



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT
HYDROCARBON POLLUTION REMEDIATION PROJECT
HYPREP...Remediating the Environment and Restoring Livelihoods

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ENVIRONMENT MINISTER INAUGURATES BOMU/KPORGHOR WATER PROJECTS



Environment Minister, Lawal; His Niger Delta Affairs Ministry Counterpart, Engr. Momoh; HYPREP PC, Prof. Zabbey Drink from Bomu Water Project

**STAKEHOLDERS PLEDGE SUPPORT
TOWARDS HYPREP MANDATE DELIVERY**

**HYPREP ENLISTS COOPERATION OF OGONI
NEIGHBOURS FOR SUCCESSFUL CLEAN-UP**

FORTY OGONI WOMEN GET BUSINESS SUPPORT

**HYPREP
HERALD
NOT
TO BE
SOLD**

THE PC'S DESK



PROF. NENIBARINI ZABBEY
PROJECT COORDINATOR
(HYPREP)

It was a beehive of activities in the past week as the HYPREP Project Coordination Office (PCO) played host to the Honourable Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal, the Honorable Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Engr. Abubakar Momoh and members of the Governing Council (GC) of HYPREP from Friday, 26th to Sunday, 28th July, 2024. We inaugurated completed potable water schemes in the Bomu and Kporghor communities. The ministers of Environment and Niger Delta Affairs commissioned the Bomu and Kporghor water schemes, respectively.

In my welcome address, I emphasized the importance of environmental sustainability and community empowerment as critical pillars for sustainable development. I recognized the achievements of the over 2500 community workers carrying out shoreline remediation and mangrove restoration in Ogoniland, who were issued the IMO Levels 1 and 2 certificates at the water commissioning event. The IMO levels 1 and 2 courses are certified by the Nautical Institute, an international body responsible for training and certifying personnel for oil spill preparedness and response.

While inaugurating the well-reticulated water facilities, the Honourable Minister of Environment reassured the stakeholders that the Federal Government of Nigeria remains steadfast in its commitment to environmental remediation and sustainable development in Ogoniland. He further said that the government is ensuring that the people of Ogoni and Niger Delta can enjoy a healthy environment and sustainable livelihoods. He presented International Maritime Organisation (IMO) 1 & 2 certificates to the community workers trained a couple of months ago to work with shoreline cleanup and mangrove restoration contractors.

In commemorating the International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem, the Ministers and GC members planted symbolic mangrove seedlings to energize the HYPREP pilot mangrove rehabilitation efforts in Bomu Creek, covering 560 ha. As of 26 July, 514,819 mangrove seedlings have been planted. HYPREP is undertaking the world's largest (over 3000 ha) restoration of oil-degraded mangroves. We launched Growcoon to propagate mangrove seedlings to beat plastic pollution. Growcoon is a sustainable alternative to single-use plastics to nurse mangrove seedlings. The Minister of Environment also presented cookstoves to Ogoni women to promote clean cooking and reduce reliance on mangrove wood for fuel. Earlier, I had issued a press statement to mark World Mangrove Day wherein I stated, "through sustained commitment and collaborative action, it is possible to restore the health of mangrove ecosystems, secure the livelihoods of local communities, and ensure a resilient future for Ogoni and the Niger Delta."

Remarkably, the 36th meeting of the HYPREP Governing Council was held

in Ogoniland. The Honourable Minister of Environment/GC Chairman and other members of the GC also spent the night there, which is symbolic and a demonstration of commitment. The GC spent the afternoon and evening of the 27th of July overseeing the inspection of HYPREP project sites. They inspected the Buan Cottage Hospital, the Buan Water Project, the Ogoni Specialist Hospital, and the Centre of Excellence for Environmental Restoration (CEER). Construction of the CEER has reached a 60.8% completion rate. The Governing Council expressed satisfaction with the quality and pace of work at the sites they visited and commended HYPREP. This does not call for complacency. It is a nudge for us (me and my colleagues) at the PCO to redouble our efforts and sustain the progress until we reach the finish line. That is exactly our resolve!

I am using this medium to thank stakeholders who continue to energize the frontiers of the Ogoni cleanup for sustainable development. This is a unique opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to the President and Commander-in-chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Bola Ahmed Tinubu GCFR, for reinstating me on 15 July 2024 as the Project Coordinator of HYPREP. I appreciate the confidence reposed in me. I thank my principal, the Honourable Minister of Environment, for his wisdom and guidance in ensuring that the PCO proceeded meaningfully while carrying out the presidential directive of accelerating the Ogoni Cleanup. I lack words to thank my beloved people of Ogoni for owning and supporting the cleanup. Together, we will keep our eyes on the ball, hold our hands, and work assiduously to recover a healthy and sustainable Ogoni environment!

In this Issue

For months now, we have been showcasing the process, progress and produce of the work the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) is doing in Ogoniland in the core thematic areas of remediation, provision of potable water, livelihood training, construction of legacy projects and shoreline and mangrove restoration. In this issue we continue with the showcasing of the progress made, leading with the cheering news of the commissioning of the Bomu and Kporghor water projects. They are the seventh and eighth water projects to be completed and inaugurated by HYPREP for Ogoni communities. You will find the details of the commissioning ceremony, which was performed by the Honourable Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal and assisted by his counterpart – the Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Engr. Abubakar Momoh.

Also in this issue, we report the news of the reinstatement of the Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Bola Ahmed Tinubu. Professor Zabbey used the occasion of his reinstatement to brief the press on his modest achievements so far and plans for the project. There is also the story of the quarterly meeting to brief stakeholders (parent ministry, regulators, funders, civil societies, Ogoni community, etc.) on progress and challenges of the project.

The Central Representative Advisory Committee (CRAC) and the Zonal Representative Committee (ZRC) are key components of the Governing Structure of HYPREP. They were in the

field recently to perform their oversight function on projects and review relationship with host communities with the aim to resolving or forestalling any potential area of conflict. The report is carried in this issue. The Chiefs and elders of the Bolo community were in the Project Coordination Office on the invitation of the Project Coordinator, Prof. Zabbey. Bolo is a neighbouring community with K-Dere and B-Dere where shoreline clean-up is taking place. They were briefed on the scope of work to be done there and the need for their cooperation to achieve set goals. Professor Zabbey also graciously approved some slots for community workers for the Bolo community for which the community was grateful.

The empowerment of Ogoni women under the livelihood programme saw the presentation of nano grants to petty businesswomen in markets across the four Local Government Areas of Eleme,

Tai, Gokana and Khana. The initiative is intended to keep the women afloat in business. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Management of HYPREP had a meeting with contractors to review performance and chart better ways of implementing the project. Members of the HYPREP Environment Clubs were taken on excursion to project sites to familiarize them with the operations of HYPREP and to create in them good environmental stewardship.

HYPREP has a new Head, Security. He is AIG Emmanuel Ekot Effiom who was recently deployed to the project from the Office of the National Security Adviser. Our poetry corner is maintained for your reading pleasure and appreciation of the environment. We enjoin you to go through the pages to keep yourself abreast of the activities and operations of the project. We will appreciate your feedback on ways to serving you better.

POETRY CORNER

HOPE FOR GREENER LAND

By: Sibe Rex Sunday

HYPREP, you descend like an apple
To grasp and laugh, to the people.
Riches and paupers equal in the dance
As their environment woes bow at your appearance

In process, you make the land greener and mature,
Nurture to revive the nature
Of a people without hope in the hit
From environmental hurt and heat.

In your hands, no torture, but succor.
Your belly births hope for the future
Of the land and water. Environment now cripples
Crops trouble from degradation triples.

In this, hope becomes infallible
Even in the mind of a feeble.
Your fist spread farther like early sunrise.
To cronicks and starrigans you arise to surprise.

A breast to the earth you feed
The environment with a sincere feed
To grow the creatures at its best.
Your worth like water is unique and first.

Project News

ENVIRONMENT MINISTER INAUGURATES BOMU/KPORGHOR WATER PROJECTS

The Bomu and Kporghor Water Projects in Gokana and Tai Local Government Areas respectively are the seventh and eighth water schemes completed and commissioned by the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) for use by Ogoni people as recommended in the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report.

The earlier completed and commissioned water projects are in Alesa, Ebubu, korokoro, Terabo, Barako and Kpean communities.

The Honourable Minister of Environment, Balarabe Abbas Lawal who inaugurated the Bomu water scheme with a reticulation distance of 28 kilometers and that of Kporghor water project of 10 kilometers in reticulation stated that both projects and indeed all the other projects being embarked upon by HYPREP are deliberate steps by the Federal Government to ensure environmental restoration and sustainable development of Ogoniland and the Niger Delta region in general.

“The Niger Delta region has faced significant environmental challenges due to decades of oil exploitation and pollution. Our administration is unwavering in its commitment to addressing these issues comprehensively. These water facilities we commission today are part of a larger, integrated approach to environmental remediation and sustainable development. HYPREP's mission goes beyond the provision of clean water. It encompasses soil and groundwater remediation, health intervention programmes and



KPORGHOR WATER STATION

livelihood restoration for affected communities. We are dedicated to ensuring that the people of the Niger Delta can enjoy a healthy environment and sustainable livelihoods.”

The Minister highlighted the importance of clean and accessible water which according to him, is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of public health, economic development and overall well-being. “Today, as we inaugurate these facilities, we are not merely turning on a tap but opening the doors to improved health, enhanced quality of life and a brighter future for the communities of Bomu and Kporghor”, he averred.

Mene Lawal who was earlier inducted into the Gokana Council of Chiefs by the Gberemene of Gokana Kingdom, HRM King Festus Babari Bagia, commended the progress achieved by HYPREP in the clean-up project so far which he attributed to HYPREP's collaboration with various stakeholders. “I commend the

engineers, planners, community leaders and every individual who has contributed to the success of these projects. Your hard work and commitment is deeply appreciated. However, while we celebrate this milestone, we must also acknowledge the broader context in which these projects exist. HYPREP will continue to execute meaningful projects like this in order to improve the quality of lives of the Ogoni people.”

The Minister reiterated Federal Government's commitment to the effective implementation of the Ogoni clean-up project and extended the commendation of the President, His Excellency, Bola Ahmed Tinubu to the people of Ogoni for their continuous support for his administration and the clean-up project, assuring them that Government is committed to the development of Ogoniland. In his words:

“On our part, the Federal Government of Nigeria remains steadfast in its commitment to environmental

remediation and sustainable development of Ogoni Land. We are dedicated to addressing the adverse impacts of oil exploration and ensuring a healthier and more prosperous future for its residents. Government will continue to actively engage with the Ogoni communities, hold consultations, incorporate community feedback and ensure that the voices of Ogoni people are heard and respected.”

He called on the people of Bomu and Kporghor communities to own the water projects, safeguard and ensure the optimal use of the facilities.

“At this juncture I would like to call on members of both communities to take it as a duty to safeguard and ensure optimal usage of these facilities. I also would like to express my gratitude to the community leaders and people of Bomu and Kporghor for their patience and resilience. Your support and cooperation have been crucial to the success of these projects. As we move forward, let us continue to work together through fostering the spirit of unity and shared responsibility for our

environment.”

Accompanying the Honourable Minister of Environment was the Honourable Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Engr. Abubakar Momoh who doubles as a member of the Governing Council of HYPREP. He promised that his ministry would continue to work with its environment counterpart to ensure that the challenges encountered by the Project were effectively addressed and re-echoed President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's commitment to the wellbeing of the Ogoni people which he said is evident in the way the President prioritizes issues affecting Ogoniland.

“The President is very much committed to what is happening in Ogoniland. I was in a meeting few months ago where Ogoni Traditional Rulers paid a courtesy visit to the President, and they made several requests of which Mr. President immediately agreed that he was going to address. It is also evident in the way the Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey was reinstated.”

Engr. Momoh called on the youths to remain calm and follow the path of dialogue in resolving issues. “Do not allow politicians to use you in anything negative that will affect the wellbeing of the people of this country. With dialogue and patience and with the renewed hope agenda, I have no doubt that the Ogoni people will benefit tremendously.”

Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey in his welcome address confirmed the successful completion of the two water facilities which he said reflects the new spirit of accelerating the Ogoni cleanup in alignment with Priority 3, Deliverable 3 of the Renewed Hope Agenda, which emphasizes the importance of environmental sustainability and community empowerment as critical pillars for sustainable development.

“HYPREP is proud to contribute to this national agenda, reflecting a new spirit of determination and action. The Honourable Minister's wisdom and guidance have ensured that the Project



Environment Minister, Lawal Cuts the Tape on Bomu Water Station

Coordination Office proceeded meaningfully while carrying out this presidential directive.”

He emphasized that the water projects would positively impact and enhance the livelihoods of the people and stressed the importance of community ownership to safeguard the water facilities.

“The commissioning of the Bomu and Kporghor water facilities marks another milestone in our collective journey towards successfully implementing the UNEP Report recommendations on Ogoniland. Access to clean and safe water, as you know, is a fundamental human right, and today, we witness, once again, the fulfilment of this promise to the hydrocarbon impacted communities in Ogoniland. Communities must continue to protect these facilities for common use.”

Professor Zabbey while briefing his audience on the progress in other thematic areas of the project said that the Centre of Excellence for Environmental Restoration (CEER) is at 60% completion while the construction of the Ogoni Specialist Hospital and Buan Cottage Hospital has attained significant progress.

In the area of Sustainable Livelihood, the Project Coordinator announced that the training of 5000 Ogoni youths and women in 20 skill areas is about to be rounded off and appreciated the Honourable Minister of Environment for approving skill-specific starter packs to trainees. He added that 29 Ogoni youths have also been trained in Air Cabin Crew. Furthermore, Professor Zabbey said that the project has also carried out a number of capacity building workshops for Ogoni youths including the Procurement and Business Strategy Workshop, Career Enhancement and



CEER Under Construction

Employability Workshop, and the Business Proposal Development Workshop. According to him, HYPREP will hold several other Workshops in the coming days.

Prof. Zabbey said that to reinforce traditional rulers' capacity to address community-related challenges in Ogoni, HYPREP will be organizing an Alternative Dispute and Peacebuilding Techniques Workshop for Ogoni Traditional Rulers and other key stakeholders in the coming weeks and announced plans by the project to enhancing its stakeholder engagement strategies to ensuring that the voices and needs of the Ogoni people are at the forefront of HYPREP's attention.

At the event which was also used to commemorate the international day for the conservation of the mangrove ecosystem, Zabbey stated that HYPREP is currently undertaking the world's largest restoration of oil-degraded mangroves and emphasized the need for continued commitment from stakeholders to ensure the realization of the long-term benefits of conserving the mangrove ecosystems in Ogoniland and outlined the strategies for the attainment of that

goal.

“While restoring mangroves through assisted planting, reducing mangrove harvesting pressure is also necessary. Thus, we commemorate this year's World Mangrove Day with two significant activities. We are launching Growcoon as a sustainable alternative to using single-use plastics to nurse mangrove seedlings. The Honourable Minister will also launch the pilot cookstove project and oversee the distribution of cookstoves to Ogoni women. The Cookstove Project is a strategic HYPREP initiative designed to discourage the cutting down of mangroves and reduce reliance on mangrove for fuel, thereby preserving our precious ecosystem.”

He commended the achievements of the project's community workers carrying out shoreline remediation who were certified by The Nautical Institute in IMO Levels 1 and 2 and stated that the certification is an indication of the hard work and dedication of the HYPREP's community workers which are crucial to the success of the shoreline cleanup activities and the overall restoration of

the Ogoni environment.

Chairman, Board of Trustees, Ogoni Trust Funds, Dr. Michael Nwielaghi told stakeholders that the funds for the project have been judiciously used, citing the many projects being undertaken by HYPREP simultaneously.

Representative of the Shell Petroleum Development Company, Engr. Ekiyokeneghare Clark in his goodwill message appreciated the Federal Government for actions taken to move the project forward and lauded the Honourable Minister of Environment for his subtle reforms introduced to making HYPREP a structurally sound project. He appealed to the Ogoni people to continuously support HYPREP to deliver on the clean-up project.

In the same vein, Professor Barineme Fakae who stood in for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in his intervention stated that the commissioning of the water facilities shows that HYPREP is progressing in the right direction, and UNEP would be glad to see more



Aerial view of Kporghor Water Station

progress in other areas of the project. HRM Mene Dr. Suanu Baridam, Spokesperson for HYPREP's Central Representative Advisory Committee (CRAC) appreciated the Honourable Minister of Environment for his commitment to the Ogoni cleanup project and restated CRAC's commitment to ensuring a peaceful environment for contractors to work. Interventions were also made by representatives of the Stakeholder

Democracy Network (SDN), Center for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD), and Chief Priscilla Vikue on behalf of Ogoni mothers.

Highlights of the two-day visit of the Honourable Minister of Environment and his entourage to Ogoni were the meeting of the Governing Council of HYPREP held at the TFAD Hotels and Resorts, Wiiyaakara and a guided tour of HYPREP project sites.

PRESIDENT TINUBU REINSTATES PROF. ZABBEY AS HYPREP COORDINATOR

Prof. Zabbey Commits to Sustainable Clean-up

Following the mass protest by the Ogoni people and organizations within and outside Ogoniland that greeted an earlier announcement removing Professor Nenibarini Zabbey as the Project Coordinator of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP), the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, Bola Ahmed Tinubu has approved the reinstatement of the HYPREP



HYPREP PC, Prof. Zabbey Arrives Project Office after Reinstatement

helmsman, Professor Zabbey.

In an earlier release from the State House and signed by the Special Adviser to the President on Media and Publicity, Chief Ajuri Ngelale, President Tinubu had named Dr. Olufemi Adekanmbi a former Commissioner for Special Duties, Culture and Tourism in Ondo State and member of the Nigerian Environmental Society (NES) to take over from Professor Zabbey as Project Coordinator of HYPREP.

The President however reinstated Professor Zabbey two days after

following a critical review of the HYPREP Project Coordinator's performance as conveyed in a release signed by Ngelale.

"The President reached the decision following a performance review of the HYPREP Project Coordinator and concluded that the Project Coordinator is fit to discharge his functions in accordance with the regulations guiding the execution of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP).

By the directive of the President, the reinstatement of the HYPREP Project

Coordinator takes immediate effect."

The reinstatement of Professor Zabbey had since doused the rising tension that was building up in Ogoni and the people are pleased with the action of the President, describing him as a leader who has the peace and development of Ogoniland at heart.

Professor Zabbey has accordingly returned to his duty post as the Project Coordinator of HYPREP with renewed vigour to implement the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) report on the clean-up of Ogoniland.

HYPREP IN BUSY PERIOD - PROF. ZABBEY DECLARES

The Project Coordinator of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP), Professor Nenibarini Zabbey has announced that HYPREP is in a particularly busy period in view of its plethora of ongoing projects in Ogoniland.

Professor Zabbey who made this known in an interview with newsmen in Port Harcourt stated that a total of about one hundred and thirty projects are currently going on across Ogoniland in the thematic areas of soil remediation, shoreline clean-up and mangrove restoration, provision of potable water, livelihood trainings, construction of legacy projects, etc.

"We have about 130 ongoing projects in the areas of remediation, water provision, strengthening of hospitals and a lot of livelihood programmes. Under remediation we have remediation of contaminated lands, shoreline cleanup and mangrove restoration going on concurrently. These have created a lot of jobs for Ogoni youths. Our estimate is that over 7,000 youths have direct employment, and we will continue to build the capacity of the youths so that they will



Aerial view of CEER under Construction

be able to work elsewhere and provide support to the project.

We have several land related issues in the communities. So, in the coming weeks we are going to train traditional rulers in Ogoni in alternative dispute resolution because we feel that if we strengthen their capacity in resolving and preventing conflict, there will be stability in the region. One of the objectives of HYPREP is to promote peacebuilding. So, we will train them so that they will be able to manage their respective communities so that we will continue to have peace and stability in the Ogoni region. We have

a lot of programmes lined up for this year and we will roll them out and the youths of Ogoni land will benefit because the project is all about them. When we say sustainable cleanup, it is because it is not just benefitting the people that are here now, it will also benefit generations yet to come. The Federal government is highly committed to the Ogoni cleanup and the Presidency is determined to clean up Ogoni sustainably in a manner that every son and daughter of Ogoni land will be proud of."

In response to a question about the timeframe of some of the HYPREP

projects, Prof. Zabbey stated that it is somewhat difficult to fix definite completion dates for the projects.

“Most of the projects we are carrying out has to do with resetting the environment. In resetting the environment, we reduce the level of oil to a level that can support the recovery of biodiversity. The biodiversity recovery will be followed

by interaction as well as biochemical processes that will bring back ecosystem functionality. In doing that, we cannot fix a definite date. When it comes to resetting the environment, we don't have the power to say that it must be a definite date. However, during the project, we are also building capacity. In this area, if you ask us how long it will take to train the

youths in a specific skill set, we can tell you.”

Professor Zabbey was recently reinstated after an earlier announcement by the Presidency removing him as the Project Coordinator of HYPREP.

STAKEHOLDERS PLEDGE SUPPORT TOWARDS HYPREP MANDATE DELIVERY

Relevant ministries, agencies, regulators, oil companies, Non-Governmental Organizations and Ogoni stakeholders have pledged their sustained support towards the attainment of the mandate of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP).

The stakeholders made their commitment known in Port Harcourt at a HYPREP's quarterly project review meeting which is a forum for the discussion of the project's progress reports and to harvest feedback to enable the project deliver on its mandate.

Present at the performance review meeting were representatives from the Federal Ministry of Environment, the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), the National Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), the Rivers State Ministry of Environment, the Rivers State Ministry of Water Resources and Rural Development and the Rivers State Ministry of Health. Others are the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Social Democracy Network (SDN), Centre for Environment, Human Rights and

Development (CEHRD), African Indigenous Foundation for Energy and Sustainable Development (AIFES), Society for Women and Youth Affairs (SWAYA) and key Ogoni stakeholders.

Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey, in his welcome address expressed his gratitude to the stakeholders for attending the meeting which he said was a component of HYPREP's monitoring and evaluation framework.

He gave a rundown of the project delivery for the quarter under review



Participants at the Project Review Meeting

and highlighted some of the challenges experienced in the course of the work.

“Over the past quarter, we have made significant progress in our remediation efforts and other project thematic areas. Key milestones include the ongoing remediation of several land and shoreline sites, mangrove restoration, the construction of the CEER, the Ogoni Specialist Hospital, water facilities and sundry livelihood programmes. We will provide you with further details on the progress of the work shortly. Our journey has not been without challenges. We have encountered logistical hurdles including malicious cutting of planted mangroves, inter and intra communal land disputes, community leadership tussles and targeted fence erections that impeded access to contaminated sites. Nevertheless, our tenacity remains unshaken, and we are more determined than ever to achieve HYPREP goals. We continue to utilize our conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms to resolve the issues. This meeting presents a unique opportunity for our parent ministry, the Federal Ministry of Environment, the Rivers State Government, industry regulators, our funding partners, civil society partners and other key stakeholders to provide feedback on our project performance. This platform allows us to align our efforts with regulatory expectations and industry best practices.”

Prof. Zabbey encouraged the stakeholders to volunteer suggestions as they would be helpful in improving strategies, processes, enhanced compliance and achieving the project's goals more effectively. He also assured them that HYPREP is reviewing site assessment and stakeholder engagement strategies for

optimum results as well as intensifying community engagement initiatives such as training programmes for the youths, skill enhancement in livelihoods and environmental management and all-inclusive employment opportunities to ensure that Ogoni communities are informed and carried along in the Project.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit of HYPREP presented a detailed progress report in the different thematic areas of HYPREP for the quarter under review, the pressing issues being faced, and the measures taken to surmount those issues. The strengths and challenges experienced over the course of effectively implementing the project. HYPREP operations have witnessed increased acceptance by the Ogoni community, effective collaboration with relevant regulatory bodies and stakeholders, technical support from UNEP and SPDC and a united team for effective delivery.

The presentation also touched on some grey areas which include site flooding, occasional disruption of work due to community agitation, unnecessary levies on contractors by community members, interference in work by community youths, communal land dispute and chieftaincy tussles, theft of contractors' equipment, encroachment on lands hosting HYPREP projects among others.

The stakeholders expressed the delight over the pace and quality of project delivery by HYPREP and called for the even distribution of projects among communities in Ogoni as well as provide the data for areas yet to be covered in HYPREP's work.

SPDC representative, Jahswill Edeh pointed out that in the area of

mangrove restoration, contractors need to adhere to procedures and processes recommended by HYPREP in order to get the best from the project. He urged mangrove contractors not to engage in dishonest practices but strive for honesty, transparency and accountability.

Amongst other concerns, there was a call for an improvement in work speed especially in shoreline restoration, the need to employ more technical personnel to improve the project's delivery output since the project has seen an increase in workload, and the need for structures to be put in place to redirect floods from ongoing project sites to prevent damage.

Responding, Prof. Zabbey recounted the unfortunate incident of fencing of some HYPREP lots by disgruntled landowners which he said has affected the delivery of the projects. He however assured them that efforts are being made to ensure that the issue is resolved while also maintaining peace and stability in the land.

The HYPREP Project Coordinator stated that the project's website has been upgraded to reflect the status of all the different projects thus making information easily accessible to promote accountability and transparency as well as spur contractors to take their jobs seriously since the progress of their work can be seen by everyone.

Professor Zabbey went on to intimate the guests on HYPREP's plan to train traditional rulers in alternative dispute resolution to resolve issues within the communities amicably and assured them that the Project Coordination office has made a recommendation to the Governing Council for the employment of more technical staff.

CRAC/ZRC PAY OVERSIGHT VISIT TO HYPREP SITES

Members of the Central Representative Advisory Committee (CRAC), and the Zonal Representative Committee (ZRC) of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) have paid oversight visits to some HYPREP project sites to acquaint themselves with the progress of work done, the challenges being encountered and how the Project Coordination Office can be supported to ensure timely delivery of projects.

Company representatives and supervisors at the different sites visited were on ground to take members of CRAC and ZRC on a tour of their sites.

They were pleased to receive the guests and solicited their cooperation towards the timely completion of their contracts especially in the area of peaceful resolution of community land disputes and chieftaincy tussles that stall the progress of work.

Speaking at the end of the two-day visit, HRH Mene Benjamin Kii commended HYPREP on the progress of work so far noting that modest achievements have been recorded by

the contractors which would not have been possible without the support of the Management of HYPREP.

“The activities of these two-days have shown indeed that work is going on at the various sites successfully. We had the privilege of visiting the remediation site at Ogale, the water project at Kporghor, and we have seen the shoreline site at Bomu, Cottage Hospital at Buan and the Centre of Excellence for Environmental Restoration (CEER), Wiiyaakara. Work done so far is satisfactory apart from some few observations that we have raised, which I believe that if all of them are addressed, the project is on cause.”

Speaking further, Mene Kii made a case for a holistic approach to managing projects and an integration in terms of work on project performance, and called for continuous engagement with the communities, educating the people at the grassroots about the ongoing cleanup, and its various programmes and activities.

“I believe there is need for the community people who are not

satisfied to understand what HYPREP is doing. I believe that if people are well informed, they will take appropriate steps to key into the programmes of HYPREP.”

He said that CRAC/ZRC will continue to engage with the leaders of Ogoni communities and the people to own the project.

Also, Rev. Engr. Nwafor Loveday in his remarks disclosed that he was impressed by the performance of the project describing the efforts of contractors as satisfactory.

“There is reasonable advancement at the sites visited. We have interfaced with the contractors, consultants and from a professional point of view, they are on track. HYPREP is doing reasonable work in Ogoniland especially at the CEER. It is a reasonable achievement within the concept of the design.”

The Central Representative Advisory Committee (CRAC) and the Zonal Representative Committee (ZRC) are saddled with the responsibility of resolving any dispute that could disrupt the operations of HYPREP in the communities of Ogoni.



HYPREP ENLISTS COOPERATION OF OGONI NEIGHBOURS FOR SUCCESSFUL CLEAN-UP

The Project Coordination Office of the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) has sought the cooperation of Bolo community in Ogu/Bolo Local Government Area towards the successful implementation of the on-going clean-up of shorelines being undertaken by HYPREP.

Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey made the call at a meeting with the chiefs and elders of Bolo community held at the Project Coordination Office in Port Harcourt.

Professor Zabbey told his guests that their participation in the shoreline clean-up will facilitate easy access to site, ensure peace and security of site and personnel and empower the youths with relevant skills to work elsewhere in the future.

“Now the cleanup is about to start in

one of the closet Ogoni communities to Bolo which is K-Dere, so we are mindful of the fact that what we are doing is for common good. Our culture is very rich and communal, so it is in the spirit of that communal fashion for the people of the Niger Delta that we feel that it is very important to carry the Bolo community along as we progress even if the cleanup at this point is not directly taking place in Bolo. We feel that apart from the indirect benefits that has come to play earlier in terms of increasing the fish catch in the area and maintaining good water quality which is what we are doing now. We feel that it is important that when Ogoni youths are getting direct employment from the cleanup that Bolo that is next community to K-Dere where we are now doing shoreline cleanup should also benefit

from direct employment.

Of course what we are doing is not just to provide direct employment, we are also using the cleanup and all our initiatives to build capacity, to enhance capacity of the youths and women of our communities and so the approach is that, apart from training them, they learn the act of cleaning oil contamination by doing it and eventually when the work comes to an end, the capacity that they acquired over the period will still be with them to also work with in other organizations. We feel that what we are doing is sustainable so it is in that spirit that I asked that we should invite the community for us to dialogue, for us to think of how best we can make the cleanup successful and how to make the community participate in the cleanup.

He stated that the scope of HYPREP



HYPREP PC, Zabbey, Staff Pose with Bolo Council of Chiefs and Elders

operations is not limited to Ogoniland though the clean-up starts from Ogoni since there is an existing document recommending the clean-up of Ogoniland.

“HYPREP is a project of the Federal Ministry of Environment that is responsible for implementing the recommendations of the UNEP report on the environmental condition of Ogoni land. So, we have the mandate of cleaning up hydrocarbon impacted areas in Ogoni and also to procure and secure the mandate in the region and provide potable water in the Ogoni communities and we are building the Centre of Excellence. We are building the Ogoni Specialist Hospital and all these projects and all the work we are doing in Ogoni is geared towards developing a template for the entire Niger Delta.

Now most of the work we are doing especially in the shoreline area is beneficial to the impacted communities because we are planting mangroves in Bomu community at this point in time and cleaning all the shoreline area and as you are aware, the creeks of the Niger Delta communicate through tidal movement and the Mangrove planting in Ogoni would serve as refuge or home to fishes, coming to breed and spend some time and also migrate to Niger Delta including Bolo. So, the benefits of what we are doing is not just for the Ogoni population. What we are doing is of benefit to your community and other communities in Niger Delta.”

In his response, the Amanyanabo of Bolo, HRH Acheseinimie M. Frank JP, Bolo-Luka (VIII) appreciated the Management of HYPREP for the kind consideration to give some employment slots to the youths of Bolo in the clean-up of the shoreline between his community Bolo and K-

Dere community in Gokana Local Government Area of Ogoni.

“I want to express my heart felt gratitude to the Coordinator for thinking along this line, he said it all in his preamble. If he comes to my kingdom, sees me killing a goat, rejoice and nothing is extended to him, he will go with annoyance, he will be angry, even if the goat is not his. What causes some of these frictions we have in the various kingdoms is either greed or not considering a line of the old national anthem which says, 'though tribe and tongue may differ, in brotherhood, we stand.' If you do that, know that the other person is a neighbour, is a friend. I have a few tenants in my compound, I used to tell them that look, all of you see yourselves as brothers and sisters, if anything happens to you, before you talk about your relations at home, it is these people that will come to your rescue. So don't discriminate, see them as brothers and sisters, so that there can be peace and joy.

I am fully aware of the fact that this thing actually came at first instance, in Ogoni name, like when we met first, we were told the thing is intended for the entire Niger Delta region, but this is a starting point. How successful it is, will determine how far our Federal Government is going to embrace it and do it for all of us but the way we are with the Ogonis particularly K-Dere and B-Dere, if you want there is nothing you will do in K-Dere, that will not affect a Bolo man. Today, there is nothing you will do in Bolo that will not affect a K-Dere man. As we are today, we are not just neighbours, we are strong in-laws because as I'm speaking, I'm fully aware of the fact that some Bolo young men are with their wives at K-Dere and vice versa. So why do we

discriminate? If you discriminate, you're indirectly starving those other children that are Bolo and K-Dere by blood. So, it's a very good thing because even for us, for the operations to be very smooth, we need peace. All of us need peace because if you are working in an environment where there is no peace, even if you're a stronger soldier you are not safe. You need peace, Bolo people need peace, K-Dere people need peace. Sometimes I leave my house in Port Harcourt as late as 9pm I don't entertain any fear driving to Bolo. I have friends from K-Dere. Some K-Dere people have friends in Bolo.

The Bolo King underscored the need for communal cooperation and peace building among communities in the Niger Delta and promised his community's readiness to provide a secured environment for HYPREP contractors to operate.

“I am a fisherman. I have taken pains to study the tides and so what you send out now, in six hours will come back to you. So even if you clean K-Dere land, it will come back if Bolo is not touched. So, there is every need for us to put heads together, put our hands together and work together in the interest and peace of all the communities around. So, I am sincerely grateful to HYPREP for taking this initiative and I want to assure you, by the special grace of God, we're not going to allow disturbance throughout the operation.”

The clean-up of oil impacted shorelines in Ogoniland will culminate into mangrove restoration and the pilot has started in Bomu community where over four hundred mangrove seedlings have been planted so far.

FORTY OGONI WOMEN GET BUSINESS SUPPORT

As a deliberate policy of inclusivity, the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) has extended its sustainable alternative livelihood programme to forty (40) Nano business owners in community markets across the four Local Government Areas of Khana, Gokana, Tai and Eleme in Ogoniland, by providing them with support funds to the tune of four million naira (N4,000,000).

The initiative is aimed at boosting small businesses in Ogoni communities, in recognition of the critical roles they play in stimulating economic activities for sustainable livelihoods at the community level.

Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey who gave out the cheques to beneficiaries at Wiyaaakara venue of the event, said the initiative is part of HYPREP's broader strategic intervention and multi-layered approach to addressing the impact of hydrocarbon pollution on people's livelihoods and added that

the scheme is designed to promote the growth of nano businesses which in turn will increase economic activities for sustainable livelihoods at the community level.

“HYPREP's intervention is not merely about providing financial assistance. We are seeking to foster an environment where local businesses can thrive, and innovation can flourish, enhancing the ability of beneficiaries to move up the income ladder while inspiring others along the same path. We expect beneficiaries of this support fund to grow to be highly resourceful entrepreneurs.”

Professor Zabbey emphasized the vital role of small businesses to the local economy, stating that the resilience of small businessmen and women at eking out a living calls for support for them to stay afloat in business.

In his words, “these micro-businesses are integral to the local economy, especially in Ogoniland. From the Bori Urban Market in Khana to the

Kibangha Market in Gokana, from the Nonwa Market in Tai to the Nchia Market in Eleme, you can see these businesses' daily struggles and efforts. Therefore, they cannot be ignored.”

While assuring that HYPREP will continue to integrate all Ogonis regardless of their status, Professor Zabbey noted that the empowerment of women to run successful businesses would eventually culminate in creating stronger and more resilient communities.

“We believe that when women are empowered to run successful businesses, they improve their lives and contribute significantly to the welfare of their families and the broader community. The ripple effect creates stronger, more resilient communities capable of facing future challenges with confidence and hope.” He stated that HYPREP is mindful of the fact that access to finance is a major constraint to the growth and development of micro businesses and assured that the Project will



Beneficiaries of HYPREP Nano Business Grant with HYPREP PC, Prof. Zabbey

continuously devise means such as the business support fund initiative and other strategies in driving sustainable economic transformation.

The Project Coordinator stressed that by empowering these market women, HYPREP continues to prioritize inclusive participation in the Project's implementation process and invest in Ogoniland's future and explained that the selection process was transparent and inclusive as beneficiaries were identified on the spot at their locations in local markets across the four Local Government Areas.

“For transparency and inclusiveness, these businesses were identified on the spot at their locations in local markets across the four Local Government Areas. Questions were also asked to ascertain challenges and areas where they needed support and where HYPREP could intervene. At the end of the exercise, these selected business owners were identified and trained in collaboration with the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Centre to strengthen their capacities to run and sustain their businesses.”

Professor Zabbey implored the beneficiaries to make judicious use of the fund in ways that will contribute to the economic development of Ogoni communities and reiterated HYPREP's commitment to providing a platform to advancing its alternative livelihood objectives for Ogoni communities.

“HYPREP is committed to supporting you every step of the way. Utilize these funds wisely, grow your businesses, and continue to inspire others with your entrepreneurial spirit. Speak to us when you have challenges, we are here to provide further guidance for your business success. Let us continue to work together, support one another, and strive towards a future of economic growth, prosperity, peace, and security.”

Head, Sustainable Livelihood Unit of HYPREP, Mrs. Josephine Nzidee explained that the business support initiative is aimed at expanding the capacity of the beneficiaries to off-take more produce from local farmers thereby catalyzing increased food production in Ogoni.

Chairman, Wiiyaakara Council of Chiefs, Chief Dr. Goddy Nwikpo appreciated HYPREP for the support to the market women and enjoined beneficiaries to make good use of the money given to them to boost their businesses.

In the same vein, Mr. Egbilika Josiah of the Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development who was present to monitor the event lauded HYPREP for remembering the market women who help to fuel the economy and encouraged them to use the money for the purpose it was given.

Also, the representative of the Stakeholder Democracy Network, Chris Nku extolled HYPREP for the initiative, noting that the intervention came at a time when several businesses are challenged and encouraged HYPREP to extend the gesture to more businesses.

Beneficiaries expressed gratitude to HYPREP and assured the Management of the Project of making

UNEP/HYPREP TASK CONTRACTORS ON QUALITY WORKS

In their determination in ensuring that the Ogoni environment is remediated to the standards it recommended, the United Nations Environment Programme, (UNEP) in collaboration with the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) has called on remediation contractors and the laboratories where samples are analyzed to adhere to best practices in their operations as Ogoni deserves the best in the Federal Government's commitment to the clean-up of the environment and the restoration of the livelihood of the people.



HYPREP PC, Prof. Zabbey with UNEP Officials at a Technical Session with Contractors

The call was made at the technical session jointly organized for remediation contractors and accredited laboratories, by HYPREP and UNEP on the implementation of Key Technical Components of the Phase 2 Remediation Works held at the Project Coordination Office in Port Harcourt.

Project Coordinator of HYPREP, Professor Nenibarini Zabbey said the session was held to review methods and discuss challenges in the remediation works and urged contractors and laboratories to uphold industry standards in their data collection methods and related

remediation activities.

Professor Zabbey reiterated HYPREP's commitment to working closely with the contractors and relevant stakeholders and in the process develop a remediation template for the rest of the Niger Delta.

Two UNEP officials, Mike Cowing and Gerrant William made presentations on Key Scientific Technicalities in the Implementation of the Phase 2 Remediation Works, stressing the need for strict adherence to best practices in the remediation works in Ogoniland.

The meeting was attended by

contractors working on the Medium Risk Sites (MRS) and owners of laboratories where samples are analyzed. Others are the National Oil Spills Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA), Nigerian Upstream Petroleum Regulatory Commission (NUPRC), the Rivers State Ministry of Environment, (RSMEnv), Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Social Democracy Network (SDN), Centre for Environment, Human Rights and Development (CEHRD) and the Society for Women and Youth Affairs (SWAYA).

ENVIRONMENT CLUB MEMBERS VISIT HYPREP SITES

In a bid to expose members of its Environment Clubs to practical operations in the remediation of the environment and other projects, the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project (HYPREP) has taken secondary students in schools within Ogoni where it has environment clubs on an excursion to its sites across the four Local Government Areas of Ogoni.

The students were familiarized with environment remediation practices, water treatment techniques, and environment preservation cultures all aimed at providing them with practical knowledge about the works of HYPREP in the field.

HYPREP Head of Sustainable Livelihood, Mrs. Josephine Nzidee, explained to the students the purpose of the excursion.

“We have been talking about remediation in the classrooms for over a year now. The first time we came to your schools to establish the environmental clubs, we told you that

we would take you to our sites where we are doing the clean-up. It is not enough for you to sit in your classrooms, and we keep telling you stories every day. Today, you are here to see what we mean when we say that we are remediating the environment. We want the professionals to explain to you what they do here on the sites. They will take you through the remediation processes from the start to when we can say the land is cleaned up.”

The students were provided with Personal Projective Equipment (PPEs) to ensure their safety before they ventured into the field. They were also given a brief on HYPREP's remediation techniques by a site engineer, Barikuma Pene who explained to them the remediation method that HYPREP is using on its sites.

“In HYPREP, the method we are using is the biological method. The biological aspect is using indigenous microbes in the environment to do the

work of cleaning up the environment. HYPREP adopted the biological method of remediation, or bioremediation because it is the most environmentally friendly.”

Engr. Pene expressed delight in the students' interest in environmental restoration and encouraged them to remain consistent because professionally, the environment remains one of the most viable sectors in the world.

The students were also taken on a tour of the Alesa water facility where they were shown the different treatment processes water has to go through, from pumping to final filtration, before it is considered to be good enough for consumption.

At the end of the excursion, Mrs. Nzidee thanked the students for their interest in the environment and urged them to take the activities of the environment club seriously by reading up materials on the environment.

SECURING OGONI: HYPREP NEW HEAD SECURITY SEEKS INVOLVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE

The newly deployed Head, Security of HYPREP, AIG Emmanuel Ekot Effiom (Rtd.) has promised to operate with a security architecture that takes into cognizance the place and input of all strata of the Ogoni society – host to the Hydrocarbon Pollution Remediation Project saddled with the responsibility of cleaning up Ogoniland.

AIG Effiom was deployed to HYPREP by the Office of the National Security Adviser to the President following the transfer of the former Head of Security, Commander OO Izokpu.

He assured the Ogoni community of running a people friendly security system that will guarantee the security of lives and property especially in communities that play host to HYPREP operations and projects.

“They should expect a very warm, welcoming, all-embracing, friendly, brotherly and fatherly approach to security. To the elders, I will be humble. I will seek their advice and allow them to direct as to the best way Ogoniland can be secured. To the youths, I will engage them in a friendly manner to encourage them to maintain the peace. The women who are mothers and sisters to me – the ones in the market, the ones who are working, the ones who are living in Ogoni and outside Ogoni should equally lend their voices in ensuring that peace reigns supreme in Ogoniland and for the progress of Ogoniland.”

Effiom stated that he would rather opt for the non-kinetic approach to security in a place like Ogoni so as to get the best result in the task of keeping the area peaceful for the



AIG EFFIOM EMMANUEL EKOT
HEAD SECURITY, HYPREP

actualization of the clean-up exercise. “Security does not necessarily have to be kinetic. Security is even better through ADR, that is, Alternative Dispute Resolution. The non-kinetic approach is what I will leverage on so that we will have an all-engaging, all-encompassing approach to the security of Ogoniland and all HYPREP projects and sites so that we don't take it to be that it is because of the presence of armed security men that work is going on. No! Let it be because of the engagement of all Ogoni sons and daughters that these projects are going on. The security men are only complementing the desires and aspirations of the Ogoni people that these projects are not only completed but meet the purposes for which they were envisaged.”

The HYPREP Head, Security is impressed with the security structure he met on ground, which he said had ensured the peace and progress of HYPREP projects across Ogoniland and promised to both sustain and strengthen the existing structure to meet the expectations and aspirations

of HYPREP and the entire Ogoniland.

In less than a month at his new duty post, AIG Effiom has traversed the length and breadth of Ogoni engaging and familiarizing with critical stakeholders to ensure that HYPREP succeeds in its operations.

“The reception was warm, friendly and encouraging. The process of familiarization is ongoing, and I have met some people. I have been to some villages, and I have been to some LOTS. I have not been able to go round because am just a few weeks old but in no distant time we will meet with all stakeholders. I have met with most of the youths, I wouldn't say I have met with all, but I have met with most.”

AIG Emmanuel Ekot Effiom started his career with the Nigeria Police Force on 3rd March 1990 and put in thirty-four meritorious years in service to the nation in regular and special postings which culminated at the Office of the National Security Adviser, Abuja from where he was deployed to HYPREP as Head, Security.

PICTURES OF THE MONTH



Gokana Council of Chiefs Presents an Award to Minister of Environment, Mene Balarabe Abbas Lawal



Minister of Environment, Lawal Presents IMO Certificate to a Trainee



Gokana Council of Chiefs Presents an Award to HYPREP PC, Prof. Zabbey



HYPREP BoT Chairman, Dr. Mike Nwielaghi at the Bomu Water Project Commissioning



Cross Section of Ogoni Elites at the Bomu Water Project Commissioning



Some Traditional & Religious Leaders at the Bomu Water Project Commissioning



SPDC Rep., Engr. Ekiyokeneghare Clark at the Bomu Water Project Commissioning



Ogoni Mothers at the Bomu Water Project Commissioning

OGONI CLEAN-UP

...HYPREP SPEARHEADING MANGROVE RESTORATION



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Photo:HYPREP



THE ENVIRONMENT ON MARBLE

“Reversing deforestation is complicated; planting a tree is simple.”

– Martin O'Malley

Photo:HYPREP

... for a cleaner and greener Ogoniland

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