in both the treatment and control categories. The bulk of the funding for both categories of fighters is illegal oil bunkering. 41% of fighters in the DDR program and 33% of fighters outside of the program reported that their groups got the bulk of their funds from oil bunkering. 29% of respondents in the treatment category and 23% of respondents in the control category implicate politicians as significant contributors to their cause(s). 13% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 9% of respondents in the control category indicate that ransom payments from kidnap victims constitute their main source of funding. Only 1% of respondents in the treatment category and 7% of respondents in the control category say they receive their funds mainly from donations.



**Figure 22: Distribution of Respondents by Source of Funds**

Commentators on the Niger Delta conflict have blamed the proliferation of small arms for the conflict. The availability of arms and ammunition to aggrieved groups in the Niger Delta, it has been argued, encourages the defiance of the authority of the state and rebellion. The key question we asked is “where do you get your weapons from?” An overwhelming majority of respondents (76% in the treatment category and 59% in the control category) indicate that they get their weapons from international sources. This appears to reinforce the theory that fighters in the Niger Delta are involved in oil-for-weapons swaps with dubious international arms dealers and oil merchants. This also appears to establish linkages between the arms available to insurgents and crude oil theft. If we also take into cognizance the 16% of respondents in the control category compared to 2% in the treatment category who say that they get their weapons from attacking other armed groups, we see that the Niger Delta conflict is far from the two-way conflict between insurgents on one hand and the state/MNOC alliance on the other. Instead, the picture that unfolds is of a severely fractured conflict system involving multiple combatants who

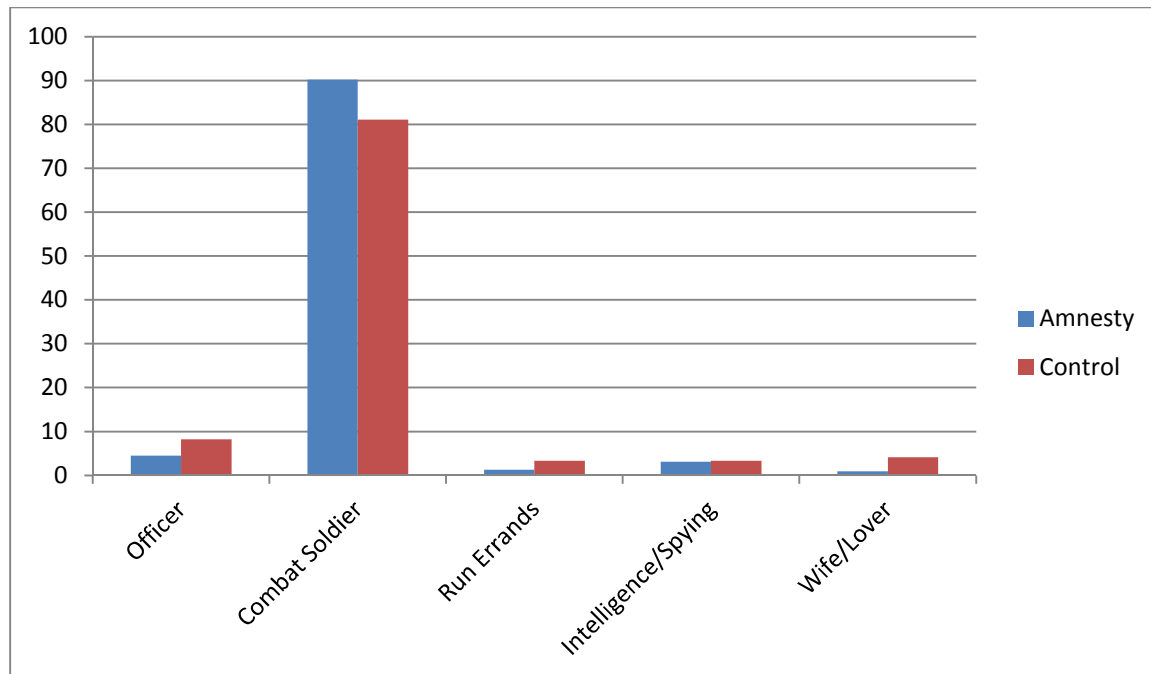
are as much engaged in turf warfare as they are engaged in hostilities with defined state/MNOC targets. It is also interesting to note that 13% of fighters in the control category compared to 7% of fighters in the treatment category get their weapons clandestinely from the Nigerian army. This appears to substantiate recent reports linking fighters with certain unscrupulous members of the nation's military. Several military officers including a major-general were recently court-martialed and jailed for supplying arms and ammunition to fighters. Thus, we see that even the military is deeply divided in terms of their loyalty to the state and support for insurgents.



**Figure 23: Distribution by Source of Weapons**

#### *Roles and Decision-Making within organization*

The vast majority of respondents were combat or foot soldiers within their respective organizations. 90% of respondents who entered DDR and 81% of respondents who did not enter DDR reported that they were combat soldiers. Also 4% of combatants in the treatment category and 8% of combatants in the control category reported that they were (are) officers in their units.



**Figure 24: Distribution by Roles within Armed Groups**

In terms of decision-making within the organization, there appears to be a significant difference in reports from both categories of respondents. 82% of combatants in the treatment category compared to 64% of combatants in the control category say that officers were responsible for making the decision on who and what to attack. Conversely, 26% of combatants in the control category compared to 14% in the treatment category say that attack decisions were (are) taken collectively. Similarly, when asked who decides what to do with gains made from an attack, 82% of combatants in the treatment category compared to 57% of combatants in the control category say that officers make the decision. Conversely, 30% of combatants in the control category compared to 14% in the treatment category say that decisions were (are) taken collectively. This means that respondents in the treatment category operate more within organizations with top to bottom decision-making processes, while respondents in the control category appears to have a more egalitarian organizational structure.

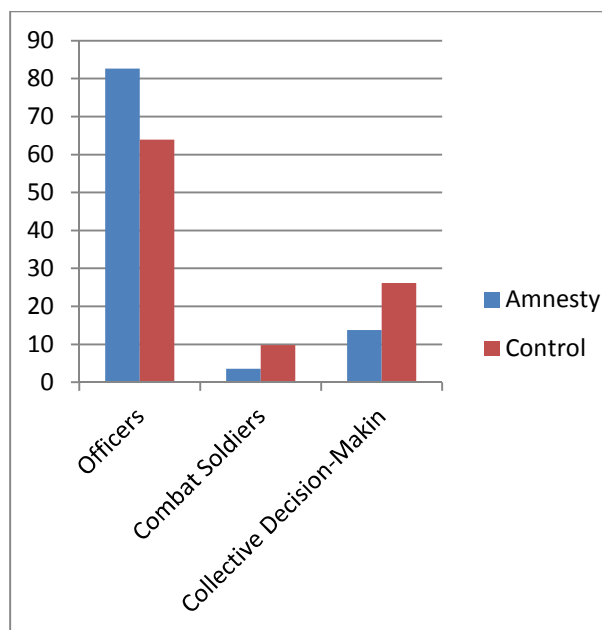


Figure 25: Distribution by Attack Decisions

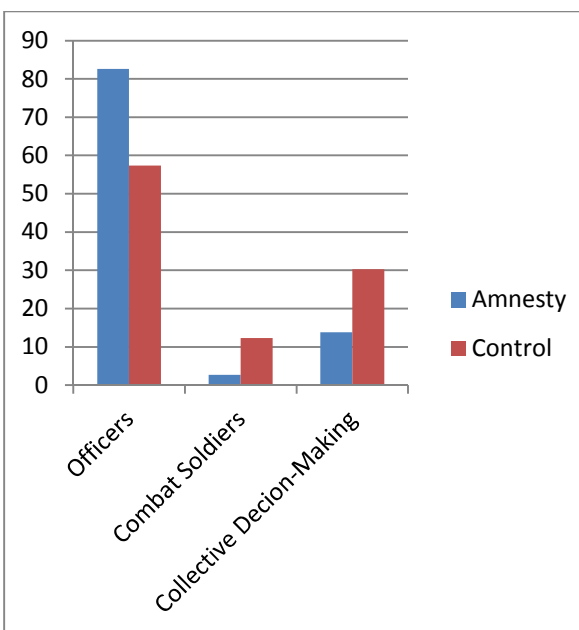


Figure 26: Distribution by Profit Decision

### 6.3 Determining Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Outcomes

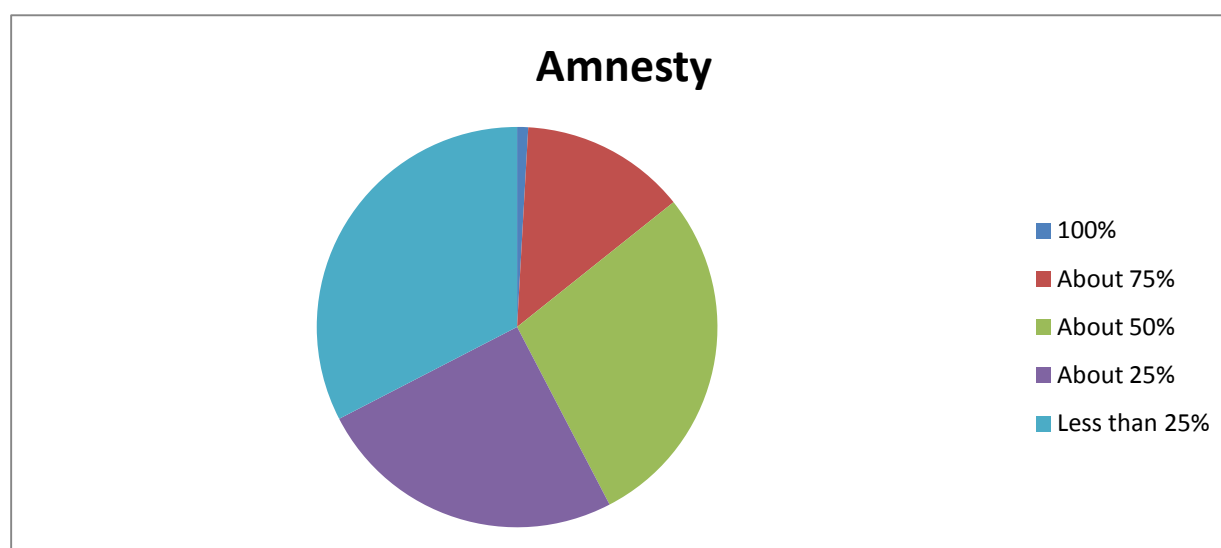
Assessing DDR outcomes is always a difficult exercise. One possible reason for this difficulty involves the great number of activities that individually and collectively produces DDR outcomes. Added to this is the fact that DDR is often implemented in environments facing ongoing conflict. Thus, it is difficult to identify all of the forces or activities responsible for different types of outcomes. In recognition of and in attempt to surmount this challenge, my analysis focuses on two types of activities and outcomes: programmatic and non-programmatic activities. Under programmatic forces, I examine the contributions of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration to ending the Niger Delta conflict. These program areas are discussed initially as mutually exclusive of each other. This is important, in order to identify specific components of these systems responsible for the outcomes. Under the non-programmatic factors, I analyze conditions and events existing outside of the Amnesty Program, but which none-the-less impacts the outcomes.

### *Disarmament*

The United Nations (2000) defines disarmament as the “collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives, and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population.” Further, it suggests that disarmament “includes the development of responsible arms management program.” This definition recognizes the importance of disarmament to the overall success of DDR programs. As with the Niger Delta Amnesty program, disarmament is always the gateway to all DDR processes. Combatants typically enter DDR programs by submitting weapons. In many instances, policies of one person per weapon have been implemented in recognition of the need to mop up all arms available to combatants and to ensure that only genuine combatants enter the program. It goes without saying, therefore, that the effectiveness of the disarmament process is a major determinant of the overall effect of DDR on conflict situations. According to the UN IDDRS (2006), the overarching aim of disarmament within a DDR process is “to reduce or control the number of weapons held before demobilization in order to build confidence in the peace process, increase security and prevent a return to conflict.” Thus, important operational objectives of the disarmament process must include the reduction of the amount of weapons possessed by, or available to, combatants. It must also include a reduction in actual or probable armed violence as well as improvement in the perception of human security within communities. These are minimum requirements against which the Amnesty program could be assessed.

The disarmament phase of the Niger Delta Amnesty program began on August 6 2009 and ended on October 4 2009. A total of 4009 light and heavy weapons were submitted by former combatants. In the first wave of registration, the Amnesty Committee documented 20,192 ex-combatants out of which 133 were women. The implication of this is that not all fighters accepted into the program submitted weapons (not that this is a requirement of the Amnesty

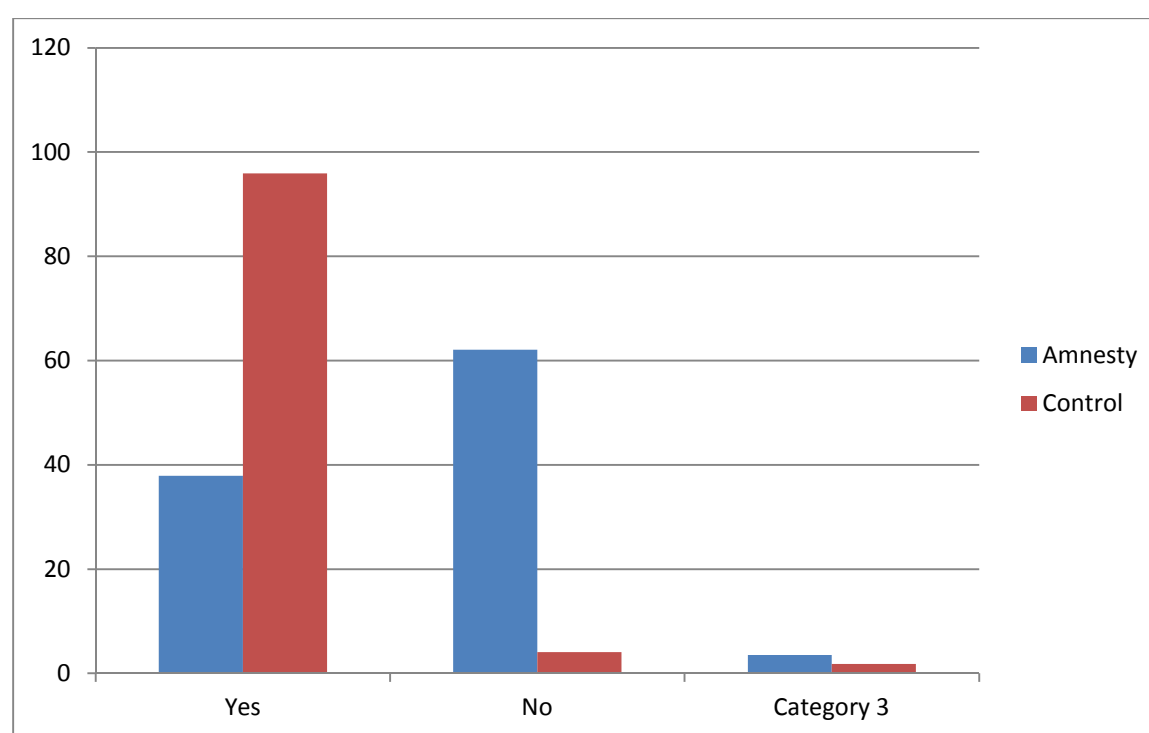
program). However, since arms collection, documentation, and destruction are central to the disarmament process and the overall success of the DDR program, it is crucial that we know the amount of arms collected from combatants and how these arms were handled or disposed off. One way of doing this in the absence of official data (Nigeria is notorious for its shocking lack of documentation on important programs like this) is to ask DDR participants what amount of weapons they submitted. I asked respondents in the treatment category to tell me approximately what percentage of their total arms stock they submitted to the Amnesty Committee. Figure 27 illustrates their responses. About 32% of respondents say their group submitted less than 25% of their total arms stock. 28% of respondents say they submitted about 50% of their arms and only .9% indicated that they submitted all their arms.



**Figure 27: Distribution by Percentage of Weapons Submitted**

In order to compare the attitude of respondents in both categories to violence despite the Amnesty program, I asked respondents whether they envisaged the need to acquire more weapons in the future to pursue their objectives. The results as illustrated in figure 28 is revealing. 96% of respondents in the control category compared to 38% of respondents in the

treatment category indicated that they anticipate acquiring more weapons in the future. While the huge difference between both groups may be suggestive of the positive effects of the Amnesty program, we should not lose sight of the fact that the acquisition of more weapons by 38% of disarmed combatants is troubling and, perhaps, foretells some problems with the disarmament program. Such high numbers is not only capable of jeopardizing the peace process, it is also capable of plunging the whole region into warfare more devastating than what has already been witnessed.



**Figure 28: Distribution by Anticipation of Future Acquisition of Weapons**

### *Demobilization*

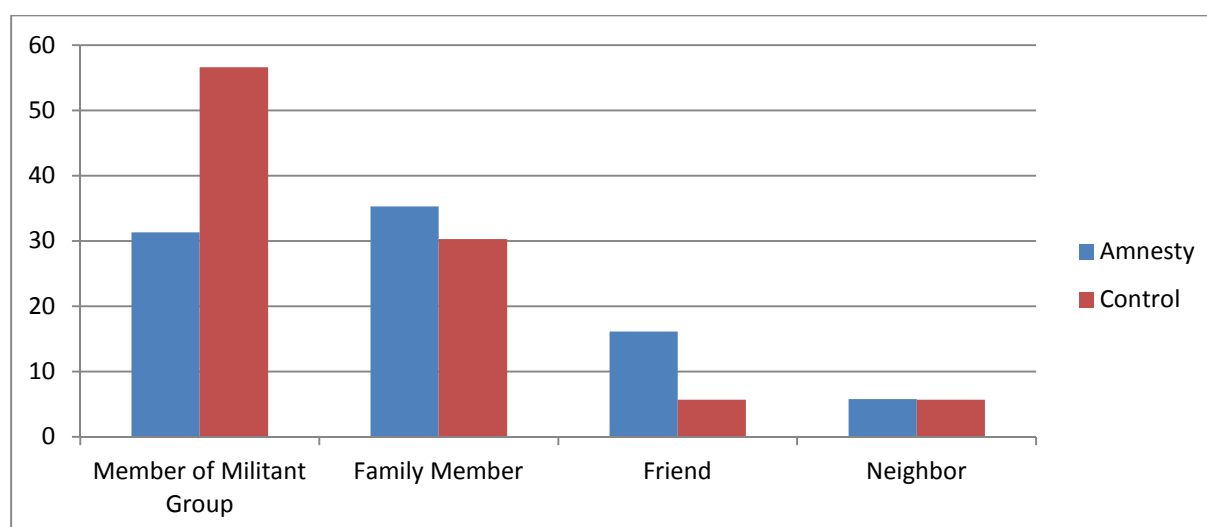
The UN (2006) defines demobilization as the “formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces and other armed groups.” It sees demobilization as consisting of two interconnected phases. Phase one typically involves the collection and processing of combatants in designated places such as camps, barracks, etc. The second phase involves the provision of support packages to those demobilized (often called reinsertion) aimed at facilitating



their reintegration into civilian society. Underpinning these phases is the overarching goal to reduce or completely diminish the links that combatants have to their armed groups or units while increasing and strengthening their links to conventional society. As important as this process is to post-conflict reintegration and reconstruction, there are potential challenges involved in the management of demobilization processes. As Collier (1994) has observed, demobilization on its own, like disarmament, has the potential to generate unintentional security dilemmas. One of such challenges involves how and where to engage demobilized ex-combatants. According to Collier (1994), governments emerging from war frequently demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants into existing security structures and or civilian populations. However, this process is heavily politicized, and in the Niger Delta situation, there have been reports of groups benefitting disproportionately from the process. Thus, if not properly planned and executed, this could create more problems than solutions for conflicted societies. For example, in Sierra Leone, because of flaws in the demobilization process, ex-combatants remained partially organized within their existing command structures (World Bank 2002) thereby threatening the peace process. In some other cases, because precautions were not taken at the planning phase, ex-combatants unintentionally reinforced latent command structures (Knight and Ozerdam 2004). Similarly, the peace process could be jeopardized if ex-combatants were demobilized too quickly before efforts to effectively dismantle their existing command structures, were taken (Spear 2005).

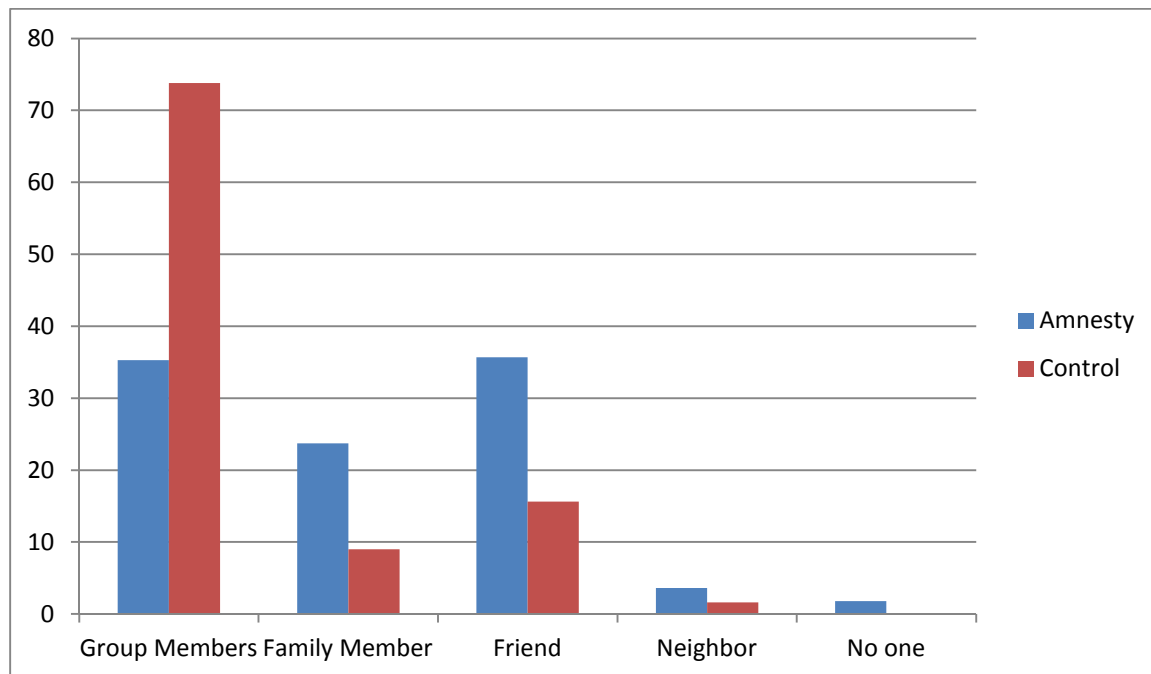
With these in mind, it is important to determine whether, in fact, ex-combatants participating in the Niger Delta Amnesty program were sufficiently delinked from their existing command structures. To make this determination, I asked respondents “if you were to start a business today, who will you partner with?” As figure 29 shows, 31% of combatants in the

treatment group compared to 56% of respondents in the control group say they would partner with a member of their militant group. Although this shows clear differences between both groups of respondents, it is equally evident that a significant portion of respondents in the treatment category have not completely broken ties with members of their former factions. Both groups are almost statistically tied in terms of partnering with family members at 35% for the treatment group and 30% for the control group. This, perhaps, indicates that combatants continue to receive some type of support from their families. However, if we consider that 41% of respondents in the treatment category and only 13% of respondents in the control category were recruited by family members, who probably were insurgents themselves, then we might infer a larger difference between both groups than the results show. The result also shows that 11% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 1% of respondents in the control category would not partner with anyone. This could suggest a period of transition for respondents in the treatment category in which they break ties with their former group members and group structures but have not yet fitted into more conventional community structures.



**Figure 29: Distribution by Choice of Business Partner**

I also use a second variable to measure demobilization. I asked respondents “who do you spend most of your time with?” I expected respondents in the treatment category to mention someone other than a member of their group. If that were the case, and if respondents in the control category mostly choose a member of their group, then, I would attribute the difference in their responses to the program effects of DDR. The result shows a huge difference between both categories. 35% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 73% of respondents in the control category spend most of their time with members of their armed factions. 23% of respondents in the treatment category compared to only 9% of respondents in the control group spend most of their time with family. Similarly, 35% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 15% of respondents in the control group spend most of their time with non-combatant friends. Although the difference between both groups appears large, the fact that 35% of members of the treatment group spend most of their time with members of their armed factions suggests some problems with the demobilization process.



**Figure 30: Distribution by Most Time Spent**

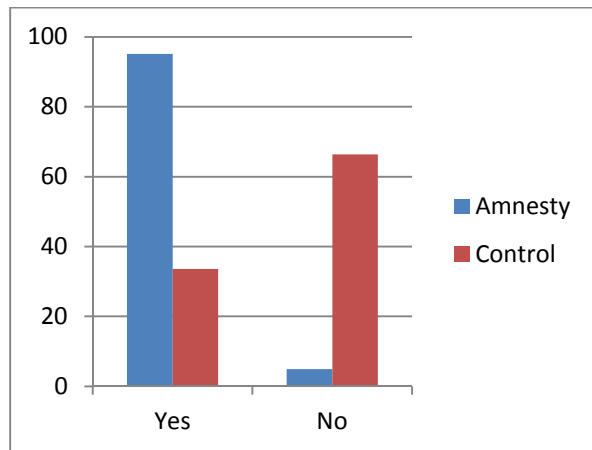
### *Reintegration*

Post-conflict reintegration involves several components. According to the UNDP (2000), reintegration involves the “political, social and economic reintegration of war-affected populations on restoring social and human capital while contributing to political and economic stability.” This approach has found support from scholars including Berdal (1996) who argues that social and economic reintegration within post-conflict environments are inexorably linked to wider political and security considerations. This does not mean that there is uniformity of scholarly opinions about what reintegration should consist of. For example, Kingma (2000) has argued that the intensity of conflict has immense psychological effects on participants to the conflict. As such, he advocates the inclusion of psychological reintegration into DDR designs. Pugel (2005) agrees with Kingma and in his study of demobilization and reintegration in war-ravaged Liberia, identified four dimensions of reintegration including psychological reintegration. For the purpose of this study, however, I will focus on the triad of social, economic, and political reintegration.

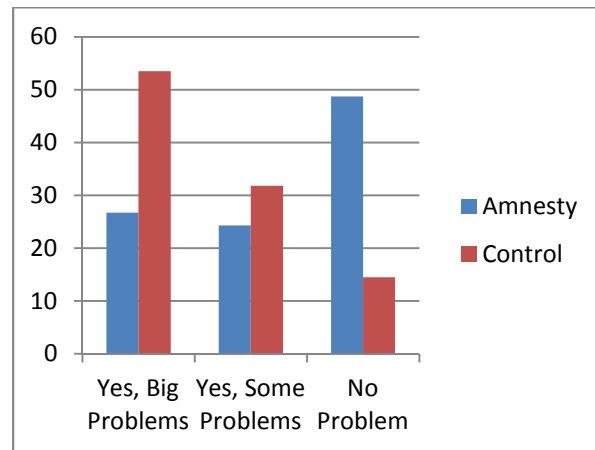
**Social Reintegration.** Assessing social reintegration is often a difficult venture. This is because social reintegration involves a range of activities and practices undertaken at communal and individual levels outside of the DDR process. For example, some ex-combatants especially women, may reintegrate into their communities quietly in order to avoid some of the stigma associated with being members of combat forces. In societies with rigid gender boundaries and where the rights of women are routinely condensed into men’s rights, the challenges to evaluating social reintegration are enormous. And when we consider that determinants of social reintegration often spillover from economic forces (Pugel 2005), we can appreciate the challenges of assessing social reintegration.

To measure the degree of social reintegration, I asked respondents whether they returned to their community following the implementation of the Amnesty program. 95% of respondents in the treatment group compared to 33% of respondents in the control group returned to their communities. The high return rate for combatants participating in the Amnesty program suggests that there is some confidence in the program. It also suggests that there is considerably less conflict in the region since even some combatants outside of the program also returned home. Since the degree of social acceptance of returning combatants gives an indication of the social reintegration of combatants, I asked respondents who returned to their community whether they experienced any difficulty gaining acceptance from members of their community. 26% of respondents in the treatment category who returned compared to 53% of respondents in the control group that returned reported big problems gaining acceptance from members of their community. Also, 24% of respondents in the treatment group compared to 31% of respondents in the control group that returned reported some problems gaining acceptance from their communities. Conversely, 48% of respondents in the treatment group compared to 14% of respondents in the control group that returned reported no problems gaining acceptance from members of their communities. The results as illustrated in figures 31 and 32 are not surprising. The effect of the conflict especially where insurgency was carried out in areas proximate to civilian communities and possibly involving civilian casualties, may have damaged previously existing communal bonds and it may take time to repair damaged or broken relationships. Also, because combatants in the control category did not disarm and demobilize (at least officially), there might be civilian hostility to their presence in the community. This is especially true in cases where insurgency commingled with criminality. We also should be sensitive to the fact that there might be tension between returning disarmed and demobilized ex-combatants and still

active armed combatants with whom they had either previously waged turf war or had been comrade at arms.

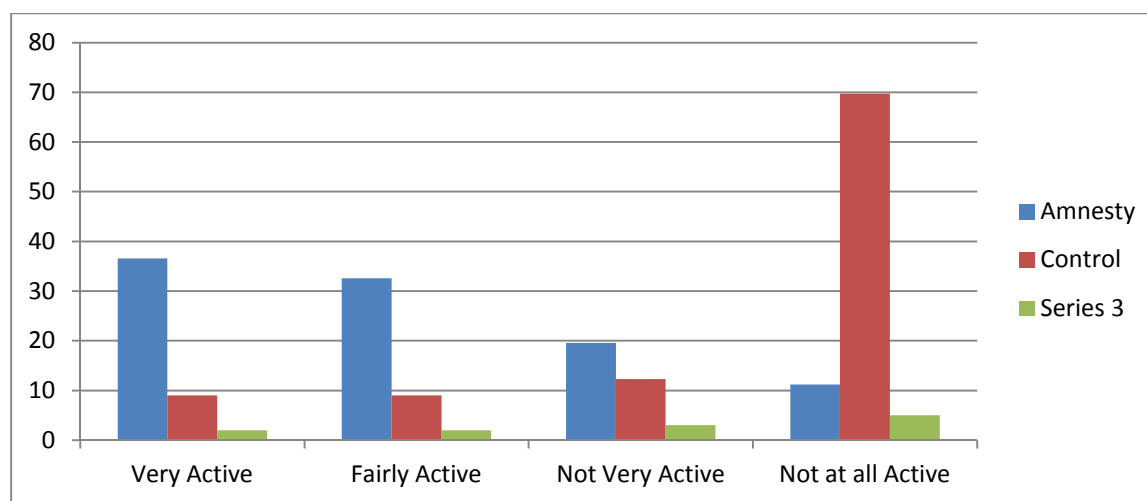


**Figure 31: Distribution by Community Return**



**Figure32: Distribution by Community Acceptance**

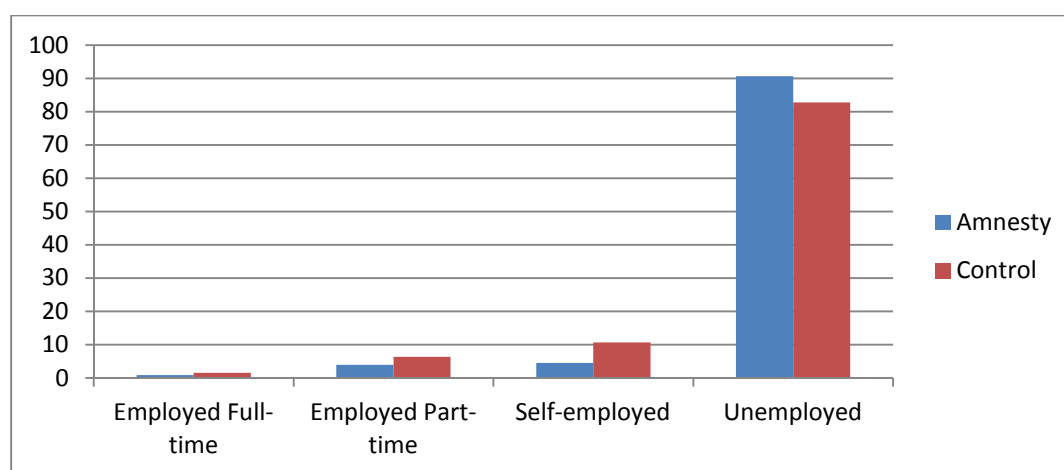
In order to determine their level of involvement with their communities, which might give some indication about the degree of their social reintegration, I asked respondents whether they are active in the monthly environmental sanitation exercise, which occurs across the nation every last Saturday of the month. As figure 32 illustrates, 36% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 9% of respondents in the control category indicated that they were very active in the sanitation exercise. 32% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 9% of respondents in the control category reported that they were fairly active in the monthly sanitation exercise. Conversely 69% of respondents in the control category compared to only 11% of respondents in the treatment category reported that they were not at all active in the monthly sanitation activities. Based on the huge differences between both categories of respondents, I can infer that combatants who entered the Amnesty Program appear to be more socially reintegrated into their communities.



**Figure 33: Distribution by Participation in Community Activities**

**Economic Reintegration.** The conflict in the Niger Delta has been blamed on the economic challenges the people of the region face daily on account of oil production, which began in the region five decades ago. The people of the region have faced many economic problems including unemployment, which is believed to be as high as 80% of the adult population – the highest in the nation. To measure economic reintegration, I ask several questions. In the first instance, I asked respondents whether they were in any form of paid employment outside of the Amnesty program. The result shows little or no difference in the employment situation of respondents in both categories. .9% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 1.6% of respondents in the control category say they are employed full-time. Another 4% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 5% of respondents in the control category say they are employed part-time. 4% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 10 of respondents in the control category reported that they were self-employed. However, the vast majority of respondents (90% in the treatment category and 82% in the control category) indicated that they were unemployed. In the second instance, I ask whether the unemployment situation in the Niger Delta was better now than before the conflict.

If more respondents say that the situation in the Niger Delta is better now, that would indicate greater economic opportunities for members of the community including disarmed and demobilized combatants. 17% of respondents in the treatment category compared with 2% of respondents in the control category say that the situation is better now than before the conflict. 48% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 32% of respondents in the control category say the situation is the same, while 39% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 65% of respondents in the control category believe that the situation is worse now. Finally, I ask respondents in the treatment category whether they believe that they will ever use the skills they had acquired from the Amnesty program in the future. 40% of the respondents believe that they will apply the skills in future. 30% do not believe that they will ever use those skills and 29% did not know if they will ever use those skills. Respondent's skepticism about the applicability of the skills set they had acquired may not be unconnected with skepticism among the larger population about the utility of education in an increasingly shrinking job market. Figures 34-36 illustrates these findings.



**Figure 34: Distribution by Employment Status**



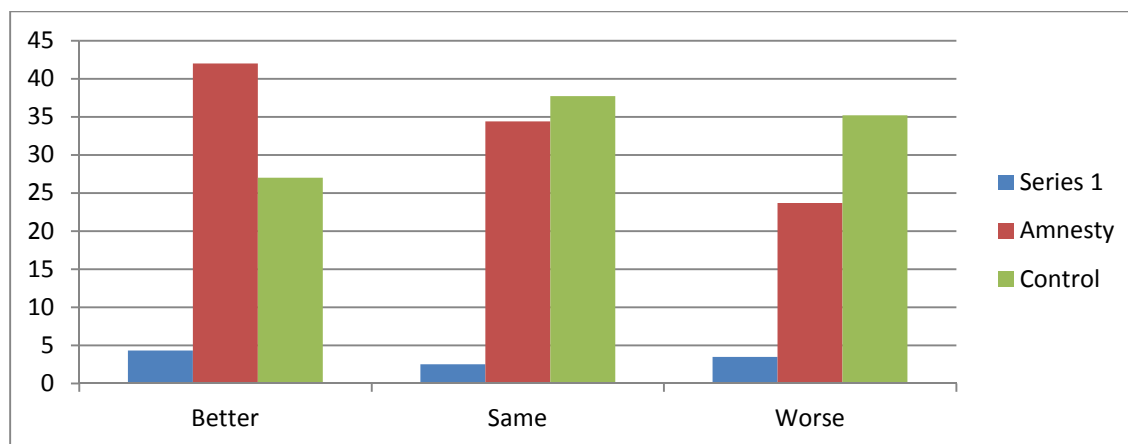


Figure 35: Distribution by Present Employment Conditions

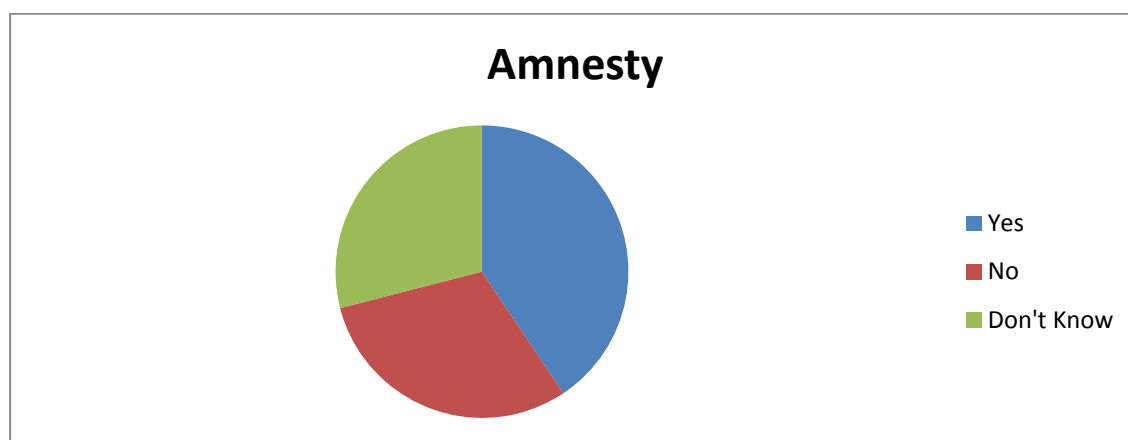


Figure 36: Distribution by Likelihood of Future Skill Application

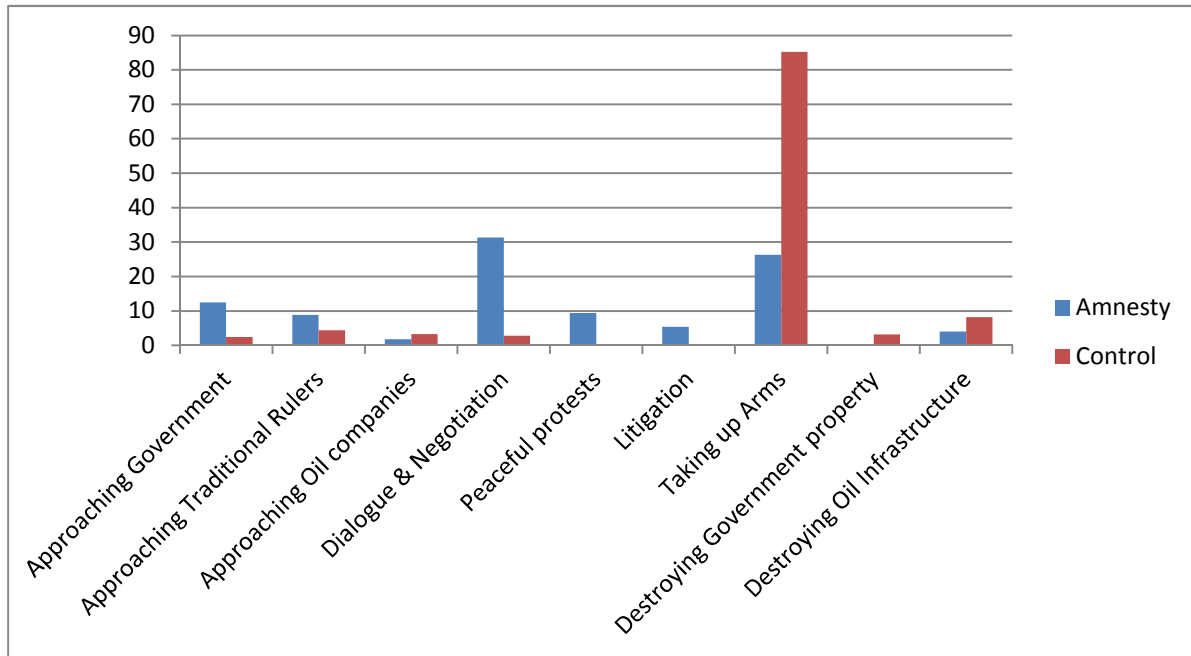
**Political Reintegration.** Like social and economic reintegration, political reintegration is crucial to the DDR process. Because of the nature of patronage politics practiced in Nigeria where political office holders hold allegiance to certain influential political figures also known as “godfathers,” and actively service these godfathers at the expense of the populace, politics in Nigeria has become a zero-sum game, where the winner takes all. Not only do politicians invest money into the process, they also mobilize force from a segment of the under-served population to bulldoze their way into government. In the process, the majority of the people are alienated from the political process. For the DDR program to succeed, it is crucial that ex-combatants are reintegrated into the political mainstream such that their views count and their

opinions are respected. This is crucial especially since the United Nations (2000:11) recognized the “need to convert combatants who pursue their objectives through force to civilians who pursue their objectives through other means,” including democratic alternatives.

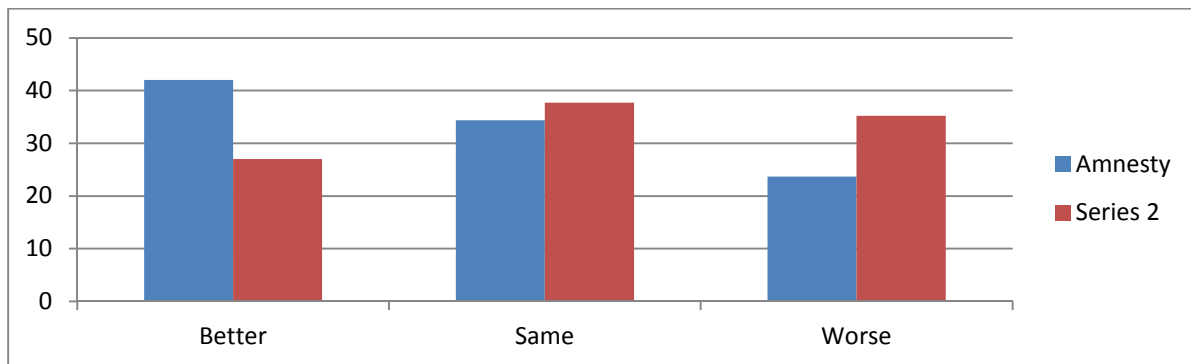
I use two measures to assess whether ex-combatants were reintegrated into the political process. In the first instance, I asked “what is the most effective way to deal with oil-related community problems?” Because respondents in the treatment category have gone through several or all stages of the DDR process, I expect that they would opt for a non-violent political solution to oil-related community problems. Thus, if they choose any of the following five options they would be considered politically reintegrated: approaching government officials, approaching traditional rulers, approaching oil company officials, dialogue and negotiation, peaceful protests, and litigation. But if they choose none of these and instead choose any one of the following: taking up arms to fight, destroying government property, and destroying oil infrastructure, they will be considered not politically reintegrated. As figure 37 illustrates, 31% of respondents in the treatment category believe that dialogue and negotiation is the best way of addressing oil-related community problems. However, about 30% of respondents in the treatment category compared to about 96% of respondents in the control group believe that violence is the best way to resolve issues.

The second question asks “think about access to political participation in the Niger Delta, is the situation better now than before the conflict?” Only 42% of respondents in the treatment category compared to 27% of respondents in the control category believe that the situation is better now than before the conflict. 34% of respondents in the treatment category and 37% of respondents in the control category believe that the situation has not changed while 23% of

respondents in the treatment category compared to 35% of respondents in the control category believe that the situation is worse now.



**Figure 37: Distribution by Method of Conflict Resolution**



**Figure 38: Distribution by Opinion on Opportunities for Political Participation**

## **Chapter 7:**

### **RESULTS**

#### **7.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, my results are organized and presented through a method of triangulation known as the dialectic mixed method. The first step in conducting the dialectic mixed method analysis is to review the findings from the single methods, in this case, questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews. After this is done, I will compare and examine the findings for convergence, divergence, and uniqueness. The second step of the dialectic mixed method involves integrating both single methods in a way that potentially increases the verifiability and validity of the overall results. I expect that with this method, the findings from the single methods will complement and strengthen each other and the overall results.

I provide a thematic understanding of my single data using logistic regression for the questionnaire survey and Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM) for the in-depth interviews. Each of the core themes represents a research question. I first outline results of the questionnaire using logistic regression before discussing the in-depth interviews. Then, I compare the findings for convergence, divergence, and uniqueness. The method is dominated by the unique findings generated from the in-depth interviews through the use of grounded theory. For example, through GTM, several variables were generated on the causes of the Niger Delta conflict. These variables were matched for convergence with survey findings where the main cause of the violence in the region as revealed through the in-depth and secondary interviews is strongly illustrative of triangulation. This convergence is more nuanced because it illustrates the underlying mechanism that influenced behaviors rather than matching examples to survey results in a one-on-one format.

The Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR Program had three main objectives: disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. In furtherance of these objectives, insurgents were invited to submit their arms and ammunition in exchange for amnesty from prosecution and reintegration. The government hoped that the program will stop the fighting and give the government the opportunity to address what it believed to be the main causes of the violence: unemployment induced by lack of knowledge and skills (illiteracy), and greed. To resolve these problems, the government embarked on a program of re-training and skills/vocational education. Through these, and the granting of waiver from prosecution, the government hoped to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate combatants into civilian society. The reintegration program itself contained three elements: social, economic and political reintegration. The ultimate aim of the program was to end the violence which had become protracted and entrench long-term peace. In order to assess how well the program contributes to ending the violence and establishing long-term peace, I generated eight measures to capture the overall impact of the Niger Delta Amnesty Program.

### **7.1 Measuring Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Outcomes**

The potential for peacebuilding in the Niger Delta was increased following the introduction of the Niger Delta Amnesty Program in August 2009 by the now deceased President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. Before the introduction of the program, armed confrontation had escalated between government forces and militant or rebel fighters. Not only did the conflict produce countless deaths and social displacement, it also directly threatened the economic livelihood of the nation, which is dependent on oil exports. The idea of building the peace through the instrumentality of DDR, perhaps, originated from the support that policymakers, the world over, have given to disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. It is believed that DDR programs are effective in facilitating peace in environments plagued by armed violence

(Annan, 1996) and greatly reduce the risk of a return to conflict after peace had been entrenched (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007). The United Nations (2000) believes that a deliberate disarmament program can go a long way to end armed conflict and prevent a return to armed conflict. Similarly, Spear (2002: 14) argues that “peace requires breaking the command and control structures operating over rebel fighters.” This would make it harder for them to “return to organized rebellion.”

Muggah (2009) has argued that disarmament and demobilization must be aligned to reintegration, for sustainable peace to occur. Reintegration has been shown to encompass at least three interrelated elements (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007), including economic reintegration, social reintegration, and political reintegration. Concerning economic reintegration, Collier and Hoeffler (2004) argues that a higher risk of conflict exists where there is absence of income-earning opportunities for youths. Similarly, the International Peace Academy (2002: 5) believes that peace in post-conflict societies is anchored on the ability of ex-combatants to earn a livelihood through legitimate means. Thus, in order to create and sustain peace in post-conflict societies, reintegration programs must “create economic opportunities for combatants” (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007: 534).

In terms of political and social reintegration, policy makers and other important stakeholders recognize that the success of DDR programs is tied to their ability to reintegrate ex-combatants into the social and political mainstream. For example, the United Nations (2000: 11) identified the need to “convert combatants who pursue their objectives through force to civilians who pursue their objectives through other means.” It argues that one of the critical tests of the peace process is to generate confidence in democratic alternatives to armed conflict. For this reason, the need to reabsorb ex-combatants into the political system such that they not only

participate in the political process but believe that such participation is the only way to resolve outstanding grievances, has been stressed. Similarly, Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) have emphasized the need for ex-combatants to be reconciled to their communities, family, friends, and neighbors. Thus, social acceptance is a significant determinant of post-conflict reconciliation and stable peace.

## **7.2 Research Question 1**

I formulated several research questions for this study. The first research question asks “what are the causes of the Niger Delta conflict?” The question is predicated on the fact that there is a shocking lack of agreement among scholars on what is responsible for the Niger Delta conflict. Instead of uniformity, scholars have differed greatly in their perception of the etiology of the conflict. The most common causes identified are pollution, resource control disputes, corruption, economic exploitation, ancient hatreds, ethnicity, colonial history, racism, political marginalization, infrastructural deficits, federalism, poverty, and unemployment. Although scholars have fully explored the connections between the environment, ethno-religious tensions, formal politics, and economic fissures and the violence, not much has been done to probe causes existing outside of these boundaries. For that matter, very little has been done to explore the connections between greed/predation and the conflict or the relationship between intra-personal disputes between powerful political and economic interests and the conflict. Similarly, not much has been done to tease out the impact that the alliance between the Nigerian political state and petrol-capitalism has had on the conflict. My goal, therefore, was to probe the causes of the conflict as a way to measure the performance of the Amnesty program. The rationale for this is that the adoption of the Amnesty or DDR approach to the conflict situation in the Niger Delta

was predicated on a pre-determined set of causes. If the conceptualization of cause is faulty, then, the Amnesty Program might not produce the expected results.

In order for the Amnesty program to end the violence in the Niger Delta and produce long-lasting peace, it must first address the grievances that produced the conflict. We get a sense of government's conceptualization of the causes of the violence from its program content. First, the government named its DDR program the "Amnesty Program." This suggests that the insurgents were criminals motivated by greed and the opportunity for resource looting. Thus, from the government's perspective, the insurgents were first and foremost motivated by greed rather than altruism. Second, the government proposed a comprehensive plan to reeducate, retrain, and or enskill combatants who enter the Amnesty program. This would suggest that militancy in the Niger Delta was motivated by the twin evils of illiteracy and unemployment. In retraining or enskilling them, government hoped to make the insurgents employable and reduce or eliminate the desire to use violence to eke out a living.

From the combination of in-depth and secondary interviews, I derived another possible cause of the conflict – deliberate manipulation and or insertion of jobless youths by powerful social, economic, and political interests into resource/power disputes. The act of deliberately manipulating or inserting hapless youths (or innocent third parties) into resource and power disagreements involving two or more influential stakeholders is what I call resource triangulation. Resource triangulation has several strains. For example, when youths are inserted into disputes or contests by politicians in order to secure political advantage, we have political triangulation. When retired military officers or community leaders engage youths in violence in order to benefit from natural resource extraction, we have predatory triangulation. When multinational oil corporations encourage youths to violently engage one another in violence in



order to maximize their profit, we have economic or exploitative triangulation. The question asks respondents who involved them in third-party conflict. The variable “triangulated” takes a value of 1 (triangulated) if respondent’s choose (1) group leader, (2) politician, (3) Community leader, (4) Traditional ruler, and (5) oil company official. It takes a value of 0 (not triangulated) if respondents say no one. Table 1 presents results of the logistic regression on the causes of the Niger Delta conflict.

### *Survey Results*

In the first model, I included 9 variables: federalism, poverty/unemployment, racism, resource control disputes, economic exploitation, infrastructural deficits, arms proliferation, corruption, and greed, with pollution as the reference category. The results shows that those who entered the Amnesty program have significantly higher odds of identifying infrastructural deficits and greed as principal causes of the Niger Delta conflict, than the control group. Other variables including federalism, poverty/unemployment, racism, resource control disputes, corruption, economic exploitation, and arms proliferation exhibited weak association with the conflict. This result is surprising considering that much has been written about the possible impact that elements such as pollution, poverty, and resource control have on the conflict.

In the second model, I added another predictor variable “triangulation.” The results show that those who entered the Amnesty program have significantly higher odds of identifying infrastructural deficits, greed, and triangulation as the main causes of the Niger Delta conflict, than the control group. As with the first model, the results show no association between federalism, poverty/unemployment, racism, resource control disputes, economic exploitation, corruption, and arms proliferation and the Niger Delta conflict.

Table 1. Estimated Odds Ratios from Logistic Regression Analyses of Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict.

	Self-Reported Causes of the Niger Delta Conflict		
	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>
<i>Causes of Conflict</i>			
Pollution	Ref	Ref	Ref
Federalism	2.236	2.297	4.126*
Poverty	.639	.628	.597
Racism	1.531	1.413	2.608
Resource Control	1.103	1.163	1.775
Economic Exploitation	1.625	1.695	1.126
Infrastructural Deficits	5.775**	5.611**	3.026
Arms Proliferation	2.187	2.421	1.443
Corruption	2.333	2.329	5.543*
Greed	9.917**	0.734**	16.550**
Triangulation		2.135*	2.750*
<i>Demographics</i>			
Age 18-24			Ref
Age 25-34			2.005
Age 35-44			3.220
Age 45-54			4.306
Ijaw			.919
Married			.869
Delta			Ref
Bayelsa			2.947*
Rivers			2.521*
Employed			.322*
No Income			Ref
Less than 50,000			.228**
50,000 – 99,999			.182*
100,000 – 149,999			.323
Above 150,000			.349
Exposure			2.401
Violence			.022**
<i>N</i>	346	346	346
-2 Log Likelihood	407.615	403.306	256.268
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	.156	.171	.588

\* $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.01$ 

In the third model, I repeated the analysis with added controls for demographic variables (age, ethnicity, marital status, state of residence, employment status in the year before they

entered the conflict, income in the year before they entered the conflict), extent of community exposure to pollution (a non-programmatic variable) and self-reported predisposition to violence (a programmatic variable). The results are similar except that while federalism has become a significant predictor of the conflict, infrastructural deficits no longer is. The results show that respondents who entered the Amnesty program have significantly higher odds of identifying federalism, corruption, greed, and triangulation as principal causes of the Niger Delta conflict, than combatants who remained outside of the program, controlling for all other variables. Overall, it is clear that the third model is the best predictor of the causes of the conflict with a Nagelkerke  $R^2$  of .588, which explains about 58.8% of the variance on the causes of the conflict. Similarly, with a -2LL of 256.268, the model has the best fit of the three models, although it is not a perfect model.

### *In-Depth Interview Results*

In this phase of the research, I combined the in-depth interview data with the secondary data. There were a total of 20 interviews. Using the Grounded Theory Methodology, I sought to build a conceptual model of the causes of the conflict, from the concepts and indicators that emerged from the data using the variable-concept-indicator model recommended by LaRossa (2005). The process began with open coding where I attempted to break down the data into separate units of meaning (Goulding 1999). I scrutinized my interview transcripts very closely by reading them line-by-line and word for word. I did this in order to “produce concepts that fit the data” (Strauss 1987). As I read the transcripts, I made notations on the margins about ideas which were resonating from the transcripts. I read each line as fragments or patches, isolating and taking words out of their contexts while at the same time looking for relations between them. As I painstakingly scrutinized the data, I conjured up ideas and theories from the literature that

evoked or conveyed similar meanings and which, perhaps, offered some more elaborate explanations for the behavior, events, or activities being described. I noted the emerging ideas and references in analytic memos that I developed to contextualize my data. I used the memos both to compartmentalize and expand my thoughts, and to build bridges across strands of thoughts emerging from the data.

The memos also helped me ask generative questions that helped to place events in proper context. For example, when a respondent said “some powerful people in the area who were trying to determine superiority over the other sparked off the orgy of bloodletting that later enveloped the Warri axis of Delta state.” I put this down in my memo with a question mark. What does it mean for powerful people to spark off violence? What does it involve to fight for superiority? How do you determine superiority? When another respondent observed that “a major cause of the problem is the officials of government, big time politicians, traditional rulers, and retired military officers ... who provided the weapons to jobless youths now parading themselves as militants to steal electoral victories and oil,” I began to connect the dots. Struggle for superiority could be political struggle to occupy public office. It could be struggle for positioning in the lucrative oil bunkering trade. What became clear at this point was that there were multiple parties to the conflict and Niger Delta militants appeared to be pawns in some high-level political and economic wrangling for power, prestige, and wealth. Thus, I created multiple concepts including “third-partyism,” “pawns,” “master-servant syndrome,” “power play,” “divide-to-conquer,” etc. before settling for “triangulation.”

With persistent interrogation of the data as well as constant comparison of the ideas that were emerging from the data, I developed many more concepts that alluded to the causes of the Niger Delta conflict including “resource deprivation,” “economic exploitation,” “illiteracy,”

“arms proliferation,” “greed,” “infrastructural deficits,” “corruption,” “pollution,” “resource control,” “racism,” “federalism,” “poverty,” “unemployment,” and “cultism.” I continued to interrogate my data for possible convergences, divergences, and uniqueness, until subsequent new indicators failed to generate new concepts. All of these concepts yielded multiple indicators. Figure 39 illustrates how the concept of triangulation was developed from multiple indicators in the data. Although only six indicators are highlighted, there were many indicators for the concept. This process was also used to develop the other concepts that pertain to the causes of the conflict.

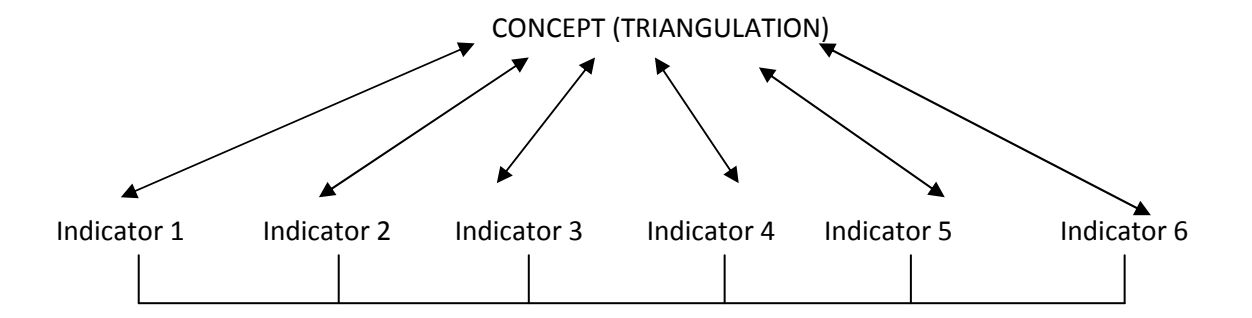


Figure 39: Concept-Indicator Model for Triangulation

*Note:* Lines among indicators show how the constant comparison of indicators generates concepts. (This figure builds on LaRossa’s, 2005 revision of Glasser’s, 1978, and Strauss’s, 1987 depiction of the concept-indicator model.)

<sup>1</sup>“The political gladiators in the country with different aims and objectives coerced jobless youths into the conflict by opiumizing them.”<sup>2</sup> “These are youths that were recruited for political thuggery and armed by politicians.”<sup>3</sup> “Most of the so-called militant generals are glorified errand boys to powerful people in Nigeria, who use them to steal crude oil.”<sup>4</sup> “With the arming of some of them by retired military rulers who know the sweetness of oil, they went into bunkering.”<sup>5</sup> “It is either the government and oil companies ignore the complaint or they sponsor people to fight against each other so that they can lift crude unchallenged.”<sup>6</sup> “They are capitalist imperialists and are part of the violence. They fund the violence because they buy stolen crude, which they pay for with cash or weapons.”

The next phase of coding was axial coding. According to LaRossa (2005), the purpose of axial coding is to examine the relationships among variables. To develop variables, I abstracted the concepts by asking questions such as, what is the extent of triangulation? How pervasive is the problem of triangulation? What are the types of triangulation? I asked these questions of all the concepts that had emerged from the data. In axial coding, the researcher codes intensively

around single variables and their relationship to other variables. In this case, I was primarily interested in the relationship amongst variables at the level of their properties and dimensions (Hinojosa et al 2008) including their convergences and divergences. Through the aligning of variables and their properties, patterns emerged that ultimately led me to identify a focal variable for analysis. For example, in comparing concepts and their properties, I started to think in terms of types, levels, extent, and degrees as a way to develop hypothesis or propositions about the causes of the conflict. I sought not only to establish relationship between all the variables, but also to clearly delineate their properties and dimensions in order to properly determine their fit. For example, what might be the relationship between triangulation and greed or between triangulation and corruption? How are these related to Nigeria's federal structure or to concerns and agitation about resource control? Further, what forces are at play when otherwise peaceful but poor or unemployed young people are encouraged to take up arms against some social elements or forces to satisfy the desires of a few powerful people?

In order to code for process I complicated my analysis by introducing the element of time. Just like the question is asked, the chicken and the egg, which comes first, so also I asked which of these variables, come first? Which of the variables acted as catalyst to the others? And which of these variables had more immediate effect on the conflict? In other words, were there immediate and remote causes for the violence and which variable was a remote cause and which was an immediate or more immediate cause? In order to answer these questions, I worked back and forth between open and axial coding. I also made extensive use of my analytic memos, which are records of my theoretical assumptions based on conceptualizations from my data. These helped to guide me throughout the analytic process.

It soon became clear that triangulation appeared to be the most immediate cause of the conflict. For example, one respondent observed that “the arms dimension to the Niger Delta struggle started when the youths that where armed by politicians for political purposes took advantage of the arms in their possession to engage the oil companies for the purpose of a better deal.” In this sense, armed agitation did not appear to be a conscious strategy to protest perceived injustice; rather, the aggressive energy of youth coupled with rising levels of unemployment, poverty, and corruption lent itself to the manipulative scheming of more powerful social, political, and economic forces. In other words, although there were many forces responsible for the violence, it was the immediate and deliberate act of certain important stakeholders to equip youths for sundry nefarious purposes that transformed socio-economic and political grievances into violent insurgency. Figure 40 diagrams the process of axial coding showing that in order to create a variable, there must be at least two concepts. Although the diagram depicts only two indicators per concept, there were many indicators per concept.

#### (TYPES OF TRIANGULATION)

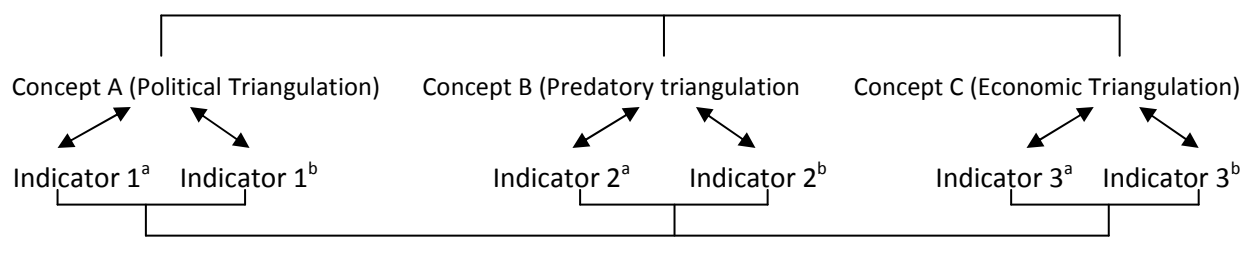


Figure 40: Variable-Concept Indicator Model

1<sup>a</sup> “These two groups where loyal to the former River state Governor, Dr. Peter Odili who was their sponsor. He used them to dominate the political scene during and after the 1999 General elections until they fell apart.” 1<sup>b</sup> “After Asari publicly criticized the election process as fraudulent, the Odili government withdrew its financial support from the NDPVF and began to support Tom’s NDV, effectively launching a paramilitary campaign against the NDPVF.” 2<sup>a</sup> “Some business men who thrive on illegal bunkering activities were also part of the sponsors.” 2<sup>b</sup> “Some politicians armed them and generals used them to steal crude.” 3<sup>a</sup> “Most of the so-called militant generals are glorified errand boys to powerful economic interests who use them to monopolize violence and control the trade in illegal oil.” 3<sup>b</sup> “They are capitalist imperialists and are part of the violence. They fund the violence because they buy stolen crude, which they pay for with cash or weapons.”

Finally, I concluded the process using selective coding. At this stage, I transformed types of triangulation from a focal variable (which tentatively hypothesized relationships between triangulation and other important variables) to the core variable, which is “the central phenomenon around which all other categories [variables] are related” (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 146). I selected types of triangulation from among the theoretically saturated variables as the linchpin for my overall narrative about the causes of the Niger Delta conflict. Compared to the other variables, it is the variable with the most analytic power and that more effectively and efficiently explains how and why the armed dimension of the conflict started in the first place. As LaRossa (2005: 850) has suggested for core variables, the story of triangulation is clear, understandable, reasonably accurate, and compelling. By focusing on the activities of individuals and groups otherwise obscure in the conflict dynamics, a theory of triangulation directs attention away from those combatants one respondent describes as “glorified errand boys” and another calls “pawns” and unto the masters, the real purveyors of violence who are often shielded in government houses where the appurtenances of power acts as subterfuges that both prevents their exposure and enables them to continue to manipulate violence for their own material gain. Triangulation is able to do this because it harmonizes all of the other competing explanations for the violence, without diminishing them. In essence, all of the other variables are related to triangulation, and this ultimately becomes the basis of my grounded theory. Apart from being theoretically saturated, triangulation, more than any other theory about the cause of the conflict, is centrally relevant to my research and has the most “clear and grabbing implication for formal theory” (LaRossa 2005:852).

#### *Combining Survey and In-Depth Interview Results*

This section describes the findings that converge, diverge and are unique across both



methods about the causes of the Niger Delta conflict. There were a total of 12 findings across both methods, 11 of these findings converged, but differed in terms of the strength or level (degree) of intensity of the finding. Also, one finding was unique to the in-depth interview method.

### *Convergence*

The findings converged in terms of identifying 11 possible causes of the conflict. Both the survey and the in-depth interviews produced responses associating pollution, resource control, poverty and unemployment, infrastructural deficits, racism, economic exploitation, federalism, corruption, greed, and triangulation with the conflict. Both methods also converged in terms of the association between racism and the conflict, which was considered very weak. While the association between poverty/unemployment, racism, resource control, economic exploitation, infrastructural deficits, and arms proliferation was weak in the surveys, they were strong in the in-depth interviews. As a result, I label these as diverging by degrees.

### *Divergence*

There were no clear divergences between both methods except in terms of the strength of the association between several of the variables and the conflict. While the survey showed no association between poverty, unemployment, racism, resource control, economic exploitation, infrastructural deficits, and arms proliferation and the conflict, the in-depth interviews indicated some (even though weak) association between these variables and the conflict. As a result of this, I label both methods as diverging in terms of degrees in relation to these variables.

### *Uniqueness*

There were three findings unique to the in-depth interviews. First was the association between marginalization and the conflict. Although survey respondents did not see this as a

factor in the conflict, in-depth interview respondents indicated a strong relationship between this variable and the conflict. For example, one respondent observed that:

There are 15 obnoxious laws against the Niger Delta. 15 that we know. The Land Use Decree, the Petroleum Act of 1959 amended in 1999, the Exclusive Export Zone Decree, the Native Ordinances. 15 of them including the Osborne Land law. All of these laws are militating against the development of the Niger Delta. These laws have enslaved the Niger Delta and enslaved the Niger Deltans. The first step is the abrogation of all of these laws so that the Niger Delta people can have increased participation and authority over what rightfully belongs to them.

Suffice to say that in the in-depth interviews, there were numerous indicators for the concept - marginalization. Second was the association between resource deprivation and the conflict. Respondents repeatedly alluded to benefits of oil production accruing to people, businesses, or communities that had no owner status to oil. Those whose land harbored the resource were deprived of advantages that accrued from oil, while outsiders enjoyed all the benefits. The relationship between resource deprivation and the conflict was so strong that I was tempted to make it the core causal variable for the conflict and the linchpin for my analysis. Third, respondents repeatedly blamed cultism or membership of secret cults for the conflict. One respondent observed that:

There is a relationship between cultism and militancy. All of the known militants are cultists. These cultists were empowered by government officials. The Vikings is fashioned out from the cults of the Niger Delta. That is why you see they wear red when they are going out for deadly action. Out of every ten able-bodied person of the Niger Delta, nine are Vikings. All elected officials in the Niger Delta are Vikings.

Within the last three decades, campus cults have proliferated tremendously such that there are cells of cults in local communities outside of campus environments. More importantly, the campus cults or as a respondent put it “neo-cults” exist side by side more traditional cults often competing for influence. In the last two decades, the number of cult-related killings has more than quadrupled, and in election circles, cults are the primary recruiting grounds for politicians desperate to secure political victories at any cost.

### 7.3 Research Question 2

In light of the above, my second research question asks, what are the programmatic and non-programmatic determinants of successful Amnesty or DDR program? The question aims to understand whether and how the Amnesty program facilitates the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants in the Niger Delta. I look for evidence that participation in the Amnesty program: 1) reduces the desire of ex-combatants to acquire more weapons to pursue their objectives, 2) destroys or disrupts the factional networks that link ex-combatants together, 3) improves income-earning opportunities available to ex-combatants, 4) facilitates reconciliation between ex-combatants and their communities, 5) generates increased confidence in the democratic process amongst ex-combatants, and 6) leads to peace in the long-term. I also look for evidence that non-program factors like sources of funds and weapons, community exposure to pollution, and participants comfort levels within their fighting units, also affect program outcomes. This research question, like the first, is inspired more by the theoretical implications of the theory of conflict transformation than by policy arguments about DDR outcomes. Lederach (1999) posits that conflict is ultimately transformed from a destructive form to a constructive one when all parties to a conflict address both the substantive and episodic dimensions of conflict. Thus, destroying the infrastructure of conflict and facilitating the full socio-economic and political reintegration of ex-combatants guarantees against a return to armed confrontation.

Also, consistent with the theory of greed or predation (Collier 2003), the persistence of violence in the Niger Delta should depend on the availability of opportunities for fighters to benefit from the conflict. Thus, ex-combatants who get their funds mainly from oil bunkering should be the least likely to reintegrate into the labor force where benefits are considerably lower

than benefits accruing from oil theft. Also consistent with the literature, the ease with which arms come into the country from abroad, should determine the outcome of the DDR process. Thus, ex-combatants who have access to foreign arms and ammunition should be the least likely to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate into society. Similarly, the extent of pollution and or damage to the ecology by oil production, should determine the performance of the Amnesty program. Thus, ex-combatants whose communities were greatly impacted by oil-induced pollution should be the least likely to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate into society. Finally, the outcomes of the Amnesty program might be affected by ex-combatants' comfort levels within their armed groups or units. Thus, ex-combatants who believed they were better off within their armed groups or units should be the least likely to reintegrate into the community.

### *Survey Results*

I used logistic regression to assess whether participation in the Amnesty program will produce more successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration outcomes for ex-combatants. The analyses controlled for demographic variables. In order to measure disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and overall success of the Amnesty Program, I developed eight measures to capture different dimensions of the program. My first measure DISARMED indicates whether ex-combatants are likely to acquire more weapons to pursue their objectives. The question asks "do you anticipate a future need to acquire more weapons to pursue your objectives?" The measure takes a value of 1 for respondents who believe they will acquire more weapons and 0 for those who do not believe they will acquire more weapons.

The second measure DEMOBILIZED indicates whether individuals maintain links with their former factions or whether they have broken their ties with their formal factions. The question asks "if you were to start a business today, who will you partner with?" The options

include “member of militant organization,” “family member,” “friend,” “neighbor,” and “no one/ do it on my own.” The measure DEMOBILIZED takes a value of 1 if individuals prefer to partner with a member of a militant organization and 0 if they prefer to partner with family, friends, neighbors, or no one but themselves.

The third measure EMPLOYED indicates whether ex-combatants had reintegrated economically by looking at their current employment status. The measure takes a value of 1 if the respondent indicates that s/he was employed full-time, part-time, or self-employed. The measure takes a value of 0 if they indicate that they were unemployed.

The fourth measure ACCEPTED captures the degree of respondent’s social reintegration. Specifically, it records respondents answer to the question “did you experience any difficulty gaining acceptance from your neighbors?” The measure takes a value of 1 indicating that respondents were socially reintegrated, if the respondent reports no problems gaining acceptance from their neighbors. The measure takes a value of 0 if respondents report “big problems” or “some problems.”

The fifth measure DEMOCRATIC captures the degree of political reintegration. The question asks “in your opinion, what is the most effective way to deal with oil-related community problems?” The options were “approaching government officials,” “approaching traditional rulers,” “approaching oil company officials,” “dialogue and negotiation,” peaceful protests,” “litigation,” “taking up arms to fight,” “destroying government property,” and “destroying oil infrastructure.” The measure takes a value of 0 if respondents believe that taking up arms to fight, destroying government, or destroying oil infrastructure is the most effective way to deal with oil-generated conflict. The measure takes a value of 1 for all other options.

The sixth measure VIOLENCE captures the likelihood that ex-combatants will use

violence in the future to redress perceived injustice. The measure takes a value of 1 if ex-combatants report that they are likely to use violence in the future and 0 if they indicate that they will not use violence. Since the Amnesty Program is designed to reduce the ex-combatants desire for violence, the measure “violence” is intended to capture how successful the program is at achieving this primary objective.

The seventh measure LONGTERM captures ex-combatants belief about the long-term success of the Amnesty Program. The measure takes a value of 1 if ex-combatants believe that the program will succeed in the long-term (5-10 years). The measure takes a value of 0 if ex-combatants report that the program will succeed only in the short-term (1-3 years) or if they believe that the program will fail.

The final programmatic measure BENEFIT indicates the likely beneficiaries of the Amnesty program. The question asks, “Overall, who would you say is likely to benefit most from the Amnesty program?” The measure takes a value of 1 if respondents say “oil producing communities” and 0 for all other options.

To measure the impact of non-program factors, I develop four distinct measures. To measure the source of funds, I ask respondents where they get most of their funding from. The options were international sources, politicians, oil bunkering, ransom payment, oil companies, government, and donations. The measure OILED takes a value of 1 if respondents say they get most of their funds from oil bunkering and 0 for all others. Summary statistics (see figure 22) shows that about 41% of respondents in the treatment category and 33% of respondents in the control category say they get their funds primarily from crude oil theft.

To measure source of weapons, I asked respondents where they get their weapons from. The options were seized from other groups, seized from government forces, purchased from the

army, international sources, and local arms dealers. The measure ARMED takes a value of 1 if respondents say they get their weapons from international sources and 0 for all others.

To measure the amount of damage to the ecology, I asked respondents “how much did your community experience the effects of oil-based pollution.” The options were very much, fairly much, not very much, and not at all. The variable EXTENSIVE takes a value of 1 if respondents say their communities very much or fairly much experienced the effects of oil-based pollution and 0 if they say their communities experienced the effects of oil-based pollution not very much or not at all.

To measure the comfort level that ex-combatants enjoyed within their fighting groups or units, I asked respondents “as a member of the group, did you feel better inside it than you would have been outside it?” The measures were better, same, and worse. The variable INGROUP takes a value of 1 if respondents say they felt better inside the group than outside of it. The variable takes a value of 0 if they report that they felt the same way or worse inside the group than outside of it.

The results presented in Table 2 are interesting. The table presents both programmatic and non-programmatic findings. In the first model, I included 5 variables: disarm, demobilize, accepted, employed, and democratic. These five variables measure the three different aspects of the Amnesty Program – disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Reintegration involves three related sets of outcomes: social reintegration (measured by the degree of acceptance that ex-combatants report they received from members of their communities), political reintegration (measured by ex-combatants self reports about strategies they might use to resolve oil-based grievances in the future), and economic reintegration (measured by ex-combatants self-reports about their reintegration into the workforce).

The results show that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program have significantly higher odds of being disarmed, demobilized, and socially and politically reintegrated. In terms of disarmament, ex-combatants had significantly lower odds of acquiring more weapons to pursue their objectives in the future than respondents in the control group, controlling for all other variables in the model. Similarly, ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty Program had significantly lower odds of maintaining links with other combatants or their armed groups than combatants who did not enter the Amnesty program controlling for all other variables in the model. Also, ex-combatants in the treatment category had significantly higher odds of being accepted back into their communities than combatants in the control category, controlling for all other variables in the model. Finally, ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program had significantly higher odds of resolving oil-based grievances and disagreements using democratic means as opposed to violence than combatants who did not enter the Amnesty Program, controlling for all other variables in the model. The results also show that ex-combatants had lower odds of being employed than combatants who did not enter the Amnesty program, controlling for all other variables in the model. However, this finding is non-significant, indicating a weak relationship between employment and reintegration success.

In the second model, I added two more variables to measure the overall outcome of the Amnesty Program. When VIOLENCE, LONGTERM and BENEFIT were added to the model, the results changed very little from model 1. The results indicate that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program still showed significantly higher odds of being disarmed, demobilized, and socially and politically reintegrated than combatants in the control group. Concerning economic reintegration, ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program showed non-significant lower odds of reintegrating into the workforce than combatants who did not enter the Amnesty



program. In terms of measuring the overall performance of the Amnesty program, ex-combatants showed significantly lower odds of the likelihood of using violence to redress grievances than respondents in the treatment category. Thus, ex-combatants in the treatment group compared to those in the control group are less likely to use violence to redress future disagreements, controlling for all other variables in the model. However, the results measuring the long-term impact of the Amnesty program was non-significant.

In the third model after adding variables to measure the non-program determinants (oiled, armed, extensive, and ingroup), the results changed significantly. Disarmed, demobilized, accepted, and democratic continued to be significant predictors of Amnesty success. The variable “employed” which had showed weak relationship to program success in the first two models became a significant predictor in model three. Thus, ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program had significantly lower odds of acquiring more weapons, of maintaining links with other combatants or armed groups, and being employed than respondents in the control group. Similarly, ex-combatants who entered in the Amnesty program had significantly higher odds of being reintegrated socially and politically than combatants who did not enter the Amnesty program, controlling for all other variables. As with the second model, respondents in the treatment category compared to respondents in the control category showed significantly lower odds of the likelihood to use violence to pursue their objectives, controlling for all other variables.

With regards to the non-programmatic factors, the results show that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program compared to those in the control group have significantly lower odds of obtaining the bulk of their funds from oil bunkering controlling for other variables in the model. This means that unlike combatants in the control group, ex-combatants in the treatment

group were more likely to get their funding from other sources.

Table 2. Estimated Odds Ratios from Logistic Regression Analyses of Programmatic and Non-programmatic Determinants of DDR Outcomes.

	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>
<b>Variables</b>			
Disarmed	.134 (.032 - .555)**	.196 (.043 - .902)*	.155 (.029 - .813)*
Demobilized	.269 (.096 - .755)*	.240 (.081 - .709) **	.201 (.061 - .656)**
Accepted	10.310(4.359–24.382)**	10.829 (4.500 – 26.063)**	12.432 (4.831 – 31.997)**
Employed	.420 (.139 -1.269)	.335 (.104 – 1.081)	.225 (.060 - .842)*
Democratic	137.166(25.226-745.837)**	76.277(10.983–529.754)**	105.273 (11.314 – 979.527)**
Violence		.241 (.069 - .843)*	.193 (.040 – .932)*
Long-term		.620 (.103 – 3.752)	.507 (.074 – 3.486)
Benefit		3.039 (.552 – 13.733)	2.283 (.374 – 13.934)
Oiled			.336 (.122 – .930)*
Armed			3.438 (1.351 – 8.750)**
Extensive			1.216 (.212 - 6.989)
Ingroup			.231 (.076 - .700)**
<i>Demographics</i>			
Age 18-24	Ref	Ref	Ref
Age 25-34	2.537 (.974 – 6.609)	2.781(1.022 – 7.568)*	3.391 (1.187 – 9.690)*
Age 35-44	8.008 (1.794 – 35.754)**	7.418 (1.580 – 34.834)**	10.778 (1.924 – 60.371)**
Age 45-54	2.256 (.208 – 24.437)	1.859 (.147 -23.445)	2.083 (1.135 – 32.021)
Education	2.245 (.999 – 5.046)*	2.049 (.886 – 4.742)	2.622 (1.029 – 6.680)*
Ijaw	1.066 (.383 – 2.970)	1.075 (.377 – 3.068)	1.316 (.418 – 4.147)
Married	.657 (.242 – 1.785)	.623 (.220 – 1.764)	.607 (.192 – 1.922)
Urban	1.062 (.490 – 2.300)	1.052 (.474 – 2.333)	1.333 (.562 – 3.165)
Delta	Ref	Ref	Ref
Bayelsa	5.194 (1.838 – 14.677)**	4.826 (1.677 – 13.893)**	4.926 (1.613 – 15.046)**
Rivers	7.747 (2.437 – 24.630)**	7.312 (2.256 – 23.695)**	8.780 (2.440 – 31.589)**
No Income	Ref	Ref	Ref
Less than 50,000	.156 (.061 - .398)**	.152 (.057 - .403)**	.149 (.052 - .432)**
50,000 – 99,999	.110 (.011 – 1.115)	.128 (.014 – 1.207)	.117 (.008 – 1.719)
100,000 – 149,999	.021 (.001 - .408)*	.026 (.001 - .546)*	.030 (.001 - .814)*
Above 150,000	.125 (.011 – 1.370)	.142 (.012 – 1.690)	.110 (.009 – 1.346)
<i>N</i>	346	346	346
-2 Log Likelihood	190.321	182.424	166.072
Nagelkerke R <sup>2</sup>	.725	.739	.769

\* $p < 0.05$       \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The results also show that ex-combatants in the treatment group compared to those in the control group have significantly lower odds of believing that conditions within the group were better than conditions outside of the group, controlling for other variables in the model. This means that respondents in the control group were more likely to find conditions within their groups desirable and amenable to their interests than respondents in the treatment group.

Perhaps, this would explain why respondents in the control group were unwilling to enter the Amnesty program. Finally, respondents in the treatment group had significantly higher odds of obtaining their arms from international sources than respondents in the control group controlling for other variables in the model. Overall, the third model appears to be the best predictor of outcomes for this DDR outcome with a Nagelkerke  $R^2$  of .769, which means that the model explains about 76.9% of the variance on the outcome of this DDR program. Similarly, with a -2LL of 256.268, the model has the best fit of the three models, although it is not a perfect model.

### *In-Depth Interview Results*

My qualitative data analysis on the program and non-program determinants of Amnesty success follows the grounded theory methodology described in section 7.1.3. As I pointed in that section, GTM permits the continuous interrogation of data from the ground up, in order to generate theory. Theory evolves from the research process itself being a product of continuous intersections and interaction with data. Unlike quantitative methods where data collection and data analysis are treated often, as separate processes, where analysis does not proceed until data collection is complete, with GTM data collection and analysis proceeds simultaneously. The search for meaning begins with the very first interview conducted and continues on through the last, and involves the careful interrogation of data through a three-phase process of coding – open, axial, and selective coding (see LaRossa 2005).

I subjected my in-depth interview data to the three-phase coding procedure (LaRossa 2005). I specifically sought to assess the performance of the Amnesty program through its three-pronged intervention model: disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. My goal was to use the grounded theory method to build a conceptual model from the concepts and indicators

that emerged directly from the data. In the open coding phase, I identified and or created concepts and matched multiple indicators to these concepts. When concepts were developed, I kept matching and pairing indicators to concepts until I reached theoretical saturation. At that point, additional indicators did not create new concepts; neither did they add value to the concepts already developed.

The data yielded many concepts on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Beginning with disarmament, respondents discussed their fears, beliefs, and hopes about the disarmament program. One theme that continued to resonate was the idea that ex-combatants did not submit all of the weapons that they had. One respondent told me that “I can tell you with every sense of emphasis that only about 30% of weapons were returned.” This theme, the idea that ex-combatants who entered the DDR program returned only a fraction of their weapons, dominated the discussion on disarmament. Related to the issue of disarmament was the distinction respondents made about participants in the Amnesty Program. One reason they did not believe ex-combatants returned all of their weapons was because the majority of people who registered as ex-combatants and entered the Amnesty program did not take part in the actual fighting. According to one respondent “the so-called militants that are participating in the program, these are not militants. I can tell you that 90% of them are unemployed people who have no means of livelihood. The real militants are not participating in the program” Some respondents were more nuanced in their discussion of participation in the program. According to one respondent:

There are two groups of agitators in the Niger Delta - the freedom fighters and the criminal elements. The freedom fighters are the genuine militants. They are the ones that have refused to participate in the Amnesty program. They have all their weapons intact. The fake militants are the ones you see parading the streets, chasing girls, and spending money like there is no tomorrow. They are the ones participating in the Amnesty program. They did not submit any weapons because they have no weapons to submit.

From these discussions, I identified several concepts including “hidden arms,” “armed” and “disarmed.” In terms of the relationship between disarmament and participation, I identified “fake militants” and “genuine militants” as the most resonant concepts with multiple indicators in the data. These concepts were abstracted into variables when I began to inquire into their properties. For example, with disarmed, I asked are there levels to the submission of arms? What percentage of weapons return would be considered ideal by managers of the program? In that context, I created the variable “extent of disarmament” to explain the interaction between participation and return of weapons. Thus, if the Amnesty program is populated by “fake militants,” what are the possibilities that they returned weapons to the Amnesty Committee? And if they returned weapons, where did they get the weapons from? I also created another variable “types of militants” to explain participation and non-participation in the program. Because of its implication for the entire disarmament process, I make types of militants the focal variable.

Because of its properties and dimensions, I chose types of militants as the core variable. This variable has the most analytical power than levels of disarmament. Apart from giving us an idea about the individuals who entered the Amnesty program especially their motivations, it also speaks to the return of arms and ammunition, which is central to the Amnesty process. From the data, nearly all respondents observed different types of militancy. While some used the words “fake” and “genuine” others spoke about “struggle militants,” “freedom fighters,” and “criminal militants.” They also alluded to the fact that the arms submission exercise was a farce. It was a farce from the beginning when illegitimate “ex-combatants” with no troop, brigade, or unit were enlisted into the program by “top political sponsors” and “godfathers.” To conclude, the in-depth interview data indicated that the disarmament process was a complete failure because of the deliberate insertion of non-combatants into the program. This action not only alienated genuine

militants, it also compromised observed outcomes of program benefits. This would explain why only 4009 weapons were retrieved from the 20,192 former combatants participating in the program.

Next, I examine the process of demobilization. There were considerable disagreements by respondents about the outcome of the demobilization process. From early on, three themes dominated the debate about demobilization. The first theme involved the idea that militants participating in the Amnesty program had lost the bond that held them together. The dominant concept developed to capture this was “demobilized.” I abstracted this concept into a variable by examining the “extent of demobilization,” which was a continuum from low intensity to mid intensity, and then to high intensity. Low intensity demobilization occurs in those instances where participants in the DDR program still maintained strong linkages to their command structures even though they were committed to the Amnesty program. According to one respondent “how do you expect people to just wake up and tell their brothers bye bye because they are participating in Amnesty? How is that possible? These people have been together for many years through thick and thin. How do you expect them to just walk away?” Thus, low intensity demobilization involves the enlistment of ex-combatants into the Amnesty program without delinking them from their command and control structures. In fact, as one respondent put it “even the Amnesty officials are using the structures of the militant groups through the commanders to gain control of the boys. That is why they pay the boys their allowances through their commanders.”

Mid-intensity demobilization involved the dismantling of erstwhile militant groups although the ex-combatant remained firmly imbedded in a network of former combatants. In that situation, a body of ex-combatants exists as primary support networks for ex-combatants. In

terms of high intensity demobilization, ex-combatants are completely delinked from their armed units and command structures. They are also alienated from their former colleagues. In this instance, ex-combatants are completely demobilized and ready to forge new interactions with non-combatant members of their communities. As one respondent puts it “there are some former militants who are completely fed up with militancy. They do not want to belong anymore. They see the Amnesty program as God-sent. They were tired of living like animals in the swamps.” It would appear that for this group of participants, conditions outside of their armed factions were far better than conditions inside.

A second major theme involves the idea that the Amnesty program was not designed to dismantle existing militant structures but to reform or change them to become amenable to existing social institutions. According to one respondent “who is talking about dismantling militant groups? Nobody is talking about that. What they want is for these groups to keep low profile, not dismantle them. If they dismantle them, how will they hope to win elections tomorrow?” Thus, the Amnesty program is seen as efforts by powerful patrons to chastise errant surrogates in order to realign them to their structures of control and domination. Seen from this perspective, the demobilization process is a success since it had whittled down the excessively restless energy of Niger Delta youth who by their increasing participation in illegal oil bunkering were beginning to defy the authority of these power mongers. On the other hand, it is a failure since the goal of demobilization is to destroy existing bonds among militants and between militants and the command and control structures of the group.

The third major theme sees the demobilization process as a complete failure. It is a failure because it failed to incorporate the more important segment of the active militant population into the Amnesty program. According to one respondent “there is nothing like demobilization going

on. What is your formula for demobilizing youths whose only credentials for enrollment into the program is that they are hungry and are from the region?” Implied here is the idea that participants in the program were not militant properly so called. If they were not militant and never belonged to militant groups, how do we discuss demobilization? The idea of the “demobilization of non-militants” is a theme that continually ran through the data. It was also the dominant topic on disarmament. This topic would also reemerge in discussions about reintegration. It is clear, that it is one of the strongest themes that emerged from the data and will play a more central role in my overall analysis.

Discussions on reintegration produced several important but divergent findings. First, one group of respondents believed that ex-combatants participating in the Amnesty program were completely reintegrated. The idea of reintegration assumed here is social and political reintegration. In terms of social reintegration, ex-combatants in the program were seen as representatives of the communities from which they were drawn. Because the majority of participants were never involved in the conflict in the first place, there was no reason to talk about reintegration. As one respondent describes it:

Why are you asking about reintegration? What is reintegration? I have told you that these so called militants are nothing but hungry youths. The Amnesty program is a windfall. It is Jonathan's dividend of democracy to jobless Niger Delta youths. These youths have been removed from the street where they pose a threat to the asset of the rich. They are now on government payroll and those who put them there have become godfathers. They command the obedience of the youths.

On its face value, this would imply that the social reintegration aspect of the Amnesty program is a success. However, if we consider that some other respondents challenged the authenticity of these militants, then we might reconsider describing the program as a success. For example, asked whether the reintegration program is working, one female respondent opined:



No. Let me talk about social reintegration. The community is governed by rules. When those militants who have gone to collect money come back, we won't accept them. Not that it really matters. We can't force them out. But we will run away from them. They are not looking out for our wellbeing. They are not interested in the welfare of our children. We will not associate with them. We consider them as armed robbers, thieves, gang members, cultists. We know them by their father's name. We know people who are fighting for us.

Thus, we see that there are conflicting interpretations about the outcome of social reintegration.

What is not in doubt, however, is that the extent of reintegration appears to be directly proportional to the level of participation in militancy in the first place. About 90% of my respondents believed that the majority of participants in the Amnesty program were not directly involved in the fighting in the first place. Hence the question of reintegrating them into their communities, which they never left, should not arise.

In terms of political reintegration, the theme that resonated more with respondents is the relationship between program participants and politicians or political parties. One female respondent described program participants as “political thugs” who go around with politicians during elections, invoking fear and snatching ballots. According to her:

Listen, elections in this country are not free and fair. So, when you talk about political reintegration, nobody votes. They put who they want in office. It is not free and fair. It is these boys that they are rewarding under the pretense of Amnesty that they use to perpetrate their evil. So, if you are talking about reintegrating these boys politically, then yes. You reintegrate them into political thuggery.

Respondents were strikingly unanimous in their belief that program participants were protégés of politicians and political parties. One respondent used the concept “politician network” to describe militants. Because of their association with politicians and the political system, their absorption into the political mainstream appears relatively smooth. One respondent described the political influence that one repentant commander now wields:

He is one of the most powerful men in Nigeria today. Just the other day, he was angry with a minister who refused to give one of his boys a multibillion naira contract. He sent his boys to the minister's office to embarrass the minister. After insulting him, they threatened to lock him out of his office. The next day, a letter came from the presidency directing the minister to proceed to a less lucrative ministry while the nominee of the former warlord became the new minister.

Ex-combatants had become more politically powerful through their deployment of violence. As the data suggests, they were strongly integrated into a network of politicians, which not only guarantees income at certain periods such as during elections, but also facilitates the absorption of ex-combatants into the political system, where they act as “strongmen” and “legmen” for politicians who use them to achieve political ends. The Amnesty program is seen by some as attempts to retool the mutually beneficial relationship between politicians and ex-combatants.

In terms of economic reintegration, opinions of respondents were strongly uniform. What appears to be the consensus was that apart from the reinsertion benefits paid monthly to ex-combatants, there was no work to reintegrate ex-combatants into. There were multiple indicators for the concept of unemployment. It was also relatively easy to abstract the concept into a variable by thinking about the extent of unemployment. For example, I pondered the question, how pervasive is the problem of unemployment? Virtually all respondents viewed the unemployment situation in the Niger Delta as alarming. Although ex-combatants were being trained or retrained, the consensus was that such training would not amount to much unless something was done to create industries to absorb them. According to one respondent:

They say they are learning to become carpenters and brick layers. Tell me, when they come back to the community, there is no industry, nowhere to apply their trade. They won't even give them loans to establish a business. So, where are they going to work? Did you see any industry when coming to this community? Where are they going to apply their trade? To put what they have learnt into practice? What is economic reintegration in all these? Is this what they call economic reintegration? It doesn't make any sense.

In sum, there appears to be a great deal of skepticism about the reintegration of ex-combatants. In terms of social reintegration, respondents were conflicted about the effect of the Amnesty program on the social reintegration of ex-combatants. Respondents, who believed that most participants in the program were non-combatants, believed that participants were effectively reintegrated into their neighborhoods for the simple fact that they never left those

neighborhoods in the first place. They were thrust into the Amnesty program as a way to engage the idle energy of youths and redistribute oil wealth. Some other respondents believe that because participants were impostors, they would not reintegrate into the communities. It would appear, that reintegration was strongest in the political field. Because participants were firmly entrenched in political networks, it was easy for them to reenter the political system where they act as political thugs and strongmen to established politicians. Finally, there was a high degree of uniformity among respondents that the Amnesty program despite its vocational and skills training efforts, was a failure. Respondents cited the non-availability of industries to absorb the trained or retrained ex-combatants, as one reason for the failure.

In terms of the non-programmatic determinants, respondents diverged in important respects. When asked about the sources of funds for militants, respondents mentioned different funding sources including oil bunkering, kidnap for ransom, armed robbery/piracy, political patronages, and government. These concepts yielded multiple indicators. For example, one respondent (NP) observed that:

Illegal oil bunkering was the main source of fund to militant groups in the Niger Delta. Though some groups still got money surreptitiously from some state government who believe these armed youths can play a major role in election activities in the states, this was not as regular as the fund coming from illegal bunkering activities. That means that politicians were part of the sponsors and they play significant role. Some business men who thrive on illegal bunkering activities were also part of the sponsors. With a good knowledge of the oil industry, some militants were able to set up local and make shift refineries to refine petroleum products which they sell to the public in jerry cans. This illegal refining of product became a boom because the federal government was unable to accede to the public demand for petroleum products. At the height of the crises another dimension to money making was introduced that is hostage taking. Ransom paid by government or oil companies became a source of income.

As the above passage reveals, the sources of funds to militants were diverse and were directly and indirectly related to the political state. To transform the concepts (such as “oil bunkering,” “ransom payments,” “armed robbery/piracy,” “political funding,”) into variables, I thought in

terms of the pervasiveness of the use of these sources. From the interviews, it became clear that oil bunkering was fairly common practice among militants and possibly other members of Niger Delta communities. I began to ask questions to help me resolve the properties of oil bunkering. For example, what does it take to establish local refineries for the refinement of petroleum products? Who are the target buyers? Why was it difficult for government to shut down these refineries? Was this because of the connections between militants and politicians? However, there was no unanimity among respondents about the main sources of funds. While some blamed bunkering, many others fingered politicians as the chief sponsors of militancy. This would suggest that triangulation acts in different ways to impact the conflict. First, it provides direct benefits to politicians and other powerful stakeholders who use militants in their political and economic permutations. Second, it encouraged many jobless youths to go into militancy as they see it as their opportunity to obtain their share of the national cake. In fact, one respondent observed that:

With so much money given to the boys, different politicians and political parties succeeded in confusing the boys to even fight against each other. At a time, the boys felt that they can start making money on their own instead of waiting for instructions from the politicians, by holding the state and Nigeria to ransom. They felt it was time to get their share of the national cake. That is when the whole thing blew up. The politicians could no longer control the boys because they have so much arms in their armory. They went back to the creeks, which they know like the back of their hand, and unleashed terror.

While it is obvious that militants get their funding from multiple sources, respondents tended to suggest that oil bunkering and payments by politicians who steal money from government, were the most important funding sources for militants.

Respondents also tended to have different theories about where militants get their weapons from. However, the most common source adduced was international sources. In that

regard, some respondents established linkages between illegal oil bunkering and international arms purchase. According to one respondent:

It was not very difficult for the militants to source weapons from the international community especially the war torn Africa nations of Liberia, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Congo etc. The militants were also able to exchange crude oil sourced illegally for arms, these arms were brought by their foreign crude oil buyers. Also of importance is the collaboration of some military men both in the army and navy who also supply arms to these groups some of these arms were those they brought home from the peace keeping missions and those stolen from military armory in the country. The collaboration between some of these military boys and the militants was very thick because of their illegal bunkering links which also became a major source of the conflicts in the region.

Apart from oil for arms swaps, militants also got weapons from moles located within the armory of the Nigeria Armed Forces. In 2010 for example, about 8 senior military officers were indicted and convicted for their roles in weapons sales to armed groups.

The in-depth interview data also revealed that Niger Delta communities suffered extensively from the negative effects of pollution. In virtually every community where oil was mined, respondents observed the negative effects of oil production. One female respondent (AG) observed:

When you ask me that question, you take me back to the bad part of my life. You don't even want to know what my community has gone through. Let me tell you. From the time we started growing up as children and when I began to know the problem of this community, since then and up till now, it has been poverty, hunger, suffering. You know why? Like I told you before, the main problem was that we could not grow food crops to eat. So my family faced starvation, hunger. Because when they drill the oil, the land cannot grow food anymore. Then, most of my uncles went into fishing. But as they were fishing, the spill from the oil pipes, the whole place was messed up. We couldn't fish. Tell me, from hunger to starvation to sickness. It is not just that spills kill the fish, they cause so many sicknesses and diseases and there are no hospitals. People died from hunger and starvation, from no medical care. It was very bad. It is the same situation in all communities. Even worse in some places.

The effects of oil production are felt not only in terms of lost income but also in terms of lives lost due to sicknesses and diseases and starvation. In fact, on this account, there was uniformity of opinion by respondents. As one respondent puts it, "the whole of the Niger Delta smells of oil. It is so strong that when we go to bed at night, our dreams are dreams of oil. Oil as killer. Oil as

destroyer. It is a nightmare.” Another respondent suggested that no right thinking person will experience the quality of damage to the Niger Delta ecology and not carry guns to fight. He observed that even the most developed societies such as the USA, which was built on notions of justice, otherwise peaceful citizens will take to arms if they had to live with the conditions of the Niger Delta. Thus, for respondents, exposure to pollution is a major determinant of militancy. As such, the Amnesty program can only succeed if it addresses the issue of pollution squarely and urgently.

### *Combining Survey and In-Depth Interview Results*

In this section, I describe the results of the single studies in terms of how they converge and diverge, and their unique contributions to the study.

### *Convergence*

The findings converged in virtually all aspects of the program determinants. In terms of disarmament, the survey indicated that respondents who entered the Amnesty program were the least likely to acquire more weapons to pursue their objectives. This finding appears consistent with the interview results to the extent that majority of participants were non-combatant in the first place. Because they were non-combatant, they had no need to acquire weapons. This would suggest as did the survey results, that those who entered the Amnesty program were less likely than combatants who did not enter the program to acquire more weapons.

In terms of demobilization, the survey found that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program were less likely to maintain links with other combatants or their armed factions. The interview results generated several levels of demobilization ranging from low-intensity to high-intensity. While some respondents referenced low intensity, which implies that ex-combatants were still strongly imbedded into active command structures, others maintained that ex-combatants were highly demobilized, in which case, they were completely

alienated from former groups and colleagues. Also, interview respondents observed that because most of the program participants did not belong to any militant groups and as such did not participate in the conflict, they was no need to talk about demobilization. This supports survey results, which indicated a strong relationship between program participation and demobilization.

The survey indicated that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program were more likely to be reintegrated socially and politically than combatants who stayed outside of the program. These findings are consistent with the interview findings. Across board, interview participants believed that participants in the Amnesty program were strongly reintegrated into their communities. Similarly, interview respondents believe that those participating in the Amnesty program also had relatively strong levels of integration into the political system. Finally both survey and interview findings appear to converge in terms of economic reintegration. While the survey results indicated that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program were less likely to be reintegrated into the workforce than respondents in the control group, the interview results indicated that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program were very likely to be unemployed because of the non-availability of work opportunities in the Niger Delta.

### *Divergence*

Results of both single studies did not appear to diverge at all. However, survey results tended to produce snapshots of events, activities, or behavior, while interview results delved deeper into the reasons behind the activities, events, or behavior described. This was true in all themes examined. For example, from the survey results, we gather that ex-combatants in the treatment category compared to those in the control category were less likely to acquire more weapons to pursue their objectives because most of the people who entered the Amnesty program were not genuine militants and did not belong to any armed group. As such, they had no

weapons to return and were not expected to acquire weapons. In terms of demobilization, the findings of the in-depth interviews appeared to diverge in degrees from the findings of the survey. While the survey indicated a strong relationship between participation and demobilization, the interview results show disagreements in terms of the Amnesty effect on demobilization. Respondents indicated several levels of demobilization within a continuum, from low to high intensity. Those located at the lowest levels were more difficult to demobilize because they continued to be firmly entrenched within their armed units. In fact, a respondent observed that the Amnesty program was not designed to destroy existing armed factions but to align them to the goals of certain established structures. Finally, the survey results appear to diverge from the interview results regarding the effect of pollution. Whereas the survey results found no association between exposure to pollution and the Amnesty outcomes, the in-depth interview respondents drew strong association between both. Thus, people or communities who experienced the negative effects of pollution were more difficult to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate into society.

### *Uniqueness*

The in-depth interviews produced unique results. First, it unmasked the identities of participants in the Amnesty program. While the survey results suggested that participants were ex-combatants and tended to attribute outcomes to the program, the in-depth interviews revealed that most participants had no prior link to militancy. Second, while the surveys suggested that as a result of their participation in the program, respondents in the treatment category were more likely to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate into society, the interview respondents tended to agree but made the case that those who entered the program were more likely to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate not because of the program effects but because they were not



combatant in the first place. Their integration into the Amnesty program was intended to engage idle youths and to redistribute some of the oil wealth, which for the most part, was located in few hands. Unique to the survey was the finding that combatants in the treatment category were less likely than those in the control category to believe that conditions inside their group were better than conditions in the larger society.

#### **7.4 Research Question 3**

I measured overall outcome using three different measures: “violence,” “longterm,” and “benefit.” The variable “violence” measures the likelihood that ex-combatants will use violence in the future to pursue their objectives. The variable “longterm” measures whether ex-combatants believe that the Amnesty program will succeed in the long term, and the variable “benefit” captured ex-combatants belief about the potential beneficiaries of the Amnesty program.

##### *Survey Results*

While the survey analysis showed a strong bivariate relationship between participation in the Amnesty program and belief about the program’s long-term positive effect, the logistic regression, controlling for demographic factors, showed very weak relationship ( $p = .572$ ). Thus, off the three measures, only “violence” showed a strong association with the Amnesty program. This means that participation in the Amnesty program significantly reduces the likelihood that ex-combatants will use violence to pursue their objectives in the future. To that extent, the Amnesty program is a success.

##### *In-Depth Interview Results*

The results of the in-depth interviews are interesting. Respondents believed that the Amnesty program was a short-term success and long-term failure. They anchored the failure on

aberrations in implementation, which one respondent (NP) calls the “Nigerian factor.” The Nigerian factor refers to greed, corruption and cronyism rolled up in one. Another respondent CC observed that the list of militants had become bloated. According to him:

The majority of the names on that list are ghost names. Where did we get 26,000 militants from? I tell you, if there were 26,000 militants in the Niger Delta, Nigeria would long have seized to exist. They are adding more names every day. Each additional fictitious name, adds a minimum of 65,000 to the bank account of the managers of this scam.

Another respondent, Eti, referenced the fact that some ex-combatants such as Gen John Togo who initially accepted Amnesty, went back to fighting as evidence that the program was doomed to fail. She argued that the program appears successful now, only because, as is typical with new projects in Nigeria, funds are flowing into and out of it. As soon as the funds stop flowing, the fighting will resume.

### *Combining Survey and In-Depth Interview Results*

In this section, I describe the results of the single studies in terms of how they converge and diverge, and their unique contributions to the study.

#### *Convergence*

The findings converged in terms of the overall effect of the Amnesty program on the violence. Survey results showed strong relationship between participation and future use of violence. Similarly, interview participants believed that program participants were less likely than non-participants to invoke violence in the future. Similarly both survey and interview participants did not think that the program will be a long-term success, although the bivariate relationship showed a strong relationship between participation and belief that the program will succeed in the long-term. In terms of beneficiaries of the program, both single studies appeared to converge. The survey respondents did not see any association between participation and opinions about the potential benefits of the program. Interview respondents believed that the

program will benefit all of the important stakeholders in the Niger Delta except members of the community.

### *Divergence*

Results of both single studies did not appear to diverge. However, while survey results only indicated that there was no relationship between participation in the program and respondent's belief about who stood to benefit from the program, the interview results indicated very strongly that local communities will not benefit from the program. According to KC:

It is obvious who is benefitting from Amnesty. Very obvious. The government has increased oil production to 2.2 million barrels per day. And when you consider that world oil price have skyrocketed you will know how much the government is making. And all this money will vanish into thin air because of corruption. The oil companies too, are posting fantastic profits. It is unbelievable. But look at those communities, did you see any changes? Big no.

This means that while oil companies and the government have made gains from the program, the condition of the communities have remained essentially the same. Respondents were almost unanimous in their belief that oil producing communities would be left out of the “gravy train” especially since it was not in the interest of the forces responsible for the conflict to share their loot with the public. This explains why the roads, schools, health centers, and public infrastructure remain in deplorable conditions. It also explains the shockingly high levels of poverty and illiteracy among the people since the only means by which the powerful attain and maintain power is to keep the mass poor, illiterate, and disorganized. Thus, unemployment, pollution, corruption, anger, and disenchantment remain at dangerously high levels.

### *Uniqueness*

Although there were no unique findings from either single method, the in-depth interviews generated responses that enabled me determine the long-term effect of the Amnesty program on the conflict as well as determine the potential beneficiaries of the program. Because

it would have been difficult to reach a conclusion on these issues without the interview results, I consider these findings unique. For example, a significant majority of interview respondents (about 80%) believed that the Amnesty program would succeed only in the short-term to address the violence. One respondent argued that the Amnesty program was established specifically to achieve only short-term success, and to that extent was successful. According to him

The way I understand Amnesty is that it is a temporary measure to encourage the militants to drop their arms. This would enable the government to address some of the grievances. If you look at the Amnesty program very well, you will see that it succeeded in doing this. But I think that using the program to solve all of the problems, is wrong. It should not happen. If they are thinking that the Amnesty itself will finally solve all the problems, then, they are joking. It will fail woefully.

Similarly, respondents believed that the only party unlikely to benefit from the Amnesty program is the community. While corrupt officials of the state (including officials of the Amnesty program), politicians, traditional rulers, community leaders, oil companies, and militants make money from increased oil production, local communities and ordinary people continue to suffer from pollution, infrastructural failure, political marginalization, and economic strangulation. None of these issues, which both the surveys and interviews indicated as causes of the conflict, appear to have been addressed.

## **Chapter 8:**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

#### **8.0 Introduction**

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR Program in order to determine whether or how well it contributes to establishing long-lasting peace in the Niger Delta. My interest in the Niger Delta peace process stems both from the observed negative effects of prolonged violence on Niger Delta communities and earlier interest by researchers in the program and non-program effects of DDR on protracted conflicts. For example, Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) focused on the individual level determinants of demobilization and reintegration in Sierra Leone, showing that wealth, education, age, gender, and ideology were significant determinants of successful demobilization and reintegration. Similarly, Pugel (2007) assessed the impact of DDR on post-conflict reintegration and demobilization in Liberia. The study found significant empirical evidence to support the conclusion that former combatants who entered the Liberian DDR program and completed a course of reintegration training, reintegrated more successfully than former combatants who chose not to enter the program but reintegrated on their own.

Although these studies yielded useful results, they both focused on two categories of demobilized and reintegrated ex-combatants. To date, no study has compared DDR outcomes for disarmed and demobilized ex-combatants who entered DDR and still active combatants who are unwilling to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate into civilian society. A comparison of non-active and active combatants, I believe, yields the greatest predictive power of DDR effectiveness than a comparison of two groups of non-active ex-combatants. Moreover, these studies focused only on demobilization and reintegration. DDR as conceptualized by the UN (2000) and

acknowledged by scholars including Humphreys and Weinstein (2007) and Pugel (2007) involves three related activities including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Understanding DDR outcomes can only be complete if all aspects are examined. My focus on the three aspects of DDR is meant to address this shortcoming.

More importantly, most studies on DDR (see Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Pugel 2007; Muggah 2009) rely solely on quantitative methods, which are limited in terms of their explanatory potential. Over the last four decades, qualitative methods have garnered greater acceptance among researchers motivated by the need to deepen understanding of social phenomena and to penetrate areas where quantitative methods alone could not. This development has further encouraged the use of diverse methodological strategies in the social and behavioral sciences, which until recently, was popular only in applied fields including evaluation (Greene and Caracelli 1997; Greene 2007) health sciences (O’Cathian 2009), education (Sammons and Gu 2008) and educational psychology (Betzner 2008). Today, the deliberate use of mixed methods has coalesced into a substantive field. Thus, studies of the program and non-program effects of DDR on conflict and post-conflict societies, I believe, are greatly enhanced by the use of mixed methods.

For this study, my quantitative sample was composed of 346 adults from the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. All of my respondents self-identified either as former combatants or as currently active combatants. The sample of ex-combatants consisted of 201 adult males and 23 adult females, out of which 86 were married, 75 had children younger than age 17, and 166 were Ijaws. The sample of still active combatants consisted of 102 males and 23 females, out of which 35 were married, 35 had children younger than age 17, and 92 were Ijaws. My 10 in-depth interviews had 6 adult males and 4 adult females. These respondents were selected purposively

because of their knowledge about the central issues of this research. I also analyzed secondary interview data involving 10 individuals who were personally involved in either the conflict or the management of the conflict.

In the following sections, I will restate the three research questions that I developed for this study, which results were presented in chapters 6 and 7. After restating the questions, I will briefly answer them and discuss them in relation to the theory of conflict transformation, which undergirds this work. My conclusions and recommendations will complete this section.

### **8.1 Research Question 1: What are the causes of the Niger Delta Conflict?**

Questionnaire survey analysis revealed an interesting set of results. Controlling for key program and non-program factors, logistic regression results indicate that poverty, unemployment, racism, resource control disputes, economic exploitation, and arms proliferation, (all indicated in the literature to have strong relationships to the conflict), were not significantly associated with the conflict. Instead, greed ( $p = .002$ ), corruption ( $p = .013$ ) and triangulation ( $p = .048$ ) were significantly associated with the conflict.

In-depth interview analysis supports the results of the questionnaire surveys, although almost all participants evinced relationships between many different factors. However, using GTM, I find that triangulation had the highest number of indicators among all the factors identified. I also find that triangulation told the most compelling story about the origin of the Niger Delta armed conflict, although greed, corruption, cultism, pollution, resource control and resource deprivation also yielded multiple indicators. Combining both methods using the dialectic mixed method approach I find that triangulation is the dominant causative factor for the conflict. It also has the most unifying power among the other factors including corruption, federalism, and greed, which logistic regression indicated were significant predictors of the

violence.

### *Discussion of question 1 Results*

Theoretically and conceptually, “triangulation occurs when two people in a family bring in a third party to dissolve stress, anxiety or tension that exists between them” (Charles 2001:281). This idea of triangulation originates from family studies, specifically from the investigation of marital conflict between parents. One particular form of triangulation in families involves parent-initiated triangulation of offspring into parents’ marital conflict. Indicators of children’s triangulation into parents’ marital conflict include parents’ attempts to form an alliance with the child against the other parent and the child becoming the focus of parents’ attention in order to avoid addressing their own problems (Buehler and Welsh 2009; Bell, Bell, and Nakata 2004).

The triangulation of children into parents marital disputes have been shown to produce negative effects on children. Amato and Afifi (2006) and Jacovitz et al argue that triangulation violates established boundaries because it places youth in confusing and distressful situations as they negotiate between parents at the same time that they manage conflicting loyalties. Bradford et al (2004) and Miller, Anderson, and Keala (2004) argue that over time, youths involvement in their parents’ marital conflict places them at risk for psychological distress especially anxiety, depressive symptoms, and withdrawal tendencies. Buehler and Welsh (2009) argue that not only are triangulated youths at risk for “internalizing problems” (or psychological distress) but also for “externalizing problems” such as lying, cheating, and disobedience at school.

I apply the principle ideas of parent-initiated marital conflict to the environment of resource conflict. As the results of this study shows, Niger Delta militants are victims of the schisms between powerful political and economic interests in Nigeria. Militancy results from the



manipulative scheming of acrimonious and feuding stakeholders who successfully project their high-level political and resource disputes on hapless youths who are encouraged and mobilized to take ownership of these disagreements. Through monetary inducements, promises of higher social placements, and percentage cuts from illegal oil deals, otherwise peaceful youths are inserted into armed gangs, through which they engage the state in violent hostilities.

Thus, when hapless, indigent, but youthfully aggressive peasants are triangulated into resource appropriation disputes involving powerful and influential people, they unknowingly become "caught in the middle" or "trapped in the center" where they are increasingly torn between divided loyalties to the state, traditional institutions, community leadership, politicians, and oil conglomerates. I envisage triangulation as a system process in which the peasant becomes involved in stakeholders' conflictual interactions by taking sides, distracting stakeholders, and perpetrating acts of violence that potentially escalates the conflict between stakeholders and contributes significantly to general insecurity among the population. Evidence from this study shows a very strong bivariate relationship between triangulated youths and internalizing problems such as anxiety, anger, and sadness. At least 60% of triangulated respondents in the control group compared to 25% of respondents in the treatment group, say they experienced anxiety on account of their involvement in conflict that did not directly concern them. Perhaps, this is one reason they find it difficult to enter the Amnesty program.

As a result of triangulation, at risk youths develop what Davies and Cummings (1994) call "emotional reactivity," which results from increasing psychological distress due to the strains and stresses of triangulation. In this sense, emotional reactivity to resource conflict produces acute emotional disconnect from traditional social values at the same time that it produces intense sensitivity to personal needs including the need for profit and self preservation.

Put differently, triangulation subdues youth's affectivity or sensitivity to communal needs including the need for group progress and survival at the same time that it increases the desire to profit out of conflict. Eventually, the profit nexus dissipates all forms of personal resistance to collective marginalization and erodes the identity of collective deprivation, which deeply etches conceptions that Niger Deltans have of the self. When this happens, a certain fatalism develops that diminishes all previous conceptions of the self at the same time that it gives birth to a new form of being – militancy.

It would appear, however, that not all youths are affected in the same way or to the same extent by triangulation. Youths more at risk to manifest the negative effects of triangulation are those youths who lack effective social anchors capable of deflecting all or some of the harmful effects of triangulation. These would include youths who have no parents, youths who have extremely poor parents on account of which parents lose controlling power over their kids, and illiterate youths desperate for some type of economic opportunity. Evidence from this study suggests that about 42% of respondents in the treatment group and 31% of respondents in the control group were starkly illiterate. Another 29% of respondents in the treatment group and 41% of respondents in the control group were only marginally literate. I expect for these groups are at greater risk for triangulation.

All of this suggests that triangulation places peasant youths at risk for adjustment problems particularly internalizing problems such as anxiety, depression, and anger and externalizing behavior such as school dropout, criminal violence including armed robbery, rape, kidnapping, illegal oil bunkering, and arson, and resistance violence including armed insurgency. For example, when ER described combatants in the treatment category as “hooligans, nincompoops, and vagabonds,” he was reacting unconsciously to the negative effects of

triangulation. According to him:

The sad news is that those who fuel the violence are the same people publicly clamoring for peace. They are like rats with long mouths. They bite you, and blow cool air on the injury so that you will not feel the pain. And then, they bite you again. The militants are completely at the mercy of this powerful people who play them like koso and smile to the banks whenever there is an attack.

This implies that the crucial issues concerning the insurgency have not been addressed. Central to the plan to grant Amnesty to insurgents is the idea that these combatants were personally flawed. Insurgents were criminals who had violated the law and needed to be pardoned, retrained, and socially, politically and economically assisted to become useful members of their communities again. In this sense, individual members of insurgent groups were the problem. If society could modify the behavior of these individuals by teaching civil skills and reorienting them to societal values, they would miraculously turn around. This blame-the-victim approach does nothing to unravel the real causes of the problem. Because the real causes of the conflict, which in this case, are greed, corruption, problems with Nigeria's federal structure, and triangulation, are unaddressed, the conflict will remain protracted even where there appears to be a lull in its episodic manifestations.

Lederach (2003) argues this point well when he observed that responding to the episodic nature of conflict does very little to untangle deep seething animosities that makes conflicts protracted. For him, central to unraveling the grievances behind armed conflict is the intersection of the past and present. In the Niger Delta, past exploitative and unjust relations including greed and corruption-fueled triangulation provided the veneer for insurgency. Therefore, the present lull in fighting (due to the Amnesty program) should provide the platform to recognize and deal with the set of factors that individually and collectively led to the fighting. Although the violence and its consequences as well as the DDR intervention can bring forth this consciousness, they do not have the ability by themselves to positively alter or change that history. The potential for

constructive change begins with our ability to “recognize, understand, and redress” the past and proceeds with our “willingness to create new ways of interacting” and to “build relationships and structures” that are geared towards the future (Lederach 2003: 34). Unfortunately, because the Amnesty program is designed only to address the episodic aspects of the conflict and not what Lederach (2003) calls the “epicenter” of the conflict, I do believe, and this study strongly suggests, that the Amnesty program will not succeed in the long-term.

The above discussion of triangulation should not presuppose the absence of other causes. It only means that triangulation appears to hold the greatest predictive ability for resource-based violence in Nigeria. I would argue that triangulation interacts with pollution, resource control disputes, infrastructural failure, federalism, corruption, and greed to produce violence in Nigeria. For example, there have been calls for the convocation of a sovereign national conference of all Nigerian nationalities to discuss and articulate a new politically structure for Nigeria. As it stands now, Nigeria operates a federal system in which power is shared unequally between the central government and the federating units. The central government controls all forms of external spending including international trade and maintains an iron fist control over natural resource extraction and distribution. Because of the immense power of the central government, competition among ethnic groups for control of the center is stiff, giving rise to a win-at-all-cost mentality. This mentality supplies the justification for inserting youths into hostile resource and power confrontations in which they ultimately stand to benefit nothing.

Scholars including Sagay (2008) and Akiba (2002) argue that the Niger Delta conflict arises principally from the nature of Nigeria’s federalism. Nigeria’s warped federal structure is ethnoclaimatocratic. I use the neologism ethnoclaimatocracy to describe a system which encourages and promotes economic and socio-political striving based on ethnic locations. The

system is essentially primordial and nihilist since it totally torpedoes the essential principles upon which federalism operates. This is why when the president comes from a particular region, all of the political appointments and developmental projects are sited within his particular ethno-religious confluence. The effect of this type of federalism is that it promotes powerful forces for identification with certain marginal interests. Corruption and greed and now triangulation becomes the tools by which these marginal interests reach their economic and political culmination. Under such conditions, armed conflict serves a useful function since it affords disadvantaged and marginalized communities the opportunity to demand a stable and equitable socio-political system.

In terms of corruption, the findings of this study is consistent with literature on the subject. Okonta and Douglas (2003), Osaghae (1998) and Ouattara (2001) have all suggested linkages between corruption and armed conflict. Ouattara (2001), for example, argues that corruption breeches basic human rights including rights to a meaningful social existence. Because of corruption, government is bloated, the formal private sector shrinks, public institutions are weakened, and rules and regulations are arbitrarily enforced. Corruption is so widespread that even the Amnesty program is not insulated from its omnipresence. According to one respondent, ER:

Don't mind these people. They think that we are all fools. Don't mind them. Do you know the billions that they have voted for the Amnesty program? Go and check. But where is the appropriation for the money. All of this comes out of the security votes which everybody knows is never accounted for. The Amnesty program is the biggest conduit for stealing money legitimately. It is a clever trick by government to pull the wool over our eyes.

The findings also support Collier's (2000) theory of greed or predation. Collier argues that in Africa, oil like diamonds, is a lootable resource. Because of its lootability, oil or the desire to profit from oil, engenders intense antagonisms among powerful forces situated proximately to its extraction and distribution. According to him, the predatory nature of these powerful forces

located within and outside of the political state produces armed conflict. Collier (2000) argues that although other grievances like pollution, resource control disputes, ethnic marginalization, and struggles for identity contributes to resource conflicts, people actually rebel because of the desire to profit out of war, and not because of grievances. Similarly, Keen (2005) argues in support of the greed thesis. For Keen (2005), the objective of war is not to win but to create conditions and opportunities for the plundering of economic assets without the requirement of accountability. He argues that armed conflict does not vitiate public order or rationality; instead it creates a new type of social order and rationality. It would seem, then, that the Niger Delta armed conflict has very little to do with grievances over marginalization, pollution, infrastructural deficits and resource control, but has everything to do with corruption, greed, and triangulation.

The in-depth interviews, however, yielded some results that either diverged from the survey results or were unique. I will touch on three of these findings briefly. In the first case, the results showed that economic exploitation was a major cause of the Niger Delta conflict. Respondents drew analogy between the billions of dollars that oil companies operating in the Niger Delta declare annually as profits and the very poor conditions of the Niger Delta and its people. According to AG:

There is a clear difference between the oil companies and our communities. Look at them; see how beautiful their environment is. Look at this place, even their dogs will hate to live here. It is painful to realize that all they are is made possible by what we are. As they become more beautiful, we become uglier.

Without knowing it, AG struck at the heart of debates about the core and the periphery. The peripherization of the Niger Delta and the resulting deprivation and marginalization of the people is anchored on petrol capitalism. In the course of fifty years, petrol-capitalism evolved in Nigeria through the capture and control of state and cultural power that in turn permits, preserves, and

extends its aggressive economic agenda. For example, Wikileaks cables on Nigeria showed the strong connection between the Nigerian state and global oil powerhouses like Shell. In one of the cables, the group head of Shell in Africa described to officials of the US embassy how it controls the affairs of the Nigerian state. She observed that Shell had representatives at every level of government in Nigeria and was privy to every policy that emanates from the state. Thus, in order for petrol-capitalism to achieve its objectives of maximizing profit, it must first gain control of Nigeria's political and cultural institutions. It is through these institutions, that its economic agenda is legitimated and the peasants pacified. The pacification of the peasants does not occur through their peaceful acquiescence; rather, it is obtained by force. The judicial murder of Ken Saro-Wiwa by a state/MNOC alliance hungry for oil and willing to deploy force to the maximum extent required, is one good example. Not only did this killing achieve the objective of facilitating oil production, it demystified the people's belief in their own power of resistance. It told a compelling story, as nothing else would, that petrol-capitalism was a force that could not be challenged through peaceful protests or civil resistance, but by force. As one respondent who is a top commander of the militant group MEND put it:

For years, our people went on peaceful protest against oil companies without success. We carried placards and marched on the streets. Those things don't work. The only thing that oil companies who are addicted to oil understand is violence. They understand kidnapping. They understand war. The Nigerian state understands trigger play more than peace.

In the second instance, the interview results show a clear relationship between racism and the conflict. About 60% of respondents discussed the connections between racism and the conflict. For example, AG compared reactions to the Gulf of Mexico spill and spills in the Niger Delta. According to her:

So I think that it's because of racism. They cannot treat us the way they treat their people over there. I heard that when there was oil spill in America. In the Gulf of

Mexico. The whole world joined them to clean the oil. They gave all the communities, people who were doing businesses like the fishing that we do here. Because the oil spill killed all the fish in the water. They gave them money. They took care of them. But here, they treat us like the real black men that we are. The thing that they will not do in their land in America, in Europe, they will do here.

AG's observation throws into relief Lipsitz's (2011) discourse of the spacialization of race and the racialization of space. According to him, the "lived experience of race takes place in actual places while the lived experience of space draws its determinate logic from overt and covert understandings of race." The ecological devastation of the Niger Delta region occurs at the same time that the world closes its eyes to its debilitating effects on local people. The world can afford to do this because of the global racial imagination that dehumanizes or sub-humanizes people of color as well as the cultural and economic institutions that support these people. Because of the global racial imagination of black people as inherently inferior or naturally sub-human, their institutions and resources are rendered superfluous. Not only are their land despoiled (through deliberate acts of pollution), but processes are created to ensure that their recovery is impossible. On top of that, the people who inhabit these despoiled spaces are marked as expendable. It would appear, therefore, that AG's linkage of racism with observable disparities in responses to spills occurring in racialized spaces, is spot on. Not only does it highlight racialized treatments of people that are phenotypically different from one another, it also underlines the problem of environmental racism. Chavis and Lee (1987) define environmental racism as a complex web of discriminatory environmental practices, activities or inactivity, and policies that results from racial differences. In the Niger Delta, environmental racism manifests in non-enforcement of oil exploration laws and regulations, toxic waste dumping, deliberate discharge of effluent into otherwise pristine waters, and the deliberate exclusion of members of oil producing communities from the decision making boards,



commissions, and regulatory bodies pertaining to oil production in the Niger Delta.

In the third instance, the interview results show a strong relationship between cultism and the conflict. In the last several decades, cultism, especially in Nigeria's higher institutions has had negative consequences on communities, families, and members of academic communities. Cult violence have become so pervasive that there has been a major cult violence every for the last ten years. Often, when cult violence occurs, it is one campus cult against another campus cult. The victims of these cult clashes are often student members of cults or some innocent victims who were either caught in the cross fires or where victims of mistaken identity. Some university teachers such as the late Mr. Akpekpe of the University of Benin have also fallen victim to cult violence. Some interview respondents drew attention to the fact that the armed insurgency in the Niger Delta started as rival cult clashes between members of Asari Dokubo's cult group (the Vikings) and Ateke Tom's group. Both groups fought over control of lucrative bunkering channels and for political patronage. The war started when Asari felt shortchanged by Ex-governor Odili, whom he felt used and dumped him. The successes that he recorded sabotaging oil pipelines and participating in the oil bunkering persuaded many other young men and women to embrace militancy. Thus, the link between cultism and militancy cannot be discountenanced.

## **8.2 Research Question 2: What are the programmatic and non-programmatic determinants of successful Amnesty or DDR program?**

The results of the logistic regression, controlling for demographic variables is interesting. In terms of disarmament, the study found that participation in the Amnesty program, significantly reduced the desire among ex-combatants to acquire weapons to pursue their objectives ( $P = .020$ ).

In terms of demobilization, the Amnesty program was shown to significantly impact

demobilization. Those ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program were less likely to maintain links with former colleagues or groups than respondents in the control group ( $P = .006$ ).

In terms of reintegration, the study found that economic reintegration ( $p = .030$ ), social reintegration ( $P = .000$ ), and political reintegration ( $P = .000$ ) were significantly associated with the Amnesty program. Thus, those who entered the Amnesty program compared to those who did not were more likely to be socially and politically reintegrated. However, participants compared to non-participants, were less likely to be economically reintegrated.

With regards to the non-programmatic factors, the results show that ex-combatants who entered the Amnesty program compared to those in the control group were less likely to obtain the bulk of their funding from oil bunkering. Compared to respondents in the control group they were also less likely to prefer conditions with their groups to conditions in the larger society. Conversely, respondents in the treatment category were more likely to obtain their weapons from international sources compared to respondents in the control group.

The results of the in-depth interviews supports the survey findings marginally. The interview results suggest that participants in the Amnesty program were more likely to be demobilized, but this is only because the majority of participants never belonged to armed factions in the first place. In terms of reintegration, the results suggest that participants in the Amnesty program were more likely to be socially and politically reintegrated than those who did not enter the program. However, this is mainly because the majority of participants never left their communities to fight. In the case of political reintegration, several respondents observed that elections were never free and fair in Nigeria and that most of the individuals who entered the Amnesty program were surrogates of politicians. Thus, there was no hindrance to their political reintegration. They show that respondents in the treatment category were less likely to be

genuine combatants. About 80% of respondents believe that the majority of those who entered the Amnesty program were ordinary citizens who see the Amnesty program as an opportunity to “get paid” by government. Consequently, they believe that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration exercise was a farce. In terms of economic reintegration, the results suggests that because of the chronic lack of employment opportunities, trained or retrained ex-combatants were more likely to reintegrate into unemployment than into the workforce. This result supports the survey findings, which indicates that respondents in the treatment category were less likely than respondents in the control category to be employed. In that sense, the economic reintegration of combatants was a failure.

In terms of the non-program determinants, interview results converged. Respondents believed that politicians were the principal source of funds to Niger Delta militants. The interview results also support survey results to the extent that program participants were more likely to be dissatisfied with conditions within armed groups, hence their enlistment. However, opinions wavered about the sources of weapons. Respondents believed that weapons were obtained through oil-for-cash swaps and all militants were involved in these deals. The interview results diverged from the survey results which found no association between communities exposure to pollution and DDR outcomes. Interview respondents indicated that exposure to pollution was a significant determinant of DDR outcomes.

#### *Discussion of question 2 Results*

The literature depicts DDR as an important effective strategy for ending protracted armed conflicts or for preventing a return to conflict in post-conflict societies (Doyle and Sambanis 2002). Studies of post conflict demobilization and reintegration show that ex-combatants who enter DDR programs are more likely to remain non-violent than ex-combatants who disarmed,

demobilized, and reintegrated on their own (Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Pugel 2007). Yet, there is skepticism that DDR achieves what is increasingly been ascribed to it. Critics argue that DDR programs are too often narrowly conceived, inflexible, technocratic, bureaucratic, and detached from the political transition or broader recovery and reconstruction strategies (Muggah 2009). As a result of concerns such as these, policy planners seek more evidence that DDR programs are effective at ending protracted conflict and establishing peace in the long term. This study is one response to that quest.

My study examined the Amnesty program in order to demonstrate DDR effectiveness. DDR typically consist of a cluster of activities including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration, which interact and intersect each other to entrench peace. Although, most DDR studies focus on programs enforced by international agencies such as the UN, the Niger Delta DDR was created and is funded by the Nigerian government. This means that the Amnesty program from the beginning, did not emerge spontaneously from below but instead, was an imposition from above, a process Muggah (2009) would describe as a “broader ‘Weberian’ project of securing the legitimate control of force” from combatants on behalf of the state. As the results show, concern about the conflict was principally about the state regaining control over the legitimate use of force than it is about resolving the grievances and animosities that gave rise to the conflict.

The study, for example, found that ex-combatants who entered the DDR program were more likely to disarm compared to respondents in the control category. However, results from the qualitative interviews suggest that this DDR effect might be moderated by the fact that most participants in the DDR program were non-combatant members of the communities who were deliberately inserted into the program for some political ends. One respondent IK observed that:

No genuine militant is participating in the Amnesty program. None. The people you see, these are

area boys of some big shot politicians. They put their boys and girlfriends in there just to make money. If you think I am lying, ask about the weapons returned. And you will see that were they say they have 26,000 reformed militant, they will only show you a few hundred guns and thousands of bullets. What is a bullet without guns? Bullets are like groundnuts in the Niger Delta.

This means that caution must be applied when DDR is credited for the disarmament success in the Niger Delta. Until we know something about the “participation effect” or until we can determine for a fact that all participants in the program had direct relationships to the conflict, we must proceed to attribute successes with extreme caution.

Another source of worry about the disarmament process concerns questions about the disposition of arms collected. On May 25 2011, Maj. Gen. Sarkin Yarkin Bello who at the time was the Commandant of the Joint Task Force (JTF) and led the fiercest battles against the Niger Delta insurgents, told the media that militants submitted 1,798 rifles, 1,981 guns of different types, 70 rocket propelled grenades (RPG), 154 pistols, I spear, and 6 cannons. He also informed that the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces had directed that these weapons be destroyed. Unfortunately, there has been no official word on how and from whom these weapons were retrieved. Also, the Army announced that following the President’s order, the weapons were destroyed at the 82 Base Ammunition Depot Demolition Ground at Lokpanta, a boundary town between Abia and Enugu states. There are no records that any civilians or civil organizations witnessed the destruction of these weapons. The secrecy which shrouds this entire process suggests that the process might not have been handled according to recommended best practices. For example, advocates demand that because of the importance of disarmament to the whole DDR process, there must be visible and tangible evidence of success in terms of arms and munitions collected (Muggah 2009; Spear 2006). Also, when disarmament is undertaken with concrete verification mechanisms and when arms are destroyed, confidence in the peace process is established.

Collier (1994) has observed that demobilization, like disarmament, have the potential to generate unintended security dilemmas (Collier 1994). Berdal (1996), Hitcock (2004), and Nillson (2005) see demobilization as a process which goal is to disconnect combatants from their armed groups or units. Nillson (2005) argues that demobilization returns the monopoly of force to the state through the disbandment of armed groups. Earlier studies on demobilization (see Humphreys and Weinstein 2007; Pugel 2007) show significant association between DDR and demobilization. This study concurs. However, I find that the association between DDR and demobilization is moderated by “participation effect.” About 80% of my interview participants believe that the majority of people who entered the Amnesty program should not have been in the program in the first place, because they did not participate in the conflict. If this were true, then, we should expect that they would indicate greater levels of demobilization than combatants still active in the conflict.

Similarly, my finding of significant relationship between DDR and reintegration is also moderated by “participation effect.” Interview respondents observed that the majority of people enrolled into the Amnesty program had no relationship to the fighting in the Niger Delta. They suggest that, politicians and other influential stakeholders in the same way that they created the conflict are deliberately inserting non-combatants into the program in order to profit from the process. This result is supported by recent developments in the Niger Delta where over the last several months; there have been agitations and protests on the streets of the Niger Delta over participation in the program. Ex-combatants speaking through different aegis complain that managers of the program are deliberately and clandestinely excluding genuine disarmed militants from participating in the program at the same time that they populate the program with their cronies (Bayelsa Reports 2011).

These reintegration challenges are not novel in themselves. Azam et al (1994) showed that reintegration programs are often heavily politicized leading to the marginalization of groups crucial to the peace process. For example, the failure to accommodate the interests of RENAMO dissidents in Mozambique spurred another round of fighting even after the peace agreement had been signed (Nillson 2005). Not only has this program defect prevented the proper absorption of potential spoilers into the program, it has also given ex-combatants the opportunity to reorganize latent command structures as happened in Sierra Leone in 2000 (see World Bank 2000). And as Knight and Ozerdam (2004) have argued, even where ex-combatants did not intentionally set out to reorganize latent command structures, the fact that program managers and influential politicians were deliberately creating bottlenecks for would be repentant combatants, was an incentive to reorganize and reactivate violence.

In his conflict transformation theory, Lederach (1997) argued for a holistic approach to transforming conflict from a destructive form to a situation amenable to all conflicting parties. Part of his strategy was to completely and deliberately engage the multiplicity of issues that not only generated the conflict, but that also continued to make the conflict protracted. In this sense, the issues that generated the conflict may be different from the issues that sustain the conflict. The participation effect in the Amnesty example functions as an obstacle to the peace process. This occurs as a result of the artificial grafting of the Amnesty program on the conflict without attempts at meaningfully engaging combatants with a view to addressing genuine grievances. Again, this appears to reinforce the argument that the Niger Delta combatants are estranged hirelings of influential members of the political and economic ruling elite who entered the conflict for their own profit. Their desire for profit is abstracted and transformed into legitimate grievances that are justified through popular rhetoric. It is for this reason that the Amnesty

program is heavily combatant-centric instead of tailored to address genuine grievances. As the evidence suggests, this might mean that the program will fall far short of expectations, in the long run.

### **8.3 Research Question 3: Overall, is the amnesty program capable of producing peace in the long-term?**

I measured overall outcome using three different measures: “violence,” “longterm,” and “benefit.” The variable “violence” measures the likelihood that ex-combatants will use violence in the future to pursue their objectives. The variable “longterm” measures whether ex-combatants believe that the Amnesty program will succeed in the long term. The variable “benefit” captured ex-combatants belief about the potential beneficiaries of the Amnesty program. While the survey analysis showed a strong bivariate relationship between participation in the Amnesty program and belief about the program’s long-term positive effect, the logistic regression, controlling for demographic factors, showed very weak relationship ( $p = .572$ ). Thus, of the three measures, only “violence” showed a strong association with the Amnesty program. This means that participation in the Amnesty program significantly reduces the likelihood that ex-combatants will use violence to pursue their objectives in the future. To that extent, the Amnesty program is a success.

The results of the in-depth interviews diverged from the survey findings. Respondents believed that the Amnesty program was a short-term success and long-term failure. They anchored the failure on aberrations in implementation, which one respondent NP, calls the “Nigerian factor.” The Nigerian factor refers to greed, corruption and cronyism rolled up in one. Another respondent CC observed that the list of militants had become bloated. According to him:

The majority of the names on that list are ghost names. Where did we get 26,000 militants from? I tell you, if there were 26,000 militants in the Niger Delta, Nigeria would long have seized to exist. They are adding mores names every day. Each additional fictitious name, adds a minimum of 65,000 to the bank account of the managers of this scam.



Another respondent Eti, referenced the fact that some ex-combatants such as Gen John Togo who initially accepted Amnesty, went back to fighting as evidence that the program was doomed to fail. She argued that the program appears successful now, only because, as is typical with new projects in Nigeria, funds are flowing into and out of it. As soon as the funds stop flowing, the fighting will resume. Moreover, the evidence strongly indicates that ordinary members of Niger Delta communities, the same people all sides to the conflict claim they are fighting for, will benefit nothing from the Amnesty program but continued deprivation, marginalization, and frustration. Thus, I find very strong evidence that the Amnesty program, despite its promises, is incapable of delivering peace beyond the short-term. It stopped the violence momentarily to allow for a more inclusive process of reconciliation that had the potential to transform the destructive conflict into a constructive one in which all parties to the conflict engage each other and resolve all disagreements, suspicions, and animosities. Unfortunately, the program missed this important moment and instead, began to assume a much wider and unanticipated role as the *de jure* and *de facto* solution to the conflict.

The transformation of the Amnesty program from a stop-gap measure into its own end is a contradiction of widely established standards for DDR (see, for example [www.unddr.org/iddrs/framework.php](http://www.unddr.org/iddrs/framework.php)). In places where DDR has been implemented, it was always implemented as part of a process of reconciliation, prejudice reduction, and socio-economic and political transformations. In that sense, DDR represents just one piece of a puzzle, albeit a very important one, but by no means the entire process. DDR should be conceived not as an end in itself but as part of a multi-dimensional process of peacebuilding. The Amnesty program, therefore, should be seen as an important part of Nigeria's peace infrastructure. As the theory of conflict transformation explains, peacebuilding is a cumulative

process that engages a whole range of actors, strategies, processes, institutions, and contexts. Further, the entire architecture of peacebuilding is activated by individuals and groups who play different complimentary roles in a triangle shaped formation. In that case, people (or groups) at different levels must interact with people (or groups) at other levels to bring about desired outcomes. This was not the case with the Amnesty program, which one knowledgeable informant described as “top-heavy and bottom-thin.” By ignoring the wider context of the conflict (pollution, resource control, exploitation, marginalization, corruption, greed, triangulation, etc) as well as important “bottom” voices, the Amnesty program prepared the stage for what will be its eventual failure.

#### **8.4 Conclusion**

The Niger Delta Amnesty program was instituted at a time of great social, political, and economic ferment and trepidation. Fear hung in the air like ripened banana fruits. Apprehensive businessmen jettisoned their lucrative oil businesses and fled the region. People – natives and foreigners alike – dreaded to walk the streets at anytime. On top of all that, the Nigerian state was on the verge of economic ruin. 80% of its domestic revenue and 95% of its foreign exchange came from oil exports, mainly produced in the Niger Delta. A mix of socio-political, environmental, and economic challenges had unleashed the potent energy of peasant youths on the nation. Their modus operandi was simple, the use of armed violence to redress what they termed “decades of exploitation and marginalization.” Oil installations were attacked ceaselessly and oil workers, many of whom are expatriates, were kidnapped and released after the payment of hefty ransoms. Some of these “captives” died in the process of their capture, in captivity, or during attempts by security forces to seize them from their captors.

Within a short while, the psychology of fear, upon which the militants based their operations, began to yield the real dividends. Governments (local, state, and federal) courted them. Politicians of different stature feted them. Oil companies, who for decades resisted calls to make their operations cleaner and safer, fell over them. And the militants milked these important stakeholders for effect. They issued threats and ultimatums, and in some instances, backed up their threats with action. Soon, they began to control their own territories, over which new emergent generals presided. By August 2009 when the Amnesty program was introduced, over 100 dreaded militant camps or territories had been created. Militancy boomed and many individuals, who had no conception of the central ideas behind the Niger Delta struggle, became emergency, cash-and-carry militants. They all smiled to the banks.

Although militancy appeared to contain enormous benefits, there were also major challenges. The Nigerian state was capable and willing to use force to quell this emergent resistance movement. It did so with the creation of the Joint Task Force (JTF) a crack team of no-nonsense soldiers drawn from the various arms of the Nigerian military. The JTF in keeping with its mandate and promise to “fight to the finish” swung into action and leveled whole villages, leaving in its trail many deaths and a mass of homeless, traumatized, and angry villagers. Despite its mandate to “fight to the finish,” it soon became clear that the government had to adopt another approach, a less aggressive one, to deal with the problem of insurgency. The Amnesty program was that approach.

From the onset, the Amnesty program encountered difficulties. The first challenge was how to build confidence with combatants, many of whom had come to see the state and its representatives, as enemies. How do you encourage combatants who were suspicious of every move of government to suspend their apprehension and give the program a chance? Of a truth,

the Amnesty program got a big boost from the federal government especially with President Jonathan, himself from the Niger Delta, in charge. In order to surmount the first challenge, the program had to engage a second challenge – money. Where will the money come from to handle the different stages of the Program? This question, and the first, was answered when the government generously opened its coffers to the program. Huge sums of money were disbursed not only to buy the support of some renegade combatants, but also to establish the program as a long-lasting institution capable of resolving not only the conflict in the Niger Delta but conflict everywhere in Nigeria. The source of the funds that went into setting up the program, at least at the initial stages, remain shrouded in mystery. Explanations have been half-hearted permitting full-throated innuendoes to thrive.

Today, two years after, the program is still active but the ceasefire that was called in order to establish the Amnesty program is no longer active. Despite what appears to be relative calm in the Niger Delta (compared to the situation in 2008 and 2009), violence everywhere in Nigeria appears to be spiraling out of control especially with the Boko Haram insurgency in the northern parts of Nigeria, which many believe is an attempt by northern elements to reap the kind of “settlements” and “pay-offs” that Niger Delta insurgents enjoy from the Amnesty program. Some stakeholders, however, believe that the Amnesty program is working. In fact, Kingsley Kuku, the special adviser to the Nigerian president on Amnesty, called the verdict on the performance of the program. According to him:

The amnesty proclamation, and subsequent post-Amnesty disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) program, is the sincerest, boldest and most profound effort by any Federal Government of Nigeria since 1960 to address the agitation for fairness, equity and development in the oil-bearing Niger Delta.

To show how effective the Amnesty program has been, Kuku drew comparisons between the situation in the Niger Delta today and what existed before the program was launched in 2009. He

observed that:

In 2008 alone, it was estimated that Nigeria lost over N3 trillion as a result of militancy in the Niger Delta. By January 2009, militancy in the Niger Delta had virtually crippled Nigeria's economy. Investment inflow to the upstream sub-sector of the oil industry had dwindled. Exasperated foreign investors had begun redirecting their investments to Angola and Ghana. At that point Angola surpassed Nigeria as Africa's highest crude oil producer. This dwindling investments in the critical oil and gas sector threatened Nigeria's capacity to grow its crude oil reserves as planned by the end of 2010.

In a sense, Kuku is right. There were drastic reductions in the levels and frequency of attacks immediately following the introduction of the Amnesty program. However, Kuku did not explain whether the investors that fled have returned. He also did not explain whether those who fled were inspired more by the escalating violence or by the dearth of vital infrastructure such as electricity, roads, and water, or by a combination of all of these. Yet, according to the Bergen Niger Delta Security Reports (2010), "militant attacks by month have ebbed and flowed since the beginning of 2006 when MEND made its first appearance." From the results of this study, I expect that this pattern will continue. As the Bergen Reports (2010) shows, one year after the introduction of the Amnesty program, the violence had not abated. For example, in 2009, there were a total of 82 violent attacks by suspected insurgent groups in the Niger Delta compared to 42 incidents in the first 6 months of 2010. Between August 6 and October 4 2009, some of the top commanders of MEND along with thousands of their fighters entered the Amnesty program. In January of 2010, however, Jomo Gbomo, MEND's spokesperson announced that MEND had called of its ceasefire and would resume hostilities with the Nigerian state. Subsequently, it detonated two car bombs in Warri, Delta state, at the Post-Amnesty meeting organized by the Vanguard Newspapers to deepen understanding about the program and explore ways to maintain the ceasefire. In an email message after the attack, Jomo Gbomo said:

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) salutes all its operatives who at great risk, successfully planted and detonated two (2) car bombs at the venue of the Vanguard Post Amnesty Conference in Warri, Delta

state. Three such bombs of varying strength were planted at this venue. It was unnecessary to detonate the third and most powerful bomb as our operatives noticed the participants at this jamboree fled towards the direction of the last bomb. Any attempt to detonate this bomb would have resulted in great loss of life. This bomb is being preserved for future use. All who participated in this operation safely returned to their respective bases

And in its most brazen attack yet, MEND detonated two car bombs outside of the Eagle Square venue of the October 1, 2010 independence day celebrations with the president and other top functionaries of government in attendance. Eight people were killed and many others injured in that attack. In all, the government appears incapable of responding to the new guerrilla tactics of MEND and other separatist groups like Boko Haram. For example, the government, at the last minute, shelved plans for the October 1 2011 independence day celebration at the Eagle Square over threats by MEND and Boko Haram to bomb the venue of the celebration. This latest move by government, which appeared to be in deference to the insurgents, showed like nothing else would, that the peace was fractured and the Amnesty program, touted as the only solution to the conflict, had failed to entrench peace in the Niger Delta.



Figure 41: Map of insurgent attacks in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2009 (adopted from the BergenRiskSolutions 2009).



Figure 39: Map of insurgent attacks in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2010 (adopted from the BergenRiskSolutions 2010).

The result of this mixed-study suggests mixed outcomes. By drawing on program and non-program factors, this study demonstrates that the complexity of factors that led to the conflict, the levels of unemployment and poverty, levels of interaction amongst members of militant groups, the nature of funding and arms supply, the degree of social and political acceptability, and the manner in which participation in the program was negotiated and executed are all crucial determinants of DDR success. Overall, the study finds that the Amnesty program appears to be partially successful at the macro-level since it facilitated the resumption of full oil production activities in the Niger Delta. As a result, crude oil output increased from about 1.3 million bpd at the peak of the conflict to about 2.2 million bpd now. With this increase, government revenue from oil has increased tremendously and the profitability of oil companies has quadrupled. This is good news for the federal government and oil companies, which have been shown to be addicted to oil revenue or profit. This shows clearly that the state/petrol-capital alliance is the primary beneficiary of this DDR program. This partial macro-level success, however, must be qualified. Apart from enabling the resumption of full oil mining activities, the Amnesty program has been unable to engage other macro level changes. For example, it has not

produced the much anticipated security sector reforms, which is crucial in order to develop the type of intelligence that would be proactive in preventing future armed conflict. The Nigerian Police Force, a humongous, monolithic body of law enforcement officers, remains ill-equipped, ill-trained, and ill-funded to provide the much needed service to Nigerian people. Moreover, the task of using one central force to police a nation of 150 million people that are fragmented along multiple lines begs for urgent reforms. This was of no consequence to the planners and implementers of the Amnesty program. Also, cooperation or collaboration with other large scale institutions such as the school and the family have not been developed such that the success achieved at the level of increased oil revenue cannot be replicated elsewhere. Thus, apart from the state/MNOC alliance, other key sectors of the society appear to be alienated from the Amnesty program, thereby permitting the ultimate breakdown of the peace process.

At the micro-level, the program has mixed results. The results show that the program has effect on disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Participants in the program are less likely to acquire weapons and to maintain links with other combatants. They are also more likely to be reintegrated socially and politically into society. However, program participants are less likely to reintegrate economically, which suggest a critical failure for the program. Because of its noticeable failure at the economic level, which in the Niger Delta is the structure upon which all else rests, the Amnesty program is unable to reconfigure the base of militancy in the Niger Delta. This is despite the fact that the program has been successful in co-opting and engaging some militant leaders (along with their members) through the payment of reinsertion allowances, choice contracts, and skill/vocational training. Many Niger Delta separatist groups still operate outside of the program and these groups have gained more traction with the formation of separatist groups in other parts of Nigeria. One of such separatist groups is Boko Haram, which



has established itself as a religious separatist movement active in the northern parts of Nigeria and funded by powerful political forces. The refusal of many insurgent groups to enter the Amnesty program and the commitment of MEND (the main insurgent group in the Niger Delta) to continue armed hostilities with the Nigerian state is predicated in part on the program's remove from communities and local people whose sufferings fuelled agitation in the Niger Delta in the first place. These local peoples continue to suffer the negative effects of oil production including pollution. They also continue to be unemployed, poor and lacking basic necessities of life including medical care and education. Armed insurgent groups also refused to be part of the program because the framework for peace ignored some of the more direct causes of the conflict including greed, corruption, and triangulation. Those empowered to implement the program are part of the original architecture of the conflict and could not be trusted to implement the program in the best interest of the communities. It is for this reason that many youths with direct and indirect connections to the program implementers but with no connection to the conflict, were inserted into the program, further alienating genuine insurgents and increasing the prospects for full-scale program failure.

The study demonstrates that the social, economic, and political circumstances surrounding the implementation of the Amnesty Program reflects defects in program design, ultimately affecting the outcomes. Not only did the program lack the endorsement of critical segments of the population including local communities and still active insurgents, the program was not well equipped to address issues of heterogeneity amongst program participants. This is the reason that key insurgents like John Togo who was one of the first to embrace the Amnesty program, withdrew from the program. Thus, the program failed most dramatically in its inability to provide ex-combatants with a longer term framework for economic advancement.

It is clear, then, that the Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR program has been unable to alter the Niger Delta conflict dynamics in any sustainable way. The conflict, which initially was put in pause mode by the introduction of the Amnesty program, appears to be rebounding, and this will have dire consequences for people of the Niger Delta and all who come to the Niger Delta for economic or socio-political reasons. This outcome is not unexpected especially if we consider the principles of conflict transformation (wherein protracted conflict can only be transformed into a situation amenable to all parties when the etiology of the conflict is addressed in ways that assuages the angst, anxieties, and concerns of all parties to the conflict). More importantly, the study finds that the Amnesty program preserved what Charles Tilly (1978) called “revolutionary situations.” Tilly described a revolutionary situation as the emergence of a condition of “dual sovereignty.” According to Tilly (1978: 200), dual sovereignty depicts:

The appearance of contenders or coalitions of contenders, advancing exclusive alternative claims to the control over the government ...; commitment to those claims by a significant segment of the subject population ...; the incapacity or unwillingness of the government or its agents to suppress the challenger coalition.

Thus, the Niger Delta conflict appears to be rebounding because the outcome of the peace initiative either preserved the existing condition of dual sovereignty or accelerated conditions for the rebounding of dual sovereignty. It is instructive to note that the conditions for the rebounding of dual sovereignty typically presents with the absence of outright military victories and often following negotiated settlements (Licklider 1995; Walter 1997; Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Mason and Quinn 2009). In the Niger Delta case, the extant negotiated settlement preserved some or all of the pre-conflict conditions that provoked the violence. In that sense, instead of weakening or dismantling the condition of dual sovereignty, the Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR program appears to strengthen that condition. As the condition of dual sovereignty waxes instead of waning, the Amnesty or DDR-induced peace fragments into the resumption of armed

hostilities. The results of this study show clearly that the Niger Delta Amnesty or DDR program has preserved the structural conditions that make the resumption of armed conflict decidedly inevitable.

This conclusion is reinforced by Mason and Fett's (1996) decision calculus on the probability of civil war reoccurrence after peace settlements. According to Mason and Fett (1996) and Mason and Quinn (2009) the potential for sustaining peace (after civil war) or the reoccurrence of civil war (after peace settlements) is a function of the difference in expected utility from resuming war compared to sustaining peace. I slightly modify their formula to calculate the probability of the resumption of armed hostilities in the Niger Delta. I calculate the benefits from resuming armed conflict as:

$$EU_{CW} = P_V (E_B + P_C) + (1 - P_V)(E_D) - \sum_{t_i=0}^{t_V} C t_i$$

Where  $EU_{CW}$  is the expected utility of resuming armed conflict,  $E_B$  is the expected benefit from armed conflict,  $P_C$  is the preservation of all (or some) of the pre-conflict conditions,  $P_V$  is the probability of achieving victory,  $E_D$  is the expected cost of defeat,  $1 - P_V$  is the probability of defeat,  $C$  is the rate at which the costs of conflict are absorbed from the present time ( $t_i = 0$ ) through a time in the future when victory is achieved,  $t_V$ . Thus, for Niger Delta insurgents to prefer resumption of armed hostilities to sustaining the peace, the expected utility of resuming armed conflict  $EU_{CW}$  must be greater than the expected utility of sustaining the peace,  $EU_S$ . I slightly modify Mason and Quinn's (2009) formula for calculating the expected benefits from sustaining the peace in the following equation:

$$EU_A = A_B + \sum_{t_i=0}^{t_V} C t_i - \sum_{t_i=0}^{t_A} C t_i$$

Where  $EU_A$  is the expected utility from the Amnesty-induced peace,  $A_B$  is the benefit from participating in the Amnesty program. By agreeing to participate in the program, insurgents save the costs of achieving victory:

$$\sum_{ti=0}^{ta} Cti$$

This saving could be a significant determinant of insurgents' decision to pursue conflict or to accept peace only if insurgents invested their own resources in the conflict. This savings will have no meaning for insurgents where a third party operating from within the political state bears the entire costs of conflict (or victory) as is the case in the Niger Delta. Because insurgents are essentially victims of triangulation, they will continue to fight as long as their sponsors within the political state continue to have access to state resources with which they fund insurgency. The implication of this decision calculus is that any variable that (1) decreases insurgent's estimate of their ability to achieve victory; (2) decreases the benefits from engaging in armed insurrection; (3) decreases the pre-conflict conditions of the Niger Delta; (4) decrease the amount of resources and influence available to powerful political and economic interests that fund insurgency; (5) increases the costs of the conflict; (6) increases the duration of the conflict; and or (7) increases the benefits for participating in the Amnesty program, should increase insurgent's incentives or motivation to sustain the peace instead of resuming armed hostilities.

Conversely, I would expect armed hostilities to resume if (1) a condition of dual sovereignty persists after the Amnesty program is implemented, (2) if the powerful political and economic interests vested in the conflict remain intact, and (3) if insurgents perceive that the expected utility of resuming armed conflict (including the potential for redressing the pre-conflict grievances in the long-run) is greater than the expected utility of sustaining the peace. If we consider these in terms of Lederach's theory of conflict transformation, I find that

the peace produced by the Amnesty program is at best short-termed. For example, Lederach argues that peace can only occur when a peacebuilding strategy (such as DDR) transforms: (a) the conflict itself; (b) some aspects of the socio-historical and political system in which the conflict occurs; (c) the persons involved in the conflict; and (d) the relationships between adversaries. It is transformation at these multiple levels that ultimately produces peace. Unfortunately, the Amnesty program not only appears to have glossed over these issues but also retained the pre-conflict conditions and coalitions, thereby guaranteeing a return to armed conflict.

### **8.5 Rethinking Theory**

In line with the findings of this study, I propose two theories to predict and explain resource-based armed conflict in Nigeria. These theories, with caution, could be applied to resource-based conflicts in other parts of the world especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The first theory is the *Theory of Resource Deprivation*. This social structure theory explains insurgency amongst Niger Delta youths as a function of socialization in a society dominated by oil exploitation and defined by huge governance deficits. The ineffective regulation of oil production led to production practices that devastated oil-bearing local communities and people in such a way that their recovery has proven impossible. The oil-induced economic, political, and social disorganization is a culmination of historical pressures beginning with slavery and colonialism and on through negotiated independence, the profligacy of corrupt civilian regimes, and military rule that put immense pressure on local communities and people to seek alternative means not only for social expression but also for economic subsistence. The exploitative alliance between the state (dominated by majority ethnic groups) and oil companies left a wound that has deepened with lack of economic and political opportunity. The structure of exploitation thrust

minority youths into a system of forced dependency and negative self-feelings at the same time that it created a basis for their forced identification with the same powerful forces responsible for their condition. Consequently, minority youths who are deprived of control and benefit of their own resources, are shut out of the socio-political mainstream, and are isolated in segregated underdeveloped communities. As a result of this, they develop ambivalence and antagonism towards the objects, structures, and individuals responsible for their negative conditions.

Militancy, therefore, offers these youths the opportunity to not only understand themselves within the dominant structure of privation but also to create new identities that frees them of the forced obligation to conform and acquiesce to their own oppression. The liberated aggressive energy, which is borne out of their deep frustration and introspection becomes directed towards social objects (including politicians, government officials, and employees of oil companies) they consider as oppressors or the structures and institutions that these “oppressors” construct (including oil installations, public facilities, police stations, etc) to facilitate the exploitation and marginalization of Niger Delta youths. However, because some of these youths are inserted into political networks controlled by powerful political interests, their anger may deflect against some social scapegoat who may be persons most like themselves.

It is important to note that deprived youths, through the process of introspection and identity construction, are able to untangle their ambivalence towards one another and to direct their potent aggressive energy towards the actual source of their privation: the exploitative alliance between the state and oil corporations. In its most extreme form (as seen from the behavior of MEND insurgents who remain active outside of the Amnesty program), resistance to privation produces a revolutionary ferment, which when conscious, is a powerful, individual, revolutionary force that can become the motive force for breaking free from poverty,

injustice, oppression, and deprivation. In that sense, the attitude of fatalism as distinct from the attitude of passivity or indifference can serve the rational objectives of the struggle against those conditions that give rise to this attitude in the first place.

From the stand point of resource deprivation theory, insurgency results from institutional and structural conditions. As long as these conditions were preserved by the peace settlement, violent insurgency will continue and escalate despite the investment of huge resources. Hence, discrimination arising out of ethnic group membership has a significant impact not only on poverty levels but also on the willingness and determination of oppressed minority youths to break out of the cycle of poverty using arms. As long as Niger Delta youths are deprived of control and benefits of their own resources, we will be able to predict that armed conflict will continue.

Finally, in assessing the significance of any structural or institutional moment on insurgency, the resource deprivation theory is interested in two dimensions of causation: with respect to each structural or institutional moment, the theory inquires into its effect either on the extent or on the distribution of poverty and suffering. The extent of poverty refers to the particular people who are consigned to impoverishment and suffering. In the Niger Delta example, these are minority ethnic group members including women (especially female heads of households) and children. The distribution of poverty refers to the characteristics of the population that makes them susceptible to poverty. In the Niger Delta example, it is the fact of membership in a community where oil is mined as a result of which the land and waterways are completely destroyed to the extent that the people (who are predominantly dependent on land for subsistence) are unable to make any form of living. Based on these, the theory asks what forces determines who will become militant? The answer to the question lies in resource deprivation. If

the people who produce the country's wealth are exploited and marginalized to the extent that they experience great difficulties meeting life's challenges, they will in turn attempt to turn around their fortunes using any means necessary, including armed conflict.

The second theory is the *theory of triangulation*. In this theory, I propose that militancy or insurgency in the Niger Delta results directly from the manipulative insertion of youths into hostile third-party resource disputes involving high-level political and economic players including politicians, community leaders, traditional rulers, top-level serving and retired military leaders, and oil companies. One of the mechanisms by which resource conflict between these important stakeholders becomes a risk factor for armed conflict is the triangulation of peasant youths into these resource disputes such that peasants are "caught in the middle" or "trapped in the center" and torn between divided loyalties to the state, traditional institutions, community leadership, and oil conglomerates.

I conceptualize triangulation as a system process in which powerless Niger Delta youths are deliberately inserted into stakeholders resource disputes as a way to strengthen the bargaining power of economic and political elements working within structures created to facilitate and expand petrol-capitalism. In this sense, the peasant youth (or its extension – the militant youth) is nothing but a pawn, being played by powerful chess masters. And as is characteristic of pawns, the Niger Delta peasant or militant, is completely expendable because he can be quickly replaced by any of the over 20 million idle youth in the Delta, whose idleness results directly from the machinations of the same powerful economic and political forces whose entrenched class interests produced the Niger Delta conflict.

Critical to achieving their economic and political goals, is the participation of peasant youths in disputes involving these powerful stakeholders. The youths play functional roles to the



extent that their participation in the disputes is limited to taking sides with stakeholders by attacking or distracting other stakeholders. The acts of violence deliberately perpetrated by these youths on behalf of their principals becomes counter-productive (or dysfunctional) when it potentially escalates the conflict between stakeholders beyond what is needed to extract huge political and economic concessions and payouts. The dysfunctional aspects of triangulation results from the inability of peasant and uneducated youths to balance the conflicting signals that they receive from their sponsors, who are high level political and economic actors. The confusion results from the conflicting loyalties that these youths have to the state, traditional institutions and values, community leadership, and oil companies. Each of these important political and economic players frequently place antithetical expectations and goals on these youths, often shaking the core values and principles that have governed life in local communities for generations. For example, in political seasons, politicians enlist the youths to derail or destabilize the campaigns of opponents and rival political parties. The promises made to the communities and the youths is for the development of the communities through the provision of vital infrastructures and the creation of work opportunities. But as soon as they are entrenched in government, they begin to use the same youths to sabotage oil and government assets in order to benefit financially. Not only are the electoral promises unfulfilled, existing infrastructure is deliberately sabotaged in order to win huge oil contracts and payoffs. This type of contradiction puts pressure on youths, especially where these youths lack effective social anchors capable of neutralizing the negative effects of triangulation. These youths routinely develop adjustment problems particularly internalizing problems such as anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, fear, and anger and a range of externalizing behavior including armed violence such as militancy, piracy, armed robbery, and kidnapping.

The conflict process model of triangulation that I propose, therefore, does not reject the notion that conflict arises from unresolved grievances (such as pollution, unemployment, resource control agitations, etc) or from greed. Instead, resource conflict results from a cumulative process involving all of these diverse forces. Triangulation is the last stage of this process and is the trigger that sets off the conflagration. It is the last in the chain of causes, but potent enough, to send otherwise peaceful youths over the edge.

## **8.6 Recommendation**

DDR is an important mechanism for peace in war-torn and post-conflict societies. As this study has shown, DDR can make invaluable contributions to peace processes. However, as Guehenno (2009: xvii) has argued, DDR is a “facilitator but not a driver” of peace. Thus, DDR can assist but never act as a substitute for a political process. In the Niger Delta example, DDR became an ineffective substitute for the political process resulting in major confusion over its aims and ends. Although, it succeeded in slowing down the pace of insurgency and provided a platform for negotiation with insurgents, it has proven inadequate as the “one-size-fits-all” solution to the conflict. Its use in this way is misinformed and misdirected and threatens to vitiate even the temporary gains made and to plunge the nation into potentially more devastating rounds of violence. To halt this drift, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. This DDR program is very highly combatant-centric. This means that the main focus of the peace process was to placate combatants through various monetary inducements. Although focus on combatants is crucial to the peace process, this should have been done as part of a larger focus to target agents of conflict including triangulation, greed, corruption, the warped federal structure, pollution, resource control, economic exploitation, unemployment, and poverty. This means that critical stakeholders in the conflict (i.e. host communities) were marginalized by the

lopsided focus on insurgents. If we consider Lederach's holistic approach to conflict transformation in which all parties to the conflict as well as the grievances and socio-economic and political contexts of conflicts must be integrated into the peacebuilding architecture, we see that the approach of the Amnesty program targeted only the symptoms or "episodes" of the conflict rather than its "epicenter." Because the Amnesty program was animated by the impulse to resolve or deescalate the conflict, it could only achieve marginal or modest short-term, non-permanent results. It is crucial then, that DDR programs address both the episodic nature of conflicts as well as the epicenter of conflicts. This would give implementers the opportunity to engage broader contexts as well as "explore and understand the system of relationships and patterns" that produced the conflict in the first place (Lederach 2003: 30). Towards this end, I advocate second generation conflict reduction activities to bolster the effects of DDR. Unlike traditional DDR which focuses mainly on combatants within military structures, second generation activities and programs focus not on military units but on civilian communities that are affected by armed conflict. According to the United Nations (2010), second generation activities and programs can be implemented to support the peace process, build trust, contribute to a secure environment and help build the foundation for longer term peacebuilding. Because they focus alternatively on area-based, community-based and collective incentives (Muggah et al 2009), second generation activities and programs have the capability to engage the entire conflict environment and quicken the march towards peace.

2. The Niger Delta Amnesty program was designed and implemented singularly by the Nigerian government. There was no contribution from international organizations such as the United Nations, which typically acts in conjunction with nation-states in designing DDR peace programs. The lack of international partnership and collaboration affected both the design and

implementation of the Niger Delta DDR program. For example, in Timor-Leste, two of the four DDR interventions were designed and managed by international organizations. The UNDP designed and managed the RESPECT program (Recovery, Employment and Stability Program for Ex-Combatants and Communities in Timor-Leste). The second program FRAP (FALINTIL Reinsertion Assistance Program) was designed and implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) with funding from the World Bank, USAID, and Canada. Although the other two programs were designed and implemented locally or nationally, they received core funding support from international sources. As a result of international support, a credible database of about 75,000 living and deceased veterans was established. To complement this, several legislations that recognized and helped to reintegrate veterans were enacted including the establishment of veteran recognition ceremonies. All of these enabled ex-combatants to achieve high degrees of social reintegration complete with improved social status. The combination of all these have ensured that veterans and ex-combatants no longer constitute potent threats to the peace and stability of society, unlike the situation in Nigeria. What this means is that the design of DDR programs must anticipate and actively encourage contributions from individuals, groups, and organizations across national boundaries. This would serve not only to integrate ideas and best practices that worked in order climes but also contribute funds and resources that are direly needed to plan and implement disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs and activities. This does not in any way suggest that that the impetus for action must come from outside the conflict zone; rather, it encourages networking and interaction on a much larger scale that helps to deepen understanding about the conflict , build trust in the process, and develop appropriate mechanisms for building the peace.

3. The Niger Delta conflict is rooted very deeply in economic conditions that are associated

with oil production. For example, unlike other regions such as the northwest and south east regions with very high unemployment and poverty levels, the negative economic conditions of Niger Delta peasants is problematic because of the wealth produced from the region. Some of these negative economic conditions originate with pollution, which results from oil production. Yet, these deeper economic issues are left unaddressed. In a practice that instantly appears puny and trivial, the program focuses on individual combatants while ignoring the multiplicity of forces that created insurgents out of hapless peasants. Thus, instead of the simplistic, one dimensional conceptualization of reintegration that focuses solely on ex-combatants, DDR programs will have greater impact if they are conceptualized holistically with economic, political, social, and psychological features. More importantly, the Niger Delta DDR completely ignored the psychological strands of reintegration. Yet, Niger Delta people generally and ex-combatants specifically are at great risk for psychological impairments due to developing the siege mentality that goes with extreme aggression by the state/petrol-capital alliance. Over many decades, the state/petrol-capital alliance have waged an aggressively relentless war with forces (imagined and real) opposed either to oil production or the allocation of oil profits. To crush such opposition, the state/petrol-capital alliance typically deplored the military with a command to quell revolts “by all means necessary.” This has meant the brutalization, maiming, and killing of innocent peasants and the militarization of local communities leading to the development of a captive mentality, where Niger Delta peasants see themselves as slaves or prisoners in their own land. Parallel to the development of this mentality is the development of ideological and practical neutralizations of this mentality. One technique of neutralization is hostility towards all social objects including friends and family members. Once this neutralization takes root, it is difficult to discard or dispel. Youths at risk of this neutralization frequently go through life being

mean-spirited and desperate for outlets to vent their frustration and anger. Many such youths were involved in the insurgency and unless concrete steps were taken to deal with their extreme psychological impairments, long-term peace will remain elusive in the Niger Delta. Thus, I recommend culturally appropriate and community-based individual interventions to deal with symptoms of impairment. These interventions should be available not only to ex-combatants but also to members of Niger Delta communities that have suffered the cumulative negative impact of oil production as well as the destructively aggressive impulses of the state/petrol-capital alliance. One of such interventions might be to engage the services of university trained counselors who have specialized training in mental health, trauma, and psycho-social interventions. These persons should be deployed to local oil-producing communities and the various rehabilitation centers as part of a broader program of community development.

4. The survey and interview data show that Niger Delta insurgents typically manifest strong educational defects. The situation with insurgents mirror situations in the larger society where as much as 60% of the population is illiterate. The statistics also show that the Niger Delta youth population is growing, so also is the size of the illiterate population. Perhaps, in recognition of this, the government made skills and vocational training for ex-combatants a major part of the Amnesty program. While this is certainly commendable and should be encouraged, it does not go far enough to address the shocking gap in education among the larger Niger Delta population. Thus, government might do well to extend the vocational and skills training outside of the Amnesty program as a way to reduce the at-risk population who potentially may pursue violence as the only real opportunity for earning income. More importantly, the government must urgently identify the Niger Delta as a “disaster zone” for the purpose of developing alternative economic opportunities that are not oil driven. This will take pressure of oil as the only revenue earner and

unleash the creative entrepreneurial spirits of local peoples. It will also mean a return to the original productive base of the Niger Delta economy: fishing, agriculture, trade, and industry. Part of the strategy must be to make funds easily accessible in the form of soft loans, micro-credit loans, entrepreneurial development loans, agricultural loans, student loans, and grants to members of Niger Delta communities. Government can do this in partnership with oil majors and international organizations, including the USAID, UNDP, and World Bank.

5. In order to sustain the Niger Delta peace process, dual sovereignty must be replaced by more amenable conditions in the Niger Delta. In order to bring about such conditions, all of the negative conditions such as pollution, poverty, unemployment, infrastructural deficits, resource deprivation, and marginalization that make insurgency desirable and inevitable must be redressed. Most importantly, dual sovereignty must be replaced by conditions antithetical to greed, corruption, triangulation, and our own brand of federalism, which this study implicates as conditions favorable to insurgency. All of these implies that in order for peace to be implanted and sustained in the long-term, all of the powerful political and economic interests whose machinations directly but unobtrusively produced both the negative conditions of the Delta and ultimately the violence, must be dismantled. Because of the persistence of these powerful political and economic forces, the interests of ordinary members of Niger Delta communities would not be incorporated into the Amnesty protocol. Unfortunately, the more these ordinary people are alienated from the peace negotiations and settlements, the more likely that the Amnesty program will breakdown into armed conflict. Sustaining the Amnesty or DDR-induced peace can occur only if deliberate effort is made to construct post-conflict institutional structures that completely dismantles the conditions of dual sovereignty and diminishes the incentives to continue to engage in armed conflict instead of accepting the peace.

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## **Appendix A: The Questionnaire**

### **Paths to Peacebuilding: Amnesty and the Niger Delta Violence**

This survey is undertaken as part of a doctoral dissertation research. Its objective is to evaluate the implementation of the Amnesty program by collecting information on key actors, their personal and professional background, the objectives of their engagement, their opinions regarding the causes of the Niger Delta violence, and their perception of the Amnesty program.

This questionnaire was developed in order to cover the remote and immediate causes of the conflict and the activities subsumed under the Amnesty program that aim to resolve the problem. We decided to broaden the scope of the study to include both the Amnesty program and the entire corpus of factors that have necessitated the implementation of this program because we want to assure comparability and completeness of this comparative research. You may indicate at the top of a question if you find it irrelevant to the conflict.

We appreciate your time for completing this questionnaire. Your data as well as information provided will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

**A. ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND**

A1. Would you describe yourself as ...?

- 1. ☐ A Militant
  - 2. ☐ An environmental activist
  - 3. ☐ Resource control activist
  - 4. ☐ A community activist
  - 5. ☐ A freedom fighter
  - 6. ☐ A paid fighter/mercenary
  - 7. ☐ A political activist
  - 8. ☐ Other, please specify
- 

A2. When did you get involved in the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Between 1998 and 1999
- 2. ☐ Between 2000 and 2001
- 3. ☐ Between 2002 and 2003
- 4. ☐ Between 2004 and 2005
- 5. ☐ Between 2006 and 2007
- 6. ☐ Between 2008 and 2009
- 7. ☐ Between 2010 and 2011
- 8. ☐ Don't know

A3. How many people where in your organization?

- 1. ☐ Less than 300
- 2. ☐ Less than 500
- 3. ☐ Less than 1000
- 4. ☐ More than 1000
- 5. ☐ Don't know

A4. About how many of these people where women?

- 1. ☐ None
- 2. ☐ Less than 100
- 3. ☐ 100 to 200
- 4. ☐ 200 to 299
- 5. ☐ 300 to 399
- 6. ☐ 400 to 499
- 7. ☐ Above 500
- 8. ☐ Don't know

A5. What was your main role within your organization?

- 1. ☐ Officer/commander/general
  - 2. ☐ Combat soldier
  - 3. ☐ Work around camp/run errands
  - 4. ☐ Intelligence/spying
  - 5. ☐ Wife/lover/girlfriend
  - 6. ☐ Other, please specify
- 

A6. What did you do to prove to your organization that you can be trusted?

- 1. ☐ Nothing
- 2. ☐ I had to go through training
- 3. ☐ I had to swear to an oath
- 4. ☐ I had to join a cult
- 5. ☐ I had to do harm to somebody
- 6. ☐ I had to participate in a dangerous mission
- 7. ☐ I had to contribute morning

A7. What was the main goal of your organization?

- 1. ☐ Ethnic nationalism
  - 2. ☐ To make money
  - 3. ☐ To gain political power
  - 4. ☐ To end pollution
  - 5. ☐ To gain control of oil resources
  - 6. ☐ Constitutionalism
  - 7. ☐ Infrastructural development
  - 8. ☐ Other, please specify
- 

A8. Which of the following best describes why you became involved with your group?

- 1. ☐ I supported the groups ideological and political goals
- 2. ☐ People inside the group lived better than people outside
- 3. ☐ I was forced into the group
- 4. ☐ To make money
- 5. ☐ I joined to avenge the death of a relative/friend
- 6. ☐ Thrill/excitement

A9. How did you join a militant group?

- 1. ☐ A family member recruited me
- 2. ☐ I joined through my membership of a cult group
- 3. ☐ A member of my community recruited me
- 4. ☐ A friend recruited me
- 5. ☐ I am a founder of the organization
- 6. ☐ I sought out the group myself and joined
- 7. ☐ I was forced into joining the group
- 8. ☐ A stranger recruited me

A10. What did you expect to gain from your involvement with the organization?

- 1. ☐ Employment
- 2. ☐ Resource control
- 3. ☐ Political power
- 4. ☐ Pollution-free environment
- 5. ☐ Community development
- 6. ☐ Revenge
- 7. ☐ Money
- 8. ☐ Nothing

A11. As a member of the group, did you feel that you were better off inside it than you would have been outside it?

- 1. ☐ Yes, better
- 2. ☐ No difference
- 3. ☐ No, worse

A12. What was the main ethnic group in your organization?

- 1. ☐ Ijaw
  - 2. ☐ Okrika
  - 3. ☐ Ikwerre
  - 4. ☐ Urhobo
  - 5. ☐ Itsekiri
  - 6. ☐ Ogoni
  - 7. ☐ Other, please specify
-

A13. What were you promised for participating in your group's activities?

- 1. ☐ Money
  - 2. ☐ Revenge
  - 3. ☐ Access to oil
  - 4. ☐ Improve the situation
  - 5. ☐ Non-medicinal drugs
  - 6. ☐ Political power
  - 7. ☐ Justice
  - 8. ☐ Nothing
  - 9. ☐ Other, please specify
- 

A14. When you went out for operation, who decide what the target would be?

- 1. ☐ Officers/commanders/generals
- 2. ☐ Combat soldiers
- 3. ☐ Decision taken collectively

A15. When you made gains from attacking a target, who decided what to do with it?

- 1. ☐ Officers/commanders/generals
- 2. ☐ Combat soldiers
- 3. ☐ Decision taken collectively

A16. Where did you get most of your guns and ammunitions from?

- 1. ☐ We seized them from other groups
- 2. ☐ We seized them from government forces
- 3. ☐ We got guns from the army
- 4. ☐ We got them from outside the country
- 5. ☐ We got them from local dealers

A17. Within your organization, which of the following behavior is most likely to put you in trouble?

- 1. ☐ Being drunk
- 2. ☐ Non-medicinal drug use
- 3. ☐ Marijuana use
- 4. ☐ Stealing from someone
- 5. ☐ Raping someone
- 6. ☐ Fighting with someone
- 7. ☐ None

A18. Are you participating in the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

A19. When did you enter the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Late 2009 (September to December)
- 2. ☐ Early 2010 (January to April)
- 3. ☐ Mid 2010 (May to August)
- 4. ☐ Late 2010 (September to December)
- 5. ☐ Not sure

A20. Which of the following reasons best explains why you are participating in the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Tired of fighting
- 2. ☐ Promise by government to address grievances
- 3. ☐ Cash incentives for participants
- 4. ☐ Order by leadership of organization
- 5. ☐ Health/safety concerns

A21. How would you describe the oil companies operating in the Niger Delta?

- 1. ☐ Responsible corporate citizens
- 2. ☐ Interested only in oil profit
- 3. ☐ Committed to the development of local communities
- 4. ☐ Insensitive to the needs of local communities
- 5. ☐ Insensitive to the problems of pollution
- 6. ☐ Racist

A22. How would you describe the federal government in relation to the Niger Delta?

- 1. ☐ Committed to the development of oil producing communities
- 2. ☐ Insensitive to the problems of oil producing communities
- 3. ☐ Corrupt
- 4. ☐ Interested only in oil revenue
- 5. ☐ Incapable of regulating the behavior of oil companies
- 6. ☐ In cohort with oil companies
- 7. ☐ Oppressive
- 8. ☐ Committed to the equitable distribution of resources
- 9. ☐ Exploitative
- 10. ☐ Biased against minorities

A22. Where did your organization get most of its funding from?

- 1. ☐ International sources
- 2. ☐ Politicians
- 3. ☐ Oil bunkering
- 4. ☐ Ransom payments
- 5. ☐ Oil companies
- 6. ☐ Government
- 7. ☐ Donation

## B. CAUSES OF THE CONFLICT

B1. In your opinion, which of the following is the main cause of the Niger Delta conflict?

- 1. ☐ Political instability
- 2. ☐ Religion
- 3. ☐ Poverty
- 4. ☐ Unemployment
- 5. ☐ Ancient hatreds
- 6. ☐ Racism
- 7. ☐ Pollution
- 8. ☐ Resource control
- 9. ☐ Federalism
- 10. ☐ Exploitation by oil companies
- 11. ☐ Infrastructural deficits
- 12. ☐ Proliferation of weapons
- 13. ☐ Corruption
- 14. ☐ Greed/predation

B2. Which of the following actors would you consider the most active in bringing about the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Federal government
- 2. ☐ State governments in the Niger Delta
- 3. ☐ Local governments in the Niger Delta
- 4. ☐ Armed forces and police
- 5. ☐ Oil companies
- 6. ☐ Politicians/political parties
- 7. ☐ Western countries (UK, US, etc)
- 8. ☐ Eastern countries (China, Russia, etc)
- 9. ☐ Traditional institutions
- 10. ☐ Oil bunkerers
- 11. ☐ Religious groups
- 12. ☐ Ethnic militias
- 13. ☐ Militants



B3. How much did your community experience the effects of oil-based pollution?

- 1 ☐ Very much
- 2 ☐ Much
- 3 ☐ Not much
- 4 ☐ Not very much

B4. Did you ever get involved in conflicts/disagreements involving politicians, community leaders, traditional leaders, and oil companies on an issue you did not feel concerned you?

- 1 ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

B5. How often did you enter such conflicts?

- 1 ☐ Very often
- 2 ☐ Fairly often
- 3 ☐ Not very often
- 4 ☐ Not at all

B6. Who involved you in the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Leader of my group
- 2 ☐ Politician
- 3 ☐ Community leader
- 4 ☐ Traditional ruler
- 5 ☐ Oil company officials
- 6 ☐ Not applicable

B7. Did you ever feel pressured to side with one or other party in the conflict?

- 1 ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No
- 3 ☐ Not applicable

B8. Which of these emotions did you feel as a result of your involvement in other peoples disagreements?

- 1. ☐ Anxiety
- 2 ☐ Sadness
- 3 ☐ Guilt
- 4 ☐ Anger
- 5 ☐ I did not feel any of these things
- 6 ☐ Not applicable

B9. Which of the following was your main strategy for defeating or neutralizing your opponents?

- 1. ☐ Using arms to fight
- 2 ☐ Civil litigation
- 3 ☐ Voting at elections
- 4 ☐ Peaceful protests
- 5 ☐ Destruction of oil infrastructure
- 6 ☐ Kidnapping
- 7 ☐ Mass media

C1. Did your organization submit any weapons to the Amnesty Committee?

- 1 ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

C2. What percentage of your weapons did your organization submit?

- 1. ☐ 100%
- 2 ☐ About 75%
- 3 ☐ About 50%
- 4 ☐ About 25%
- 5 ☐ Less than 25%

C3. Do you anticipate a future need to acquire more weapons to pursue your objectives?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

C4. Did you ever receive cash benefits for entering the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

C5. Was the cash benefit a one-time payment or a regular monthly payment?

- 1 ☐ One-time payment
- 2 ☐ Regular monthly payment
- 3 ☐ Irregular payment (not one time)

C6. Did you receive any type of training from at the demobilization/rehabilitation center?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

C7. Overall, how would you rate the materials and content of the training?

- 1. ☐ Excellent
- 2 ☐ Good
- 3 ☐ Ok
- 4 ☐ Poor
- 5 ☐ Very poor

C8. How would you rate the trainers?

- 1. ☐ Excellent
- 2 ☐ Good
- 3 ☐ Ok
- 4 ☐ Poor
- 5 ☐ Very poor

C9. Approximately what percentage of your reinsertion payment did you save?

- 1. ☐ 0%
- 2 ☐ 25%
- 3 ☐ 50%
- 4 ☐ Above 50%

C10. Approximately what percentage of your reinsertion payment did you give to other people?

- 1. ☐ 0%
- 2. ☐ 25%
- 3. ☐ 50%
- 4. ☐ Above 50%

C11. Did you (are you) participate (participating) in a Amnesty funded vocational or educational program?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

C12. Which Amnesty funded vocational or educational program did you (are you) participate (ing) in?

- 1. ☐ Artisananship
- 2. ☐ Oil and gas
- 3. ☐ Agriculture
- 4. ☐ Transportation
- 5. ☐ Information technology
- 6. ☐ Maritime
- 7. ☐ Culture/tourism/hospitality
- 8. ☐ Environmental and sanitation management
- 9. ☐ Small scale manufacturing
- 10. ☐ Entertainment
- 11. ☐ Creative arts and theater
- 12. ☐ Building and construction
- 13. ☐ Formal education

C13. Have you completed your Amnesty funded vocational or educational program?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

C14. If no, why have you not completed training?

- 1. ☐ I am still in training
- 2. ☐ The Amnesty program stopped paying my benefits
- 3. ☐ It is a waste of time
- 4. ☐ I am going back to fighting

C15. If yes, what was the duration of training?

- 1. ☐ 1 to 6 months
- 2. ☐ 6 to 12 months
- 3. ☐ Above 12 months
- 4. ☐ Not applicable

C16. Do you agree with this statement: “the training I have received (I am receiving) has prepared (is preparing) me well for a life career?”

- 1. ☐ I agree
- 2. ☐ I disagree
- 3. ☐ I neither agree nor disagree

C17. Since completing the training program, have you had a job?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Not applicable

C18. Do you think that you will ever use the skills and education that you have acquired from this program in the future?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No
- 3. ☐ Don't know

C19. Following your participation in the Amnesty program, which of the following do you feel most connected to?

- 1. ☐ Members of your militant group
- 2. ☐ Family
- 3. ☐ Non-militant friends
- 4. ☐ Neighbors
- 5. ☐ No one

D1. Following the implementation of the Amnesty program, did you return to your community?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

D2. Did you experience any problems gaining acceptance from your neighbors?

- 1. ☐ Yes, big problems
- 2. ☐ Yes, some problems
- 3. ☐ No problems
- 4. ☐ Not applicable

D3. Did you experience any problems gaining acceptance from your family?

- 1. ☐ Yes, big problems
- 2. ☐ Yes, some problems
- 3. ☐ No problems
- 4. ☐ Not applicable

D4. Did you return to the same community you left to join the conflict??

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

D5. Who do you now spend most of your time with?

- 1. ☐ Members of your militant group
- 2. ☐ Family
- 3. ☐ Non-militant friends
- 4. ☐ Neighbors
- 5. ☐ No one

D6. In the event of a personal problem, who are you likely to turn to as your primary source of support?

- 1. ☐ Members of your militant group
- 2. ☐ Family
- 3. ☐ Non-militant friends
- 4. ☐ Neighbors
- 5. ☐ No one

D7. If you were to start a business today, who will you partner with?

- 1. ☐ Members of your militant group
- 2. ☐ Family
- 3. ☐ Non-militant friends
- 4. ☐ Neighbors
- 5. ☐ No one

D8. In your opinion, what is the most effective way to deal with oil-related community problems?

- 1. ☐ Approaching government officials
- 2. ☐ Approaching traditional rulers
- 3. ☐ Approaching oil company officials
- 4. ☐ Dialogue and negotiation
- 5. ☐ Peaceful protests
- 6. ☐ Litigation
- 7. ☐ Taking up arms to fight
- 8. ☐ Destroying government property
- 9. ☐ Destroying oil infrastructure

D9. How active are you in the monthly sanitation exercise?

- 1. ☐ Very active
- 2. ☐ Fairly active
- 3. ☐ Not very active
- 4. ☐ Not at all active

D10. Did you register to vote in the monthly sanitation exercise?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

D11. Overall, do you believe that the training you received will make you a better person socially?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

E1. Think about the unemployment situation in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E2. Think about access to medical care in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E3. Think about access political access in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E4. Think about the problem of oil-related pollution in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E5. Think about oil revenue allocation in Nigeria. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E6. Think about the condition of schools in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E7. Think about the way conflicts are resolved in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse



E8. Think about the problem of corruption in the Niger Delta. Do you think the situation is better today than now the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Better
- 2. ☐ About the same
- 3. ☐ Worse

E9. The issues raised in the last 7 questions (E1 through E8) fall into 8 categories. In which of these categories would you like to see progress made?

- 1. ☐ Education
- 2. ☐ Medical care
- 3. ☐ Political participation
- 4. ☐ Employment
- 5. ☐ Resource allocation
- 6. ☐ Pollution
- 7. ☐ Conflict resolution
- 8. ☐ Corruption

E10. If you had the opportunity, which of the following actions will you take to address some of the issues in E9?

- 1. ☐ Complain to government officials
- 2. ☐ Complain to traditional rulers
- 3. ☐ Vote at elections
- 4. ☐ Appeals for assistance from the international community
- 5. ☐ Take up arms to fight
- 6. ☐ Approach the courts
- 7. ☐ Organize peaceful protests/demonstrations

F1. Overall, how satisfied you with the disarmament aspect of the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Very satisfied
- 2. ☐ Fairly satisfied
- 3. ☐ Not very satisfied
- 4. ☐ Not at all satisfied

F2. Overall, how satisfied you with the demobilization aspect of the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Very satisfied
- 2. ☐ Fairly satisfied
- 3. ☐ Not very satisfied
- 4. ☐ Not at all satisfied

F3. Overall, how satisfied you with the reintegration aspect of the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Very satisfied
- 2 ☐ Fairly satisfied
- 3 ☐ Not very satisfied
- 4 ☐ Not at all satisfied

F4. Overall, how would you rate the costs and benefits of the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Benefits only
- 2 ☐ Costs only
- 3 ☐ More costs than benefits
- 4 ☐ Equal costs and benefits
- 5 ☐ More benefits than costs

F5. Overall, who would you say is likely to benefit most from the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Militants
- 2 ☐ Government
- 3 ☐ Oil companies
- 4 ☐ Oil producing communities
- 5 ☐ Amnesty officials

G1. Were there women in your organization?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

G2. What was the main role women played in your organization?

- 1. ☐ Officers/commanders/generals
- 2 ☐ Combat soldiers
- 3 ☐ Work around camp/run errands
- 4 ☐ Intelligence/spying
- 5 ☐ Wife/lover/girlfriend
- 5 ☐ Not applicable

G3. Based on your knowledge of the involvement of females in militancy, should female militants participate in the Amnesty program??

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2 ☐ No

G4. What percentage of the population of female militants do you believe is participating in the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ About 10%
- 2. ☐ About 20%
- 3. ☐ About 30%
- 4. ☐ About 40%
- 5. ☐ About 50%
- 6. ☐ About 60%
- 7. ☐ About 70%
- 8. ☐ Not applicable

G5. Compared to male militants, what type of treatment did female militants receive at the rehabilitation center?

- 1. ☐ Better treatment
- 2. ☐ Worse Treatment
- 3. ☐ Same treatment
- 4. ☐ Not applicable

G6. How involved were female militants in the planning of the Amnesty program?

- 1. ☐ Very involved
- 2. ☐ Fairly involved
- 3. ☐ Not very involved
- 4. ☐ Not at all involved

G7. In your opinion, how likely is it for the Amnesty program to succeed if female militants do not participate?

- 1. ☐ Very likely
- 2. ☐ Fairly likely
- 3. ☐ Not very likely
- 4. ☐ Not at all likely

G8. Did the Amnesty program treat single or widowed ex-militants as heads of households and given special assistance?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

G9. Under the Amnesty program, are there special funds allocated to women?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

G10. During the conflict, were female militants victims of sexualized violence?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

G11. Who are (were) the perpetrators of sexualized violence against women?

- 1. ☐ Male militants in the same organization
- 2. ☐ Male militants in a different organization
- 3. ☐ Members of the Joint Task Force
- 4. ☐ Police
- 5. ☐ Military
- 6. ☐ Not applicable

G12. Does the Amnesty program have facilities for the treatment, counseling, and protection of female ex-militants who were victims of sexualized violence?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

H1. Think about the ongoing Amnesty program. How successful do you think the program is likely to be in the short term (1-3 years)?

- 1. ☐ Very successful
- 2. ☐ Fairly successful
- 3. ☐ Not very successful
- 4. ☐ Not at all successful

H2. Think about the ongoing Amnesty program. How successful do you think the program is likely to be in the mid-term (4-5 years)?

- 1. ☐ Very successful
- 2. ☐ Fairly successful
- 3. ☐ Not very successful
- 4. ☐ Not at all successful

H3. Think about the ongoing Amnesty program. How successful do you think the program is likely to be in the long term (5-10 years)?

- 1. ☐ Very successful
- 2. ☐ Fairly successful
- 3. ☐ Not very successful
- 4. ☐ Not at all successful

H4. Based on your experience with the Amnesty, do you intend to stay in the program till the end?

- 1. ☐ Yes, I intend to stay till the end
- 2. ☐ No, I will drop out but will not go back to fighting
- 3. ☐ No, I will drop out and go back to fighting

H5. Considering the ongoing Amnesty program, how likely are you to continue to use violence to pursue your objectives?

- 1. ☐ Very likely
- 2. ☐ Fairly likely
- 3. ☐ Not very likely
- 4. ☐ Not at all likely

I1. What is your age?

- 1. ☐ 18 to 24
- 2. ☐ 25 to 34
- 3. ☐ 35 to 44
- 4. ☐ 45 to 54
- 3. ☐ 55 to 64
- 4. ☐ 65 and over

I2. Please, choose the category which most closely satisfies your view of your ethnic origin?

- 1. ☐ Igbo
  - 2. ☐ Yoruba
  - 3. ☐ Ijaw
  - 4. ☐ Edo
  - 5. ☐ Urhobo
  - 6. ☐ Itsekiri
  - 7. ☐ Ikwerre
  - 8. ☐ Ogoni
  - 9. ☐ Kalabari
  - 10. ☐ Efik
  - 11. ☐ Okrika
  - 12. ☐ Other, please specify
- 

I3. What is your gender?

- 1. ☐ Male
- 2. ☐ Female

I4. What is your marital status?

- 1. ☐ Single
- 2. ☐ Married/living with partner
- 3. ☐ Divorced
- 4. ☐ Separated
- 5. ☐ Widowed

I5. What level of education have you completed?

- 1. ☐ No school
- 2. ☐ Primary school
- 3. ☐ Secondary school
- 4. ☐ Trade/technical school
- 5. ☐ Polytechnic/university
- 6. ☐ Graduate school

I6. Do you currently have children 17 or younger living in your household?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

I7. What was your occupation before you entered the conflict?

- 1. ☐ Farmer/fisher
  - 2. ☐ Trader
  - 3. ☐ Civil servant
  - 4. ☐ Artisan
  - 5. ☐ Teacher
  - 6. ☐ Medical worker
  - 7. ☐ Domestic servant
  - 8. ☐ Housewife
  - 9. ☐ Student
  - 10. ☐ Odd jobs/part-time
  - 11. ☐ Business
  - 12. ☐ No employment
  - 13. ☐ Other, please specify
- 

I8. Have your occupation changed now?

- 1. ☐ Yes
- 2. ☐ No

I9. If yes, did it change because of the training you received from the Amnesty program?

1. ☐ Yes

2. ☐ No

I10. What was your monthly household income in the year before you entered the conflict?  
(Income measured in Naira)

1. ☐ No income

2. ☐ Less than 50,000

3. ☐ 50,000 – 99,999

4. ☐ 100,000 – 149,000

5. ☐ Over 150,000

I11. Outside of the Amnesty program, are you in any form of paid employment at the moment?

1. ☐ Yes, self-employed

2. ☐ Yes, full-time

3. ☐ Yes, part-time (casual worker)

4. ☐ No

I12. Would you describe yourself as disabled?

1. ☐ Yes

2. ☐ No

I13. In what section of society do you live?

1. ☐ Inner city

2. ☐ Sub-urban area (GRA)

3. ☐ Rural area

I14. What is your religion?

1. ☐ African Traditional Religion

2. ☐ Christian

3. ☐ Muslim

4. ☐ Atheist

I15. What is your state of residence?

- 1. ☐ Bayelsa
- 2. ☐ Delta
- 3. ☐ Rivers

I16. What is the name of your organization?

- 1. ☐ MEND
- 2. ☐ NDV
- 3. ☐ TO
- 4. ☐ NDPVF
- 5. ☐ FNDIC
- 6. ☐ EE
- 7. ☐ NDSF
- 8. ☐ MB
- 9. ☐ PLF
- 10. ☐ MONDP
- 11. ☐ NDSM
- 12. ☐ NDCDF
- 13. ☐ JRC
- 14. ☐ COMA
- 15. ☐ NDEEF
- 16. ☐ NDLF
- 17. ☐ URA
- 18. ☐ UYBF
- 19. ☐ UVF

Thank you!



**Appendix B: Interview Schedule**

1. What are the remote and immediate causes of the armed conflict in the Niger Delta? Please explain in detail.
2. What efforts have been made in the past to resolve this conflict?
3. What is your opinion about the amnesty program?
4. Who is responsible for the implementation of the amnesty program?
5. How is the amnesty program implemented?
6. What is your opinion about participation in the program?
7. What do you think is the main reason(s) militants are participating in the program?
8. How much weapons, arms, and ammunition have been submitted by militants since the program started?
9. In your opinion, who is a militant and what do you think is their prime motivation?
10. What does rehabilitation and reintegration incorporate?
11. How is the reintegration being done?
12. What is economic reconstruction?
13. What facilities, structures, institutions, activities, events, and policies have been created to stimulate the economic development of the region?
14. What is the role of women in the conflict?
15. What has been the role of the international community in resolving the conflict?
16. What does peace in the Niger Delta mean to you?
17. Who benefits from peace in the region? Who benefits from the conflict?
18. Overall, what is your opinion about the amnesty program? Has it been successful in mitigating the conflict?

19. Is there anything else you wish to tell me about the Niger Delta violence and the amnesty program?